



為下一代請法(一)

—我學佛的心路歷程

Requesting Dharma for the Next Generation (1)

—How I Came to Study Buddhism

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阿彌陀佛！我的名字是尹達偉，法名是親偉。我想大略的自我介紹一下，我來金聖寺已經幾年了，這兒對我來說有一種家的感覺，但是我覺得還不太認識這裏的僧眾和在家居士。主要的原因可能是我的中文不夠好，所以比較難以和大家溝通。因此我就利用這次機會介紹一下自己，以得到這個團體的幫助。

首先，這次的講話緣起於我和雲法師討論關於把佛教帶到西方來，以及法界佛教青年會、基礎禪坐班、法界青年會議等等的話題。我覺得金聖寺可以成爲一個利益世界的起程點。我希望法界佛教青年會的年輕人，以及居士、出家眾，大家同心協力，讓佛法在世界上發揚光大。

我們常常聽到大家說「要把佛法帶到西方來」。對我而言，這目標很吸引人。但是，我想對其他人來說，可能會有些距離感，因爲他們並不強烈地認同自己與西方有關。所以，在準備這個講題的時候，我想到了一個比較概括性的目標：「讓佛教在世界上發揚光大。」讓佛教在世界上發揚光大--不止包括把佛教帶到美國來，也包括把佛教傳給下一代；這樣，每個人都會覺得自己是這個目標的一份子。另外，「把佛教帶到西方來」這個概念，並沒有包含「把佛教帶回亞洲」。雖然我並沒有親身體驗佛教在亞洲的狀況

，但是我覺得很多在亞洲長大的人，都會覺得自己與亞洲有關聯，因此「把佛教帶回亞洲」這個說法會讓他們覺得相應。

Amitofo. My name is David Yin; my Dharma name is Chin Wei. To briefly introduce myself, I've been coming to Gold Sage for a few years now, and feel very much at home here, but I still feel like I do not know the nuns and lay people here that well. Probably the main reason is because my Chinese is not very good yet and so communication is difficult. So this is my chance to introduce myself and gather support from the community here.

First, this presentation began with me speaking to Yun fashi about bringing Buddhism to the West, Dharma Realm Buddhist Youth (DRBY), the roundtable, the Beginning Chan classes, DRBY conference, etc. and I felt Gold Sage could be a starting place that could bring a lot of benefit to the rest of the world. I hoped that everyone, DRBY, lay people, the left home community could all work together as a team and keep the Dharma alive in the world.

I think we often hear people talk about "bringing the Dharma to the West." This vision captures the heart of many people, for instance myself, but for others, I think it might create a sense of distance because they do not identify so strongly with the West. So, while preparing for this presentation, I came up with a more general vision: Keeping the Dharma Alive in the World. Keeping the Dharma alive in the world then entails not only bringing Buddhism to America, but also passing it on to the next generation which I feel everyone feels a part of. In addition, another element of the vision that is not captured in bringing the Dharma to the West is the idea of bringing Buddhism back to Asia. Although I do not have direct experience with Asian Buddhism in Asia, I feel many of the people who grew up in Asia will find a personal connection there, and so the idea of bringing Buddhism back to Asia resonates.



在我印象中，宣公上人的遠見既廣大又周全，雖然我並不能完全理解，但是我知道它超越美國，或亞洲，乃至全世界的界限--這是這個機構所以取名為「法界佛教總會」的理由。

講到這裏，我覺得我應該說說我的背景，讓大家了解為甚麼我這麼想。我並沒有帶著這個想法進佛門，但是這是我成長及改變的一個過程。

從小我總覺得好像要尋找甚麼似的，我很想知道我的人生目的到底是甚麼--我想：「這樣不就讓人生好過得多了？」回顧以前的日記，我發現我常常這樣提問自己；但是直到上高中前，我都沒有真正去尋找答案。上高中後，開始有興趣尋找更深一層的人生意義，這有幾個原因。但是談那些會有些離題。簡單地說，我開始探討幾個宗教，主要是基督教；因為我有很多朋友都是基督徒，所以有很多接觸的管道。此外，由於我的中國文化及家庭背景，我也探討佛教。

