Key Daoist Principles and Teachings in the *Bàopǔzǐ nèipiān* 抱朴子內篇 (Inner Chapters of Master Embracing Simplicity; DZ 1185; ZH 980)*

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夫玄道者，得之乎內，守之者外。用之者神，忘之者器。

Considering the mysterious Dao, we realize it on the inside and guard it on the outside. Those who apply it become divine; those who forget it become instruments. (1.2b)

豈況仙人殊趣異路，以富貴為不幸，以榮華為穢汙，以厚玩為塵壤，以聲譽為朝露。

How could they [ordinary people] possibly recognize immortals who have special interest in a different path, one that regards riches and honors as misfortunes, glory and splendor as filth and pollution, pomp and circumstance as dust and grime, and reputation and prestige as morning dew. (2.4b)

盛陽不能榮枯朽，上智不能移下愚。書為曉者傳，事為識者貴。

Abundant sunlight cannot invigorate dead wood; higher wisdom cannot alter lower ignorance. Writings are transmitted for those who understand; matters are valuable for those who recognize. (4.5a)

上士得道，昇為天官；中士得道，棲集崑崙，下士得道，長生世間。

When the highest adepts attain the Way, they ascend to become celestial officials; when the middle adepts attain the Way, they perch and gather in Kūnlún 崑崙; when the lowest adepts attain the Way, they have perpetual life in the world. (4.9a)

長生之道，不在祭祀事鬼神也。不在道【導】引與屈伸也。昇仙之要，在神丹也。知之不易，為之實難也。

The Way of Perpetual Life does not reside in making ritual offerings to ghosts and spirits. It also does not reside in Dǎoyǐn 導引 (Guided Stretching) accompanied by bending and stretching. The essentials of ascending to immortality reside in divine elixirs. Knowing this is not easy, while doing it is substantially more difficult. (4.10a)

第一禁，勿令俗人之不信道者，謗訕評毀之。

The principal proscription is not to allow ordinary people who do not believe in the Dao to criticize, mock, malign, or slander it. (4.18b)

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遣歡戚之邪情，外得失之榮辱，割厚生之腊毒。

They dispatch the aberrant feelings of joy and sadness, externalize the glory and disgrace of gain and loss, and cut out the parching poison of “thick living.” (5.2a)

小修則小得，大為則大驗。

Minor cultivation results in minor attainment; major practice results in major confirmation. (6.1b)

若令家戶有仙人，屬目比肩，吾子雖蔽，亦將不疑。但彼人之道成，則蹈青霄而游紫極。自非通靈，莫之見聞，吾子必為無耳。

If your household contained an immortal, right under your eyes and standing at your side, you would never suspect it even if ensconced [therein]. However, once that person’s path is completed, they will tread the blue empyrean and wander to the Purple Pole. Unless personally connected to the numinous, no one would see or hear them. You certainly must be earless. (6.2b)

凡學道當階淺以涉深，由易以及難。志誠堅果，無所不濟。疑則無功。非一事也。夫根荄不洞地，而求柯條干[乾]雲，淵源不泓窈，而求湯流萬里者，未之有也。是故非積善陰德，不足以感神明；非誠心款契，不足以結師友；非功勞不足以論大試。

Generally speaking, for studying the Dao, you must step into the shallows in order to wade into the depths, go through the easy in order to approach the difficult. With aspiration and sincerity firmly determined, nothing will not be forded. [However,] if you have doubt, there will be no accomplishment. This is not a singular issue. Now then, if roots do not penetrate into the earth and yet seek to branch into the celestial clouds, if headwaters do not extend to the depths and yet seek to flow for ten thousand *lǐ*, this is unprecedented. Therefore, unless one amasses goodness through hidden virtue, it will be insufficient to affect divine illumination; unless sincere in heart-mind and intimate in kinship, it will be insufficient to join with teachers and companions. Unless there is meritorious exertion, it will be insufficient to discuss the Great Test. (6.3a)

寶精愛炁，最其急也。並將服小藥以延年命，學近術以辟邪惡，乃可漸階精微矣。

Valuing vital essence and cherishing qi are most urgent. Moreover, if you would ingest lesser medicines in order to extend the years and life-destiny and learn proximal techniques in order to avoid aberrance and perversity, then you can make gradual progress into the essential subtleties. (6.3b)

