



發自內心的修行

True Cultivation Emanating from the Heart

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很多人學習佛法是因為覺得做人很苦，或者生病，或者遇到困難，想找一個解決的方法而接觸宗教。我個人覺得最好的是佛教，因為佛法告訴我們苦是怎麼來的。生老病死苦、求不得苦、愛別離苦、怨憎會苦，這種種的苦都來自我們的欲望、我們的執著。佛法教我們懺悔業障，了解因果，就是《地藏經》和《水懺》裡面講的道理。

晚上聽經目前正在聽《華嚴經》，已經是重複聽的第三遍。人家說《華嚴經》的境界很不可思議，沒有辦法想像，所以剛開始我其實聽不懂。直到聽第三遍，才有點體悟到菩薩對眾生的悲心。《華嚴經》教我們要學習菩薩的慈悲，菩薩都是為眾生而發願修行。因此，如果內心真懺悔，還要發出慈悲心，去思維怎麼樣才能幫助眾生，怎麼樣才能令眾生離苦、令眾生安樂？

我們的一言一行都在因果之中，能這樣盡心盡力為眾生服務、幫助別人，不但可以積德，也是培福。有句話說「萬法皆空，因果不空」，因此我們要善用心念，廣作善事。說好話，做好事，常為他人著想，當你有需要的時候，一定會得到別人的幫助。如果自私自利，做事都只為自己，最後一定是眾叛親離。

這裡有一個關於慈悲的故事，發生在明朝。當時有個人叫馬森，他的爸爸馬俊是懷安人。馬俊的太太到四十多歲好不容易生下一個兒子，長得眉清目秀。因為晚年得子，所以夫婦對這個孩子疼愛有加，如同寶貝一樣地珍惜。兒子四歲時，有一天婢女抱他出

One of the reasons many people want to study the Buddha Dharma and consider being religious is because they suffer from either illness or obstacles and hope to find a solution to end those difficulties. I believe that Buddhism is the best solution, because it reveals to us the source of our sufferings, which is our greed and attachment. Greed and attachment both lead to the sufferings of: birth, old age, sickness, death, not obtaining what you seek, being apart from those you love, and being together with those you hate. Buddhism also teaches us to repent of the karma that we have committed, and understand the principles of cause and effect, which are explained in the *Earth Store Sutra* and *Water Repentance*.

I listen to the *Flower Adornment Sutra* in the evenings and have come to study this sutra for the third time. I was told that the *Flower Adornment Sutra* state is inconceivable, so I couldn't quite understand it in the beginning. It was only recently when I was listening to the Sutra for the third time, that I understood the great compassion that Bodhisattvas have toward all living beings. The *Flower Adornment Sutra* teaches us to learn from the Bodhisattvas' great compassion and their resolution to cultivate for the sake of all sentient beings. Thus, to truly repent, one must not only be sincere, but also bring forth compassion from one's heart to help living beings who are suffering so they can obtain joy and peace.

Even a single word or action is subjected to the principles of cause and effect. Hence, [instead of wasting time creating body and mouth karma], we should whole-heartedly devote ourselves to serving and helping others; by doing this, we can also help ourselves with the accumulated merit and virtue. There is a saying that goes, "All dharmas are empty, but cause and effect never are." In light of this principle, we need to commit ourselves to mindfully practicing good deeds, speaking good words, and putting ourselves in others' shoes. Then when we need help, we will definitely receive aid from others. However, if we are always selfish and only concerned about our own gain, eventually, we won't find any allies when we need them.