我不知道大家對基督教有多少的接觸與認識？但是有一個相當普遍的概念，尤其是在福音派教會裏，提到：「你必須相信耶穌是你的拯救者。」不但如此，還說：「祂是你進入天堂唯一的道路。」雖然我誠懇地嘗試去相信，但是卻沒辦法強迫自己相信這個，因為我覺得「不信者必下地獄」，這道理難以服人。而且，所謂「留在地獄裏」，並不像佛教所說是暫時的，而是永遠的。

我記得當時我也讀著宣公上人及 Ajahn Sumedho（阿姜·蘇美度）的書。在我所讀的關於宗教及心靈的書當中，蘇美度法師的四聖諦這本書引起了我的注意。蘇美度法師強調說：「信並不是佛教的目的；反之，重點是在耐心地修行，以讓我們透視這世界究竟是怎麼一回事。」他也舉出他在泰國時，在 Ajahn Chah（阿姜·查）座下學習的經驗來說明修行的重要性。這些都和我非常相應，我覺得這才是合理的心靈之路。

但是，當時我覺得很迷惑和挫折。我開始覺得很多世間所追尋的東西很浮淺，《麥田捕手》、基督教聖經裏的《傳道書》，以及一些我自己對世界的觀察，更加肯定了我的感覺。但是，同時我感覺非常迷茫，我不知道該朝哪一個方向走？猶如被丟進大海，在波濤洶湧及黑暗中，只看到兩個救生圈，一個是基督教，一個是佛教，我不知

The impression I get is that Shr Fu's vision is so vast and inclusive that I cannot truly comprehend it. But at least I know that it extends past the boundaries of America, or even Asia, or possibly even the entire world—the organization is called Dharma Realm Buddhist Association for a reason.

At this point, I feel like I need to say a little bit about my background so that everyone can understand why I think this way. Actually I did not come to Buddhism with this mindset at all, but it was a process of growth and change within myself.

Since young I always felt like I was looking for something. I wished I knew what my purpose in life was—I thought, “Wouldn't that make life so much easier?” Going back to my old journals, I found that I often posed this question to myself, but I never really actively sought an answer until I got to high school. There were various reasons why my interest in finding a deeper meaning was sparked in high school, but that would lead us off topic. Simply put, I began to research a number of religions, primarily Christianity because many of my friends were Christians and it was so accessible and Buddhism because of my Chinese culture and family background.

I do not know how much exposure to Christianity everyone has had, but there is a very common belief, especially in evangelical Christianity that: “You have to believe that Jesus is your savior.” And not only that, but “Jesus is the only way into heaven.” Although I sincerely tried to believe, I could not force myself to believe this primarily because I felt that it didn't make sense that people who did not believe would be destined for the hells. And the stay in the hells is not temporary like in Buddhism, but rather is forever.

So at that time, I also remember reading books by the Venerable Master and Ajahn Sumedho. Out of all the books I read on religions, spirituality, etc. Ajahn Sumedho's book *The Four Noble Truths* caught my attention. Ajahn Sumedho emphasized that belief was not the ultimate goal in Buddhism. Rather the emphasis was on patient practice, which yields insight into how the world really is. He also illustrated the importance of practice with his own experiences as a Buddhist monk in Thailand studying under Ajahn Chah, which resonated deeply with me. I felt that this really was a spiritual path that made sense.

At this point, however, I felt very confused and frustrated. I already began to feel that much of what the world was seeking was superficial. *Catcher in the Rye*, *Ecclesiastics* in the Christian Bible, and a number of my own observations of the world outside confirmed this feeling. However, along with this came a deep sense of confusion because I did not know where to go from here. I



道應該抓住哪一個？我多麼希望當初只學到其中一個，這樣我就不需要面對這些內心的掙扎。

我有很多基督教的朋友，我也參與他們的同工會。但是，如同我剛說的，他們的概念很多我無法接受。在佛教，我並沒有一群年齡相仿又有興趣探討佛法的朋友，所以我覺得在尋找的路途中是孤單的。我覺得在情感上我被基督教拉去；但是佛教教義合情合理，卻把我吸引到另一邊。

