



excerpt from the forthcoming

PROPER DHARMA PLATFORM SUTRA

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Abbot: "In life after life we make this kind of impure, unclean karma, and then when we want to wipe it clean, it's not easy to do. For example, bowing once every three steps is sagely work, but no one is willing to do it. Everyone thinks it's really stupid work. But if you are willing to cultivate this kind of method without fearing that others will laugh at you, or look down on and ridicule you, then your efforts will make the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas happy.

"If you don't reach the point of ultimate stupidity, you won't be able to open ultimate wisdom. If you don't reach the place of ultimate suffering, you won't realize the state of supreme happiness. From past to present, from east to west, and from within and without, this is truly rare, especially in the West where everyone talks of "practicality": "What can you hope to get out of this?" they ask. But you believe in absolute, supreme principles, and you have begun in the smallest places to do the greatest work--sagely work.

"However, when you do the work of sages, your mind must be totally pure. You must have only pure and lofty thoughts. You have to wash your mind completely clean--allow no random musings or selfish thoughts to enter.

"Bad habits are defiled seeds from the past, and these seeds cause us in thought after thought to be unable to forget defiled habits. So when a man walks by, you don't give him a second glance. But, if it's a woman, one glance is not enough. Even though I'm not there with you, I can still see it clearly. If you see yourself as already dead to worldly ways, then where could desire thoughts come from?

If you can't put down death,

You won't be able to pick up life.
If you can't put down the false,
You won't be able to pick up the true.
If you don't put down the small,
How can you pick up the great?

"So, at all times, wipe clean the mind and let no dust alight. If thoughts of desire don't die, then wisdom won't be born. With one thought of desire, you won't obtain true wisdom. You must cut off desire and end love. When you do, great wisdom manifests."

Monk: Master, what does it mean, "Extreme stupidity becomes great wisdom?"

Abbot: "'Extreme stupidity' is this: Did I eat my fill? I don't know. Did I get enough sleep? I don't know. Do I have enough clothes on? I don't know."

Monk: In other words, great stupidity can become great wisdom when one loses all concern for the body and its benefit?

Abbot: "If you can see the body as empty and cut off all selfish desire thoughts, then the original Buddha wisdom will appear."

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