為術者，內修形神，使延年愈疾，外攘邪惡，使禍害不乾。

Considering the techniques practiced, we inwardly cultivate form and spirit in order to extend the years and heal illness; we externally repel aberrance and perversity so that calamities and injuries do not deplete. (6.3b-4a)

務學不如擇師。師所聞素狹，又不盡情以教之。因告云，為道不在多也。

Committed study is not as good as selecting a [reliable] teacher. If what a teacher has listened to is plain and narrow, they will not teach with an exhaustive disposition. They will accordingly claim that practicing the Way does not reside in numerous [approaches and methods]. (6.4b)

禁忌之至急，在不傷不損而已。

The most urgent prohibition and taboo rests in not-harming and not-degrading, and that is all. (6.5a)

覽諸道戒，無不云欲求長生者，必欲積善立功，慈心於物，恕己及人，仁逮昆蟲，樂人之吉，愍人之苦，周人之急，救人之窮，手不傷生，口不勸禍，見人之得如己之得，見人之失如己之失，不自貴，不自譽，不嫉妒勝己，不佞諂陰賊，如此乃為有德，受福於天。

When one inspects the various precepts of the Dao, none does not mention that those who wish to seek perpetual life must strive to amass good [deeds] and establish merit, maintain a compassionate heart towards beings, treat self as others, extend kindness to insects, delight in others' good fortune, sympathize with others' suffering, help those in distress, aid those who are impoverished, do not harm living beings, do not incite misfortune, view others' attainments as one's own attainments, and view other others' losses as one's own losses. Do not honor oneself; do not praise oneself; do not envy those who have surpassed oneself; and do not engage in flattery or be treacherous and vicious. Through this, one then becomes virtuous and receives good fortune from the heavens. (6.6a)

侵剋賢者，誅戮降伏，謗訕仙聖，傷殘道士。

The worthy will be overthrown, and the subdued will be executed. Immortals and sages will be disparaged, and adepts of the Way will be disabled. (6.6b)

其有曾行諸惡事，後自改悔者。

For previous actions that involved wrongdoing, one must later perform personal atonement. (6.7b)

善事難為，惡事易作。

Benevolent actions are difficult to enact; malevolent actions are easy to conduct. (6.8a)

彼有外名者，未必有內行；有陽譽者，不能解陰罪。

Those who have external fame do not necessarily have internal practice; those who have positive reputation may be unable to resolve negative faults. (6.8a)

陰陽之術，高可以治小疾，次可以免虛耗而已。其理自有極。安能致神仙而卻禍致福乎？

The best yin-yang [sexual] techniques can [only] cure minor ailments; the next ones can prevent vacuity and wasting, and that is all. Such principles naturally have their limits. How could they confer divine immortality or dispel misfortune and bring good fortune? (6.10a)

棄交遊，委妻子，謝榮名，損利祿，割集爛於其目，抑鏗鏘於其耳，恬愉靜退，獨善守己，謗來不戚，譽至不喜，睹貴不欲，居賤不耻，此道家之難也。出無慶弔之望，入無瞻視之責，不勞神於七經，不運思於律歷，意不為推步之苦，心不為藝文之役，眾煩既損，和氣自益，無為無慮，不休不惕，此道家之易也。所謂難中之易矣。

Abandoning social involvement, renouncing wife and children, rejecting glory and fame, losing profit and post, splitting assembled splendors from one's eyes, restricting jingling and tinkling bells from one's ears, in tranquil appreciation and quiet retirement, with solitary aptitude at guarding oneself, not saddened by criticism, not elated by praise, seeing honor without desiring it, dwelling in poverty without being ashamed—these are the difficulties of the Family of the Dao. Leaving without expectation of congratulations or condolences, entering without demand for regard or notice, not taxing spirit with the Seven Classics, not rousing concern about calendrics, thought not becoming worried about deducing [stellar] reckonings/calculations, mind not becoming enslaved by arts and letters, multitudinous vexations already/all decreased, harmonious qi naturally increasing, without action and without concern, not laxed and not vigilant—this is the ease of the Family of the Dao. This is what I mean by ease in the midst of difficulty. (7.5b)

不知彼有外名者，未必有內行，有陽譽者不能解陰罪。

They do not understand that those who have external fame do not necessarily have internal practice or that those who have positive reputation may be unable to resolve negative faults. (7.8a)