我清清楚楚地記得，有一天晚上我和上帝約誓說：「如果祂能指示我正確的道路，我願以生命來奉獻，不惜任何犧牲。」那正是我「去做或罷休」，充滿激烈情緒的時刻，但是仍然沒有一個令我折伏的答案。我有一些夢說服我做基督徒

，但是並不持久。所以，我繼續爲了應該怎麼做而掙扎著。找尋人生的意義中最根本的問題是「我們死後會怎樣？」我想，如果我找到這個問題的答案，我就知道應該抓住那一個救生圈。以上就是我第一次參加萬佛聖城實法師所帶領的「法界佛教青年會寒假靜修班」時所抱著的思想觀念。

來到聖城，我實在太開心了，因爲我找到其他有興趣探討同樣問題的年輕人。

我現在把事情簡述一下，還記得和Marty（維合文教授）還有其他四、五個年輕人坐在一間房裏。Marty談到這是他的「第二條生命」，然後他詳細的描述他怎麼在馬來西亞發病、去世，及死亡的真實經驗。這個經驗結束於宣公上人把他救回來，上人說服了閻羅王放他回來，因爲Marty還有事情要辦。Marty最後說，這是一個很好的經驗，因爲他一向都是個懷疑主義者，需要親身經歷，才能夠真正相信。我聽了非常震驚，因爲這完全出乎我的預料，當時我看著Marty，覺得他直率而真誠，不是一個編故事的人。所以，我就告訴自己說：「好！我找到答案了，現在是我實現諾言的時候了！」

因此，我抱著「明天就會死」的心理開始修行（就像在寺廟裏晚間所念的「警眾偈」），大家可以猜到，我是太過火了！我以爲我應該實現自己的承諾，也覺得如果我真的對這一條道路有信心，就該真正的去體驗它。所以，我發覺我自己在嘗試

felt like I was thrown in the sea, and amidst the turbulent waves and darkness could only see two lifesavers, one Christianity the other Buddhism, and I did not know which one to grab onto. I actually began to wish I had only studied one of them so that I wouldn't have to deal with this inner conflict.

I had many Christian friends and would join them in their Fellowship gatherings, but as I said before I could not accept many of their beliefs. As for Buddhism, I did not have a peer group who were interested in the same questions I was in terms of investigating the Dharma, so I felt like I was alone in my search. I felt that emotionally I was being pulled into Christianity, but the principles of Buddhism which made more sense to me was pulling me the other way.

One night, I clearly remember making a promise to God that if He could show me the right way I will dedicate my life to it, no matter what sacrifices I had to make. It was one of those do or die moments filled with raw, unbridled emotion, but no convincing answer came. There were some dreams that convinced me to be Christian for a little bit, but they did not last. So, I continued to struggle with what I should do in my life, and the question that I felt encapsulated my search for purpose was: "What will happen to us after we die?" My thought was that if I knew the answer to this question then I would know which lifesaver to grab onto.

This is the mindset I came with to the first DRBY winter retreat at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas led by Rev. Heng Sure. Coming to the City, I was overjoyed to find other youth interested in the same questions I was. Although I'm simplifying things a bit, I remember sitting in a room with Marty with possibly three or four other youth and somehow Marty mentioned that he was on his "second life." He then gave a detailed account of how he got sick and died in Malaysia and his experiences of actually dying. The experience ended with him being brought back by the Venerable Master who went to persuade King Yama to let Marty come back because Marty still had work to do. Marty's last comment was how it was a good experience because he was always a skeptic and needed to experience something to really believe it. I was quite shocked by the story because I did not expect it at all, and when I looked at Marty, I thought he seemed very straightforward and honest, not one to make up things, so I thought to myself, "Well, I have the answer—time to live up to my promise!"