去遊玩，一不小心失手，小孩從高處跌落下來，傷到額頭，流血過多不幸死亡。

看到這種情形，馬俊悲痛之餘，想到太太一定會嚴處這位婢女，後果必定不堪設想。於是叫婢女趕緊離開，一切後果由他自己來承擔。回到家之後，馬俊告訴妻子說自己不小心把兒子摔到地上，受傷死了。太太聽了非常地傷心，好幾次昏厥倒在馬俊身上。太太覺得婢女也有責任，於是到處要找她回來鞭打追究，結果卻遍尋不著。

婢女回到家之後，很愧疚自己失手把小孩摔死，又很感恩馬俊慈悲不予追究。跟父母訴說經過之後，父母非常感動，日夜焚香對天禱告，希望上天保佑恩公馬俊能夠早生貴子。

第二年，馬家果然生了一個兒子馬森，左邊額頭上有一個紅色的疤痕。馬森從小就很聰明好學，天性也非常孝順，長大後不但中舉人，還擔任知府。他的政績非常良好，為人善良賢明，平反當時很多的冤獄，因此大家都尊稱他為「明允」。

後來做到戶部尚書，就是替國家檢查稅收收入。他勸諫皇帝力行節儉，有一次皇帝想花六萬兩購買黃金，馬森就告訴皇帝不可以這樣。又有一次皇帝想買珠寶，馬森也是極力諫止皇帝不要浪費。所以馬森是明朝一位很有名的賢官。

因為馬俊的慈悲，能夠寬容原諒婢女的疏忽，因此感召生得非常賢能的兒子。由此可知，因果都是自己決定的。

最近讀上人講解的《論語》，不同於一般的《論語》白話解釋，上人不僅僅講解《論語》，同時也把佛法的道理融合在裡面。其中有一篇是上人對出家人的開示，但有些部分可以給大家作參考。上人說：「人都想做一個好人，每一個眾生都想要成佛。人想做好人，需要時間久遠不改變自己這種志願和行為。」

我在台北法界服務迄今十六年，這麼多年來，一直都在的居士沒有幾個。很多初發心的居士，如果沒有堅持心及往昔種下的福德因緣，一旦碰到事情，很容易就會離開了。因此在修行的路上，能夠長時間不改變自己的志向和行為是不容易的。上人說時時都要諸惡

There is a story about compassion that happened during the Ming Dynasty. There was a man named Sen Ma, whose father's name was Jun Ma, of Huai An origin. Jun's wife gave birth to a boy when she was already in her forties. This boy had bright eyes and handsome features, and was deeply beloved and treasured by the couple, who were already middle-aged. When the boy was four years of age, a maid took him out to play, but allowed him to fall from a high place by accident. The boy had a severe head injury and unfortunately died later from losing too much blood.

When Jun saw this, he was devastated. Then he thought of the severe punishment his wife would impose on the maid, so he asked the maid to leave immediately and told her he would take full responsibility himself. Coming home, Jun told his wife that he missed catching the boy who landed on the ground and died because of his injuries. Jun's wife was devastated and passed out several times in his arms. His wife believed that the maid also shared responsibility, and tried to get her back to receive a whipping, but her efforts were in vain.

When the maid came home, she felt terribly guilty about her negligence, which led to the death of the boy. In the meantime, she was also grateful for Jun's compassion in pardoning her. Her parents were deeply touched by what happened, and prayed day and night, offering incense to Heaven that Jun Ma would soon have a son again.

A year later, Sen Ma was born. He had a red scar on the left side of his forehead. Sen Ma was smart, diligent, and filial to his parents in his childhood. After he grew up, he passed the provincial exam and qualified as Ju Ren (a promoted scholar), and then took office as head of the province. Sen accomplished great achievements in his political career, with a reputation for being virtuous and fair. By refuting many verdicts that had been proven wrong, he was called "bright and impartial."

Later he was promoted to Minister of Finance and was in charge of auditing tax expenditure. He frequently suggested to the Emperor that he be frugal. One time, the Emperor wanted to spend sixty thousand ounces of silver to purchase gold, but Sen disapproved. Another time, when the Emperor wanted to purchase jewelry, Sen tried to persuade the Emperor to abstain from wasting again. Sen Ma thus gained a reputation as being a virtuous official of Ming Dynasty.

Jun Ma's compassion to forgive and pardon the guilty maid resulted in this virtuous son. This highlights the principle that people have influence over their own cause and effect.

