

# ***Building a Foundation: Constructing the Buddha's Palace***

## 打地基 建佛的宮殿

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為什麼我要出家呢？大家也知道上人神通廣大，在我們的家族，師父在十幾二十年前，對各位居士說：「果寶(恒貴師之法名)的家族，四、五十人都皈依我的。」我當時也不知道四、五十人皈依，現在也不止了，所以我的家族是四代都皈依師父的。為什麼會跟隨上人出家呢？並不是師父的神通廣大感動我出家，因為上人的神通廣大在我們家族從小就耳熟能詳。

我們前幾天聽一件公案，師父說他有一個老弟子很乖的，六十幾歲，她的肚子有聲音，她犯了一個餓病，整天要吃東西，到後來她肚子裡有人跟她講話。這位老居士就是我們的伯婆，我祖父的阿嫂，所以上人在我們的家族加持真是不可思議，說也說不盡；但是足以感動我出家的是上人的德行，後來因緣成熟，我就出家。

出家到現在已二十幾年了，時間過得很快，但在心中：「到現在我還是一個小小的沙彌尼，因為真的是法門無量誓願學。」我們有很多東西還沒有學，佛法連一滴水還未嚐到，修行連開步還未開始。現在所做的只是打一個地基，打好地基後才可以建佛的宮殿。如果地基打不好，即使最高的佛殿，再莊嚴的，一下子就會倒下來。這個地基就是我們的心地法門，我們的地基應該將六大宗旨，這六條支柱，這六個地樁打下去。要把這六大宗旨：不爭、不貪、不求、不自私、不自利、不妄語，把這六個樁打下去，才可以有把握建佛的宮殿，否則只是徒勞無功。

當然做這個工作不是那麼簡單，要走長遠的路，一定要從堅固開始，所以道場人多人少並不是問題。像上人剛到美國，只有三個人聽經，師父說：「一個躺在那裡，一個蹺起一條腿，一個不曉得在做什麼。」可是師父仍然如對百萬人天一樣，非常鄭重其事的對他們講經說法。你看現在人也多了很多，當年也有很多人離開了，其實上人未圓寂前已經告訴我們了。

Why did I choose to leave home? We will have to start from some ten-odd to twenty years ago. Back then, it was already well known that Venerable Master Hua knows pretty much everything. At that time, he said to our family, "Within Guo Bao's (Dharma Master Heng Gwei's name) family, there will be forty to fifty people that will become my disciples and take refuge in the Triple Jewel." I didn't know at the time that there would actually be forty to fifty people from my family taking refuge. As of now, the number is even greater than that. In fact, all four generations of my family took refuge with the Venerable Master. Why did I follow the Venerable Master to leave home? It was not because I was moved by his ability to foresee and know everything. We had already heard of his intelligence and wisdom all our lives.

Several days before this, we were told an anecdote. The Venerable Master said he had a very obedient disciple, around sixty years old, whose stomach always grumbled. She was always hungry, and therefore always had to eat. Later on, someone started talking to her from her stomach! This sixty-year-old disciple was our great-aunt, my grandfather's sister-in-law. The Venerable Master's protection over our family has really been incredible. It was the Venerable Master's great deeds and wisdom that touched my soul and motivated me to leave home. Later, when the conditions were ripe, I left the home-life.

I have been a monastic for twenty years already. Time flies, but I always consider myself a young novice, because the number of dharma practices is unlimited and there is still much to learn. We haven't even tasted a drop of the Buddhadharmā. We haven't even taken the first step in our spiritual practice. What we're doing now is building ourselves a solid foundation. It's only after this foundation has been built that we can construct the palace of the Buddha. If the foundation isn't stable or strong enough, any temple we build on top, no matter how elegant or high, would still topple. This foundation is the dharma door of the mind-ground. This foundation should be based on the six great principles, supported by these six posts, and embedded upon these six ideas. We have to drive these six great principles – no fighting, no greed, no seeking, no selfishness, no pursuit of personal advantage, no lying – into the foundation to ensure that the Buddhist temple we build later will stand strong. If not, then our efforts will basically have been wasted.

Of course, this career isn't simple; the road is long. We must be strong from the beginning. Whether there are many people or few at the monastery is not a problem. When Venerable Master first arrived in the States, only three people who came for his Dharma talks. The Master said, "One was lying down, one sat with one of his legs propped up, and one didn't know what he was doing." Regardless, the Master still treated everything the same way; he taught the Dharma in the most respectful of ways, as if before an audience of millions. Now, many people come to listen to the Dharma talks. Back then, many people also left. In fact, this is something that Master already told us before he passed away.