貴道者，以其加之不可益，而損之不可減也。所以貴德者，以其聞毀而不慘，見譽而不悅也。

For those who esteem the Dao, additions cannot increase it and deductions cannot decrease it. Therefore, for those who esteem inner power, hearing disparagement does not induce distress and meeting glorification does not induce delight. (7.9a)

內寶養生之道，外則和光於世。

Internally treasure the Way of Nourishing Life; externally follow harmonizing radiance with the world. (8.1a)

人能淡默恬愉，不染不移，養其心以無欲，頤其神以粹素，掃滌誘慕，收之以正，除難求之思，遣害真之累，薄喜怒之邪，滅愛惡之端，則不請福而福來，不禳禍而禍去矣。

If human beings can [abide in] detached silence and tranquil joy, remain undyed and unmoved, nourish the heart-mind through desirelessness, nurture spirit through pure plainness, sweep and

wash away seductive yearnings and restrain them through alignment, banish concern for difficult pursuits, dispel entanglements that injure perfection, reduce the aberrations of pleasure and anger, and extinguish the extremes of love and hate, then blessings will arrive without requesting them and calamities will depart without praying to avert them. (8.1b)

至要者，在於寶精行炁，服一大藥。

The utmost essentials reside in treasuring vital essence, circulating qi, and ingesting one major medicine. (8.2b)

初以授人，皆從淺始，有志不怠，勤勞可知，方乃告其要耳。

When initially teaching people, one always begins with the shallow. For those whose determination does not falter and whose diligent effort is known, only then does one reveal the essentials. (8.2b)

至於仙者，唯須篤志至信，勤而不怠，能恬能靜。

For reaching immortality, one only needs to have steadfast determination and utmost sincerity. Diligent and not negligent, one can become calm and still. (12.1b)

聖事有厚薄也。

The matter of sagehood has “thick-and-thin.” (12.3a)

以為諸得仙者，皆其受命偶值神仙之氣，自然所稟。故胞胎之中，已含信道之性，及其有識，則心好其事。

All of those who attain immortality are fated for such; they just happen to encounter the qi of divine immortality, which is endowed spontaneously. Thus, while in the womb, they already contain an innate nature for trusting the Dao. In time, when they become cognizant, their heart-minds prefer such matters. (12.3ab)

苟不受神仙之命，則必無好仙之心，未有心不好之而求其事者也，未有不求而得之者也。

If one does not receive the fate of divine immortality, one certainly will not have a heart-mind that prefers immortality. There has never been someone with a heart-mind that does not prefer this who seeks such matters; there has never been someone who does not seek but finds it. (12.4a)

道家寶秘仙術，弟子之中，尤尚簡擇，至精彌久，然後告之以要訣。

Daoists treasure and keep secret the techniques of immortality. They are especially careful in selecting disciples. Only after a long time do they divulge the essential instructions to them. (12.4a)

嗜利棄義，亦無數焉。

As for those who discard righteousness out of fondness for profit, they are indeed incalculable. (12.8a)

性篤行貞，心無怨貳，乃得升堂以入於室。

With innate nature steadfast and practice pure, their heart-minds were free from resentment and indecision. Then they attained ascent into the hall as well as entry into the chamber. (13.1a)

或朝為而夕欲其成，或坐修而立望其效。

Some practice in the morning and want completion in the evening. Others become [just] seated in cultivation and immediately expect results. (13.1ab)

若夫睹財色而心不戰，聞俗言而志不沮者，萬夫之中，有一人為多矣。故為者如牛毛；獲者如麟角也。

As for those with a heart-mind unprovoked by seeing wealth and lust or with an aspiration unhindered by hearing ordinary promptings, even one person among ten thousand would be a lot. Thus, those who practice are like ox hairs; those who become attained are like [Qí]lín horns. (13.1b)

升峻者患於垂上而力不足，為道者病於方成而志不遂。

Those who scale steep [mountains] worry about their strength being insufficient when approaching the summit; those who practice the Dao are afflicted about their determination being unwavering when completing the formula. (13.1b)

其知道者補而救之，必先復故，然後方求量表之益。

Those who understand the Way replenish and save it [qi]; they must first restore and only then seek to augment its quantity. (13.2a)

非長生難也，聞道難也；非聞道難也，行之難也；非行之難也，終之難也。

It is not difficult [to attain] perpetual life; it is difficult to hear about the Way. It is not difficult to hear about the Way; it is difficult to practice it. It is not difficult to practice it; it is difficult to complete it. (13.2b)