Recently I have been studying Venerable Master Hua's lectures on the *Confucian Analects*, which is distinct from other people's commentaries. Venerable Master Hua incorporated Buddhist

不作，眾善奉行，這樣才能做一個好人。可是我們初初想要做好人，做到最後就無惡不做，眾善不行了。因為時間一久，就生出一種懈怠的思想。

好像剛出家的人很有道心，剛學習佛法的人也是很用功修行，但是時間一久，就「學佛一年，佛在眼前；學佛兩年，佛在大殿；學佛三年，佛在西天」，越來越遠了。所以要把心保持下去不容易。我們想要學習佛法，就要時時記得初發心；否則時間一久就會忘了，盡做一些鬼事。

上人說君子上達，但是我們往上跑不動；可是往下呢，很快就到三惡道了。上面是佛、菩薩、聲聞、緣覺的四聖法界，這是不容易的。上人又說善惡兩條道，修的修，造的造。根深的就聽善言，業重的就聽謠言；真的不聽，假的他相信了。我們學佛這麼多年，對這種道理要明白。

上人說《論語》就是教我們怎麼做人，人是需要教導的，特別是成年人，不然很容易任意妄為而做錯事。誦經幫助我們，可是我們一定要了解經意，明白道理，才能改變我們的行為。

佛陀告訴我們，苦都是由我們的心造成的。學習佛法就是要隨時迴光返照，碰到境界的時候要反省，看看自己哪裡做得不對，而不是去找人的不是。不是自己永遠都是對的，別人不聽我的就是不對。如果在這個上面執著，遇到境界時就很容易退心。所以我們要常常迴光返照，在法上用功，以法為樂，這才是真正的修行。❀

principles in his explanation. For example, in one section, he was lecturing to left-home people (monastics), but what he said could be relevant for any person. The Venerable Master stated, “Everyone wants to be a good person and every living being wants to become a Buddha. However, it takes time and perseverance in keeping your vows and conducting yourself as a good person.”

As for myself, after 16 years of service in DRBA's subdivision in Taipei, I have not seen many laypeople stay as long. Without perseverance or merit and virtue accumulated from the past, many of them forget their original resolve and leave the monastery when they encounter challenges. That being said, the road of cultivation is a rocky one that can challenge people's resolution to practice long term. The Venerable Master Hua said that in order to become a good person, we need to always refrain from doing evil and do only virtuous deeds. However, as time passes amount certain time, we tend to do things the opposite way and commit evil deeds instead of good ones, because we retreat from our original resolve.

This also happens with newly left home monastics who have made the resolve to cultivate the Way, or new practitioners who study Buddha Dharma vigorously. Unfortunately, as time passes, they wander off the Buddha path and fall into the tradition of “During the first year of studying, the Buddha is right in front your eyes; after two years of studying, the Buddha is away in Buddha's Hall; after three years, the Buddha is in the Western Land.” It takes effort to keep our resolve alive when studying the Buddhadharma, and to remember our original vows; otherwise, we will forget them and continue to create evil karma.

The Venerable Master Hua once said that a man of noble character looks beyond profit for virtue. But we are not like this, because we retreat from our resolve and fall into three evil realms in no time. It is difficult to ascend to the Four Dharma Realms of the Sages—Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, Hearers, and Those Enlightened by Conditions. The Venerable Master also said that there are only two paths: a good one for cultivators and an evil one for offenders. Those who have deep good roots will believe and accept good advice; whereas those who suffer from heavy karma from the past will choose to believe in rumors. They won't listen to the truth yet they will trust lies. People who have been studying Buddhism for years should have a clear understanding of this principle.

The Venerable Master said that the *Confucian Analects* teaches people how to become a human being. We all need such guidance, especially adults, to avoid creating offenses because of our arrogance. Although reciting sutras is beneficial, we still need to understand the meaning and principles presented in sutras to correct our misconduct.

Shakyamuni Buddha tells us that all suffering originates in the mind. Studying Buddhadharma requires constant introspection when conditions arise. We need to be repentant if we have made mistakes rather than criticizing others' faults. We are not always right about everything, and those who disagree with us are not necessarily wrong. If we are attached to our own arrogance, then we may easily retreat when conditions arise. This is why we need to constantly reflect upon ourselves, and joyfully study the Buddhadharma with diligence. This is what I call true cultivation. ❀