

垂詢式的教誨

Teaching By Asking Questions

朱果翔2018年9月5日講於萬佛聖城大殿

A talk given by John Chu at the Buddha Hall of CTTB on September 5, 2018

今年是師父宣公上人一百歲的聖誕，如來寺的法師要大家輪流上台來做一些報告。今天晚間我還是本著至誠感恩、飲水思源的心，向大家報告二十幾年前，上人的一些簡短開示與交談。上次六月份報告之後，有人建議，希望我能夠進一步說明這些簡短的問答與對話，從這當中得到什麼法益？在日常生活上有什麼影響？

世間法裏頭來講，一個人講的話對別人影響很大，譬如一句話可以救一個國家，叫做「一言而可以興邦」；或者講一句好話，讓別人三年之後都還感覺到很溫暖，叫做「良言一句三冬暖」，在世間上能做到這樣就很好了。

然而，上人的開示或是對我們的指導，每一句話，都是從他的願力與德行自然流露出來。因此，對眾生的影響，在時間上、空間上來說，都是無窮深遠的。特別是上人的十八大願，他不只要救一個國家，而且是生生世世救度法界的每一個眾生。這相當於十方諸佛的廣長舌相，從他們的大誓願海所流出。

現在講第一個簡短的故事，是1993年上人帶領一個訪問團到台灣去。我們整團的人住在台北華懋飯店，那是比丘尼恒礎法師俗家家人的產業。上人到台灣弘法的時候，很多人慕名前來請益，諸山長老、政治、社會各方面的傑出人士預約請見，絡繹不絕，因此訪問團的一些成員就輪流在招待室服務。

這天剛好輪到我在上人旁邊跑腿服務，這個

This year is the 100th anniversary of the Venerable Master's birthday, and the Dharma Masters of Tathagata Monastery asked everyone to take turns to speak. Tonight, I would like to share a few small stories that happened around 20 years ago, while Master Hua was alive. Someone asked me to talk about my conversations with the Venerable Master, and how he taught me through his words.

In Chinese culture, there is a phrase that is used to describe words that influence a person's life. It is called "speech that benefits a nation." Or, when someone speaks kindly to you, and you remember it for many years, then you can say those are "good words that will warm you for three winters." If one does this, it is considered to be a very good thing.

Every word from the Venerable Master's talks is the natural expression of his vows, his merit and virtue. His teachings have ripples that extend throughout time and space. The Master's eighteen vows are not only limited to a nation, but are dedicated to compassionately rescuing each living being in the Dharma Realm. This is similar to the deep and ocean-wide vows of the Buddhas. It is also a great hallmark – the vast and long tongue – of all the Buddhas of the ten directions.

The first story takes place in 1993 in Taipei at a famous hotel. This hotel was owned by Bhikshuni Heng Chu's parents and that was where the DRBA delegation stayed. There were many eminent monks and important people who wanted to see Master Hua. They made appointments to pay their respects to him, asked him questions, and requested his instruction. During that time, the delegation members took turns serving the Venerable Master in his reception room.

One day it was my turn to serve. For a short time, about 5 minutes after the first guest left and before the second guest

插曲就發生在前面一個客人剛離開上人的會客廳，下一位客人還沒有進來，這中間大概有五分鐘的空檔。會客廳裏只有我跟上人，等著下一個客人進來。

上人曾經說過：「整個虛空法界都可以是學校，到處都是可以學習的教材。」於是，上人利用這個機會來教化我。上人看茶几上有一杯水，他自己那一杯已經喝光了，另外這一杯都沒有人喝，所以他跟我說：「你知道怎麼把這杯水倒入另外一個杯子，不要太快，也不要太慢，最重要的是不要把水漏掉，不要把它打翻了。」

上人這麼一問，我就說：「弟子知道怎麼做，我來試試看。」我就不疾不徐，也不太快，也不太慢，手也不要發抖，不要緊張，就把滿滿一杯的水倒入另外一個空杯裏。上人看了點點頭，接著下一個客人就進來了。

這動作很簡單，但是影響我至今。你看現在社會上，老人家老了，有的手發抖，行動不方便，假如要把這杯水倒過去，很多人做不到了；年輕的小孩子，整天蹦蹦跳跳的，心靜不下來，很調皮的，要他做這個動作，也許一次可以，多做幾次很容易就打翻了；年輕人呢，容易好高騖遠，覺得這個太簡單又無聊，若要重複做這個動作，他也不願意做。

這就像我們臨命終的時候，這輩子所有的善業、惡業全部裝起來，收拾書包，準備前往下一世。若是能把八識田裏所有的業種，全部倒入另一個清淨無漏的杯子，就能蓮華化生去了。但是不一定能做得到，假如沒有足夠的資糧、相當的定力，也沒有佛菩薩的接引，我們不容易做到像晚間在佛殿所迴向的：「願我臨終無障礙，阿彌陀佛遠相迎，……一剎那中離五濁，」無法帶著這個杯子裏頭善惡夾雜的業，「屈伸臂頃到蓮池」。

如果希望臨終的分段生死能夠做到有

arrived, I was alone with the Venerable Master in the reception room.

The Master used to say, "Every place in the Dharma Realm is a classroom, and every situation can be a lesson for learning." So he used this occasion to teach me. During his five minutes of rest, the Venerable Master looked at his empty teacup. There was another cup nearby that was still full. He asked me, "Do you know how to pour this cup of water into an empty cup? You can't do it too fast or too slow, and most importantly, don't spill."

I answered, "Your disciple knows how to do it; I will try." So he watched how I poured the water from one cup into another. He nodded his approval and then the next guest entered the room for their turn with the Master.

This exchange, short though it was, has stayed with me. What is the wisdom of pouring water from a cup? When many elders become physically weaker, their hands shake, and they may be unable to hold a cup of water steady enough to pour it out. If you were to ask a child to do it, they may spill the water, because they like to play or lack the patience. They may succeed once but if you ask them to repeat it, they might knock it over the second time. Even if you asked a young adult, they might be too busy and think this task was trivial.

It is somewhat analogous to the moment of our death. At that time, all of the positive and negative karma that we have accumulated over our lifetime which is kept in the eighth consciousness comes with us into our next body and life. If we want to take the seeds in our eighth consciousness and pour them into a clean cup with no outflows, then we can be reborn in the lotus flowers of the pure land. But, it is not so easy if we have not accrued enough favorable conditions and a certain level of samadhi. Then the moment of death will be hard, as described during the evening transference, "When death comes, may we have no obstruction. May Amitabha Buddha come to welcome us... so in an instant we leave the five turbidities and arrive at the lotus pool." It would be difficult to bring this cup, full of good and bad karma, to the lotus pool in the pure land.

If we want to have confidence in our rebirth and have no obstructions or outflows at the moment of our death, then we need



把握、沒有障礙、沒有漏掉，平時在變異生死的時候，念念遷流，就要都攝六根，淨念相繼。所以平時走路要一步一步地走，吃飯也是一口一口地吃，做事情也是一件一件地做，不疾不徐，不貪多，不求快。這就是上人常常講的：「不怕慢，只怕站。」這樣才有可能成就。

我覺得上人很簡短的這個機會教育，給我很多的啟發，至今還很受用。因為個人很笨拙，用語言能夠形容的很有限。其實上人的每一個動作都是無言之教，每一句話都有很深遠的道理，我只能很粗淺的說明這兩、三點。

第二個簡短的故事在1995年左右，上人入涅槃之前，他住在洛杉磯近郊的一個小城市 West Covina。在94、