夫修道猶如播穀也，成之猶收積也。

Cultivating the Dao is like sowing grain; completing it is like harvesting and storing [crops]. (13.2b)

治身養性，務謹其細，不可以小益為不平而不修，不可以小損為無傷而不防。凡聚小所以就大，積一所以至億也。若能愛【之】於微，成之於著，則幾乎知道矣。

When regulating the body and nourishing innate nature, be carefully attentive to the minutiae. Do not allow a minor benefit to be insignificant and uncultivated; do not allow a minor loss to be harmless and unblocked. Generally speaking, accumulating small [things] consequently becomes great; amassing singular [units] consequently reaches a hundred thousand. If you are able to cherish it when subtle and complete it when manifest, you are close to understanding the Way. (13.3a)

易養故得仙也。

Ease of nourishment results in attaining immortality. (13.7a)

吐故納新者，因氣以長氣，而氣大衰者則難長也。服食藥物者，因血以益血，而血垂竭者則難益也。

Expelling the old and ingesting the new depends on qi to enhance qi. However, when qi is greatly weakened, then it is difficult to enhance. Ingesting medicinal substances depends on blood to increase blood. However, when blood is almost drained, then it is difficult to increase (13.7ab)

衝風赴林，而枯柯先摧；洪濤凌崖，而折隙首頹；烈火燎原，而燥卉前焚；龍【籠】椀墜地，而脆者獨破。

When powerful winds assail a forest, dry branches are the first to break. When massive waves pummel a cliff, fissured crevices are the first to collapse. When fierce fires scorch a prairie, parched plants are the first to burn. When baskets and bowls fall to the ground, only the brittle ones break. (13.8b)

凡為道者，常患於晚，不患於早也。

Generally speaking, those who practice the Way always worry about [starting] late; they do not worry about [starting] early. (13.8b)

養生以不傷為本。

For nourishing life, take not being harmed as the root. (13.9a)

長生之要，在乎還年之道。上士知之，可以延年除病。

The essentials of perpetual life reside in the Way of Reverting the Years. The highest adepts, by knowing this, can extend their years and expel illness. (13.9a)

善攝生者，臥起有四時之早晚；興居有至和之常制。

Those who are adept at caring for life [adjust] the earliness and lateness of sleeping and rising according to the four seasons. Their activity and repose follow the constant rule of utmost harmony. (13.10a)

天地之大德曰生。生，好物者也。是以道家之所至秘而重者，莫過乎長生之方也。

The great inner power of heaven-and-earth is called "life." Life involves cherishing beings. Therefore, considering what the Family of the Dao regards as most esoteric and important, nothing surpasses formulas for perpetual life. (14.1a)

求而不得者有矣，未有不求而得者也。

There are those who seek without finding, but there has never been someone who did not seek and found. (14.1b)

世閒自有奸偽圖錢之子，而竊道士之號者，不可勝數也。然此等復不肯【謂】挺無所知也，皆復粗開頭角，或妄沽名，加之以伏邪飾偽，而好事之徒，不識其真偽者，徒多之進問，自取誑惑，而拘制之，不令得行，廣尋奇士異人，而告之曰，道盡於此矣。以誤於有志者之不少，可歎可患也。

In the world, there are, of course, "masters" who are crafty frauds and scheming for money; they furtively claim the title of *dàoshì* 道士 ("adept of the Dao"). They are too numerous to count. Still, I do not claim that this type is utterly without understanding; all of them offer a rough opening to our topmost point. [Still,] some falsely angle after renown, foisting themselves by concealing depravity and covering up deceit. Under these conditions, their enthusiastic followers do not recognize truth from falsity. Many of them put forth questions, bringing deceit and delusion on themselves, while becoming arrestingly restrained by them. [Such "teachers"] do not allow them to travel in order to search widely for extraordinary adepts and anomalous people. Instead, they claim that the Way is thoroughly exhausted in this [their own teachings]. Those with determination whom they mislead are not few. How regrettable and unfortunate! (14.1b-2a)

上士先營長生之事，長生定可以任意。

The highest adept first manages the matter of perpetual life; once perpetual life has been settled, one can do as one pleases. (14.4a)

然決須好師，師不足奉，亦無由成也。

Surely one must appreciate one's teacher. If a teacher is insufficiently revered, there truly will be no way to succeed. (14.4a)

言不了則為之無益也。

If words are not understood, practice will have no benefit. (14.5b)