So, I threw myself into cultivation with a kind of "I'm going to die tomorrow" mentality (like the last Exhortation chanted at night in the monastery), and as you can guess, I was way too extreme. I thought I had to be true to the promise I made to



把每一個我所讀、或者聽到的師公上人的開示都用在生活上，我變得很瘦又不健康，因為「吃少一點！睡少一點！」常常在我耳邊迴響，如果我懈怠一些，我就覺得對自己不老實。

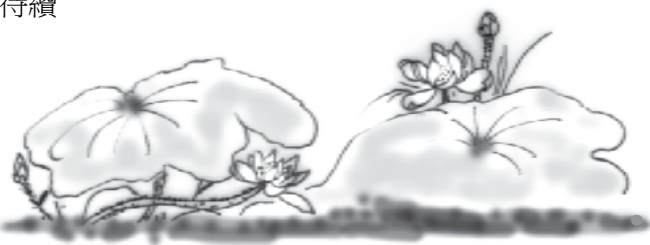
你可以想像得到，我不只傷害自己，也讓週圍的人，尤其是我媽媽，很不開心。另外一個故事可以顯示出我當時是多麼的固執。有一晚，我載媽媽和珮玲去柏克萊聖寺聽實法師講經；我堅持要聽大悲咒。我媽媽當時又累又睏，只想靜靜的休息，但我還是堅持要小聲的播大悲咒，以便一路誦持。我自覺很有道理，因為我聽過很多故事，提到開車時念佛或持咒的重要性。過後珮玲告訴我，我太固執了，應該多隨順我媽媽一些，強迫別人聽大悲咒，絕不是中道。

由過去在家、學校及在聖城的經驗，讓我了解到自己變得太「陰」了。我既愛批判、自以為是，又封閉。看事太過黑白分明，我發現連獨處也相當困難。所以有個機會，我就請教實法師我的所作所為。他的答案是：修行不應該勉強，我應該放鬆，多和朋友及父母親談話。最後，他叫我想一想：我給別人什麼樣的佛教徒形像？這和我很相應，因為當我退一步，客觀的看看自己，我發現自己並沒有作一個好榜樣。法師強調中道

，太過與不及是一樣的。要接受他的勸告很難，但是很意外，當我放下一些，變得沒有那麼認真之後，我發現事情有了好轉。至少我變成一個比較容易相處的人。

另一個結果是：當我眼界開擴一些時，我突然發現上人要把佛法在世界上發揚光大的目標及願力，變得更有意義。我開始看到佛教真的可以為美國及全世界帶來很多利益。雖然我並不肯定該怎麼做，但我要成為這其中的一份子！

◎待續



myself along with the sense that if I really could trust this path I had to experience it for myself. So, I found myself trying to apply everything I read or heard from Shr Fu to my practice and found that I got pretty thin and unhealthy because I often heard, "Eat less! Sleep less!" If I slacked off even a bit, I felt that I was no longer being true to myself.

As you can imagine, I not only hurt myself, but caused a lot of unhappiness for the people around me, especially my mother. Another story illustrates my hardheadedness at the time. One night while driving up to Berkeley for Rev. Heng Sure's Dharma lecture with my mom and Pei Ling, I insisted that we listen to the Great Compassion Mantra in the car. My mother was tired and sleepy and wanted to rest in silence, but I could not bring myself to turn it off, but rather insisted on playing it very softly so that I could recite while driving. I thought I was justified to do so because of all the stories I heard about the importance of reciting while driving. Afterwards, however, Pei Ling told me that I was being too stubborn and should accord with my mother more. Forcing the Great Compassion Mantra on other people was definitely *not* the Middle Way.

Over time my experiences at home, at school, and at the City caused me to realize I was becoming too *yin*. I was too judgmental, self-righteous, and close-minded. Things were pretty much black or white and I found that I was having a difficult time just living with myself. So when I had a chance, I asked Rev. Heng Sure about what I was doing. His answer consisted of telling me that cultivation should not be forced and that I should relax. I should talk to my friends and parents more, and ultimately he asked me to consider what image was I giving others about what Buddhism is? This resonated with me because when I took a step back and really looked at myself objectively, I realized the example I was setting was not very good at all. He emphasized the Middle Way, trying to do too much was the same as doing too little. Taking his advice was hard, but surprisingly, when I let go a bit and became less serious, I found things got better. At least I became a much easier person to live with.

But another effect was that since I opened my eyes a bit, all of a sudden Shr Fu's vision and vows of keeping Buddhism alive in the world made more sense to me. I began to see how much benefit Buddhism really could bring to America and the rest of the world. I found that this was something I wanted to be part of, although I am not sure exactly how yet.

.....◎To be continued