

You Are So Stupid!

你真愚癡啊！

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“You are so stupid,” my teacher Master Hsuan Hua often said to me. Whenever I asked myself why, the same answer would come: “because you are like everyone else.” He said the same words to all of us, with such a sense of compassion and frustration it could not help but move you.

His choice of words, being a Manchurian and a non-native English speaker, may not have been the most eloquent to an outsider who didn't know what he meant, but to those of us who had been with him throughout the years and heard it countless times, we had no doubt what he was talking about. Our view of the world and ourselves and our relationship between the two was so vastly different from his view that his meaning could not escape us. In fact, he didn't really have to say it, we could tell from just being around him. And it didn't matter if you were a college grad or drop out, it was always plain as day that he saw an entirely different world than we did.

But, what world was he seeing that our failure to see was so frustrating to him? The short answer might be that he felt a connection to the world of our everyday experience that we fail to experience. And it is our failure to correctly grasp this relationship that is the cause of us creating many obstacles for ourselves. Whereas, his was a world of complete freedom without attachment to anything, ours is one with many attachments that causes us to seek with our own self interest in mind. He was completely free of any selfish intent and this allowed him to take joy in others gains as well as the joy of bringing happiness to others.

In Buddhist terms, he was a bodhisattva, whereas we were just ordinary self cherishing beings seeking our own advantage, never recognizing that even if all such wishes were fulfilled, they would be inherently terribly self circumscribed and limited, whereas without such a view, the possibility for happiness is limitless.

When my teacher said “stupid” he meant what is usually translated as “ignorance,” and in a Buddhist context it is not our usual kind of ignorance, but an ignorance of a special sort wherein we are fundamentally mistaken about everything. “Ignorance” is the first of the “Three Poisons,” the first in the list of the “Twelve Links of Conditioned Co-production, and one of the Six Root Defilements, amongst other lists. It is why we are not enlightened, why we are “born in a stupor and die in a dream”. ❀

宣公上人墨寶——《大佛頂首楞嚴經》

Calligraphy by the Venerable Master Hua—The Shurangama Sutra

遺云中真皆汝即佛名以搖澄如虛塵諸發光清又名以住不
失何所精是身時言為搖動寂是空質有明入暘如為不名住
本汝現妙妙汝如如塵動名名思寂搖塵空隙^縫升新客住主名
妙等物心明心來是義者塵空惟然動相中中天天霽義者人客

The World Honored One said, “It is because living beings are impeded by guest-dust and affliction that they do not realize bodhi or become arhats. At that time, what caused you who have now realized the holy fruit to become enlightened?” Then Ajnatakaundinya arose and said to the Buddha, “Of the elders now present in the great assembly, only I received the name ‘understanding’ because I was enlightened to the meaning of the word ‘guest-dust’ and realized the fruition. World Honored One, it is like a traveler who stops as a guest at a roadside inn, perhaps for the night or perhaps for a meal. When he has finished lodging there or when the meal is finished, he packs his baggage and sets out again. He does not remain there at leisure. The host himself, however, does not go far away. Considering it this way, the one who

阿難言：「如來所現，徵在而今，我心所在，而推我窮，尋逐，即能推者，為心，佛言：「此非汝難，此非汝難，然，阿難，坐合掌，白其佛，言：「此非我心，當名何等。」佛告阿難：「此是前塵，虛妄，真相，惑汝，真性，由汝，無性，至於，今生，認賊，為子，失汝，元常，故受，輪轉，阿難，白佛：「佛，言：「世尊，我，佛，弟，寵。」

Ananda said, "The Tathagata is asking where the mind is located. Now that I use my mind to search for it thoroughly, I propose that precisely what is able to investigate is my mind." The Buddha said, "Hey! Ananda, that is not your mind." Startled, Ananda, leapt from his seat, stood and put his palms together, and said to the Buddha, "If it's not my mind, what is it?" The Buddha said to Ananda, "It is your perception of false appearances based on external objects which deludes your true nature and has caused you from beginningless time to your present life to recognize a thief as your son, to lose your eternal source, and to undergo the wheel's turning."

「你真愚癡啊！」上人常常這麼對我說。每次我問他為什麼的時候，他總是回答：「因為你和其他人都一樣。」說也奇怪，每次他帶著這種慈悲同時又失望的語調對我們每個人說時，總讓我們感動不已。

由於出生在中國東北，英文不是母語的緣故，因此對一些不了解上人的「圈外人」而言，總覺得他不太會說話，也不夠有說服力。但對我們這些長年在他身邊的弟子來講，並且聽過這句話很多遍了，我們對他所說的毫無疑問。我們對自身和這個世界以及這兩者之間關係的認知，和上人的有極大的差異。以至於我們不會不明白他的意思。事實上，上人不用多說什麼，只要在他身邊我們就可以感受得到。而且不管你的程度如何，大學生或是中輟生，都能確信上人所看的世界和我們所看的截然不同。

但是，他看到的，而我們未能看到那個世界是什麼樣子，以至於如此地令他沮喪呢？簡單地說，師父完全地融入這個世界中，而我們卻做不到。也正因為我們無法正確地掌握與世界的關連性，所以為自己製造了許多的障礙，這點令師父十分地失望。然而，他總是處在一個完全自由的世界裏，他不執著任何事物。反觀我們，有數不清的執著；在我們的內心深處，只願意追求自我利益。由於上人沒有絲毫半點的自私心，所以他會為別人的獲得而高興，同時也歡喜帶給人快樂。

從佛教的觀點看來，他是位菩薩，而我們只不過是一味追求自利的凡夫。我們樂此不疲，從來不會想到即使滿足了希求，那也只不過是畫地自限罷了，實在狹隘得很！如果真能放下這些知見，那麼所獲得的快樂將是無有盡極的。

因此，當上人說「愚癡」的時候，他指的是佛教裏所謂的「無明」，也就是我們對事情認知上的根本錯誤，這和一般世俗所說的「無明」不同。無明是「三毒」之首，也是「十二因緣」中的第一個因緣，又是「六種根本煩惱」之一。它，正是導致我們至今仍沒有開悟，還在醉生夢死的主要原因。

言一切衆生，不生不滅，及阿羅漢，漢皆由客，塵煩惱，誤汝等，因何開悟，今成聖果，時立陳那，起今白佛，我於大眾中，獨得解名，二悟客塵，世尊譬喻，行客投寄，旅亭或宿，宿食事畢，不遑安住，傲裝前途，若實主人，自無思惟，如是思惟。

does not remain is called the guest, and the one who does remain is called the host. The word 'guest', then, means 'one who does not remain.' Again, when the sky clears up, the morning sun rises with all resplendence, and its golden rays stream into a house through a crevice to reveal particles of dust in the air. The dust dances in the rays of light, but the empty space is motionless. Considering it this way, what is clear and still is called space, and what moves is called dust. The word 'dust,' then, means 'that which moves.' Your bodies and your minds all appear within the wonder of the bright, true, essential, wonderful mind. Why do I say that you have lost track of what is fundamentally wonderful in you, the perfect, wonderful bright mind, and that in the midst of your bright and enlightened nature, you mistake the false for the real because of ignorance and delusion?"