明師之恩，誠為過於天地，重於父母多矣。可不崇之乎？可不求之乎？

The kindness of enlightened teachers actually surpasses the heavens and earth and is more important than that of one's father and mother. How can one not revere them? How can one not seek them? (14.6a)

故世閭道士，知金丹之事者，萬無一也。而管見之屬，謂仙法當具在於紛若之書，及於祭祀拜伏之間而已矣。夫長生制在大藥耳，非祠醮之所定【得】也。

As a result, in the present age adepts of the Way who understand matters of the Golden Elixir are not one in ten thousand. And still, individuals with tubular vision claim that the methods of immortality are all contained in the disorderly jumbles of writings and among prostrations during sacrificial worship, and that is all. Now then, perpetual life involves formulating the great medicine; it is not attained through prayer and offerings. (14.6b)

所謂適楚而道燕。雖良馬而不到，非行之不疾，然失其道也。

This is called "going to Chǔ 楚 enroute to Yān 燕." Although one has a good horse, one will not arrive. This is not a case of not travelling quickly; rather, one has lost the way. (14.7b)

後世頑淺，趣得一人，自譽之子，云「我有秘書，便守事之。」而庸人小兒，多有外託有道之名，名過其實，由於誇誑，內抱貪濁，惟利是圖。

Ignorant and superficial individuals of later generations became interested in a specific person, a self-lauding "master" who claimed "I have an esoteric text that I am deftly guarding and engaging." Under these conditions, many mediocre people and immature individuals outwardly pretend to possess the Way in name, [but] the naming exceeds the substance. This is due to boasting and lying. [Meanwhile,] they inwardly embrace avaricious turbidity, solely with profit as their scheme. (14.7b)

將來之學者，雖當以求師為務，亦不可以不詳擇為急也。陋狹之夫，行淺德薄，功微緣少。

Although future students must seek a teacher to serve, they truly cannot not consider meticulous selection as crucial. Among superficial and blinkered individuals, practice is shallow and inner power thin, accomplishment is minute and chances meager. (14.9a)

諸虛名之道士，既善為誑詐，以欺學者，又多護短慝愚，恥於不知，陽若以博涉已足，終不肯行求請問於勝己者，急爾守窮，面墻而立，又不但拱默而已，乃復增忌於實有道者而謗毀之，恐披聲名之過己也。此等豈有意於長生之法哉？為欲以合致弟子，圖其財力，以快其情欲而已耳。而不知天高聽卑，其後必受斯殃也。夫貧者不可妄云我富也，賤者不可

虛云我貴也。況道德之事實無，而空養門生弟子乎？凡俗之人，猶不宜懷妬善之心，況於道士，尤應以忠信快意為生者也。

Since these various [so-called] adepts of the Way with hollow renown excel at deception and fraud in misleading students, many of them also shield their shortcomings and conceal their idiocy. Ashamed about their lack of understanding, they pretend that their breadth of wading [experience] is already sufficient. In the end, they are unwilling to seek instruction from those who surpass themselves. They anxiously maintain their deficiencies, standing facing a wall. In addition, they not only clutch onto silence, but also grow envious of those who truly have the Dao, and further slander and vilify them. [This is because] they fear that their reputation and renown are being overshadowed by them. How can such individuals have any consideration of the methods of perpetual life? They [only] want to gather disciples and are scheming for money and power in order to satisfy their own desires and that is all. Under these conditions, they do not understand that Tiān may be high but its hearing reaches low—later on, they assuredly will suffer calamities. Now then, it is unacceptable for poor people to falsely say "we are rich" or for common people to vacuously say "we are noble." How much more is this the case for those who truly lack [understanding] about the matter of the Dao and inner power while futilely fostering followers and disciples? If it is even unacceptable for ordinary people to carry envy of excellence in their heart-minds, how much more is this the case for adepts of the Way who should particularly take loyalty, honesty, and carefree awareness as the basis of their lives. (14.9b-10a)

失之東隅，收之桑榆，墜井引綆，愈於遂沒。

What is lost in the eastern corner [sunrise] can be recovered among mulberries and elms [evening]. Extending a rope to someone who has fallen into a well is better than accompanying the drowning. (14.12b)

未有不耕而獲嘉禾，未有不勤而獲長生度世也。

No one ever acquired fine grain without plowing; no one ever acquired perpetual life and transcending the world without diligence. (14.13a)

道必當傳其人，得其人，道路相遇輒教之。

The Way must only be transmitted to a certain type of person. If one finds such a person, even if encountered on the road, one would immediately teach them. (16.4a)

凡事無巨細，皆宜得要。

In all matters, whether large or minute, it is necessary to obtain the essentials. (16.5a)

無有肥仙人富道士也。

There are no plump immortals or rich adepts of the Way. (16.6a)

我命在我不在天。

My fate is in me, not in the heavens. (16.7a)

凡為道合藥，及避亂隱居者，莫不入山。

Considering those practicing the Way and compounding medicines as well as those fleeing chaos and dwelling in seclusion, there is no one who does not enter the mountains. (17.1a)

知一者，無一之不知也。不知一者，無一之能知也。

By knowing the One, not a single thing is not known. By not knowing the One, not a single thing can be known. (18.1a)

夫長生仙方，則唯有金丹；守形卻惡，則獨有真一。

Considering the immortal formulas for perpetual life, there is only the Golden Elixir; for guarding form and evading deviance, there is only Perfect Unity. (18.2a)

非有至志，不能久也。

Unless one has utmost determination, it will be impossible to persist. (18.5a)

淺近庸人，雖有志好，不能克終矣。

Mediocre people with shallow familiarity, even if they have the determination and inclination, are unable to prevail until the end. (18.5b)

至人消未起之患，治未病之疾。

Utmost people disperse worry before it arises and regulate illness before it is contracted. (18.6a)

君有甄事之才，可教也。然君所知者，雖多未精，又意在於外學，不能專一，未中以經深涉遠耳。

You have a talent for examining these matters and are teachable. However, much of what you know has not yet become essential. You also are concerned about studying the external and are unable to concentrate on the One. You are not yet focused on threading the depths and fording the remote. (19.2b)

雜道書卷卷有佳事，但當校其精粗，而擇所施行，不事盡諳誦，以妨日月而勞意思耳。若金丹一成，則此輩一切不用也。亦或當有所教授，宜得本末，先從淺始，以勸進學者，無所希準階由也。

The miscellaneous Daoist books, scroll by scroll, contain [some] good material, but you must examine their [relative] refinement and coarseness and then select what can be applied in practice. Do not concern yourself with becoming versed in everything by recitation, through which you waste days and months by toiling through intention and reflection. If the Golden Elixir is completed quickly, then all these other types [of literature] are useless. At the same time, sometimes one must have something to teach, and it is appropriate to understand the roots and branch-tips. Commence with the elementary in order to encourage those who are beginning students. [Then,] when there is a lack of hope, standard steps can be followed. (19.3a)

承師問道，不得其人，委去則遲遲冀於有獲，守之則終已竟無所成，虛費事妨功，後雖痛悔，亦不及已。

Consider [the consequences of] contacting a teacher to inquire about the Way and not finding the right person. If you abandon them, you may eventually hope to catch one. If you continue to follow them, you will finally accomplish nothing. Vainly wasting and impeding your effort, later on you may even have deep regret, but you assuredly will never reach the goal. (20.1a)

雖聖雖明，莫由自曉。非可以歷思得也，非可以觸類求也，誠須所師，必深必博。

Even among the sages and even among the enlightened, there was no one who could comprehend things on their own. As it could not be acquired through extensive thought nor sought through tactile categorization, it is truly necessary for one's teacher to be deep and broad. (20.1a)

賢者愈自隱蔽，有而如無，奸人愈自衒沽，虛而類實。

Worthy individuals prefer to keep themselves hidden and concealed, with what they possess seeming to be nothing. Sycophants prefer to exhibit and peddle themselves, with what they lack appearing to be abundant. (20.2a)

彼之守求庸師而不去者，非知其無知而故不止也，誠以為足事「故」也。見達者而不能奉之者，非知其實深而不能請之也，誠以為無異也。

As for those who maintain their pursuit under a mediocre teacher and do not leave, it is not that they know that they do not know and thus do not stop. They sincerely believe that they are sufficient for the undertaking. When they do encounter a realized individual but are unable to serve them, it is not that they know their substance and depth but are unable to inquire about things. [Rather,] they sincerely believe that such people are not extraordinary. (20.2a)

能知要道者，無欲於物也，不徇世譽也，亦何肯自摽顯於流俗哉？

Considering those who are capable of understanding the essential Way, they are free from desire for things. As they do not pursue worldly renown, how indeed would they be willing to flaunt themselves among current fashions? (20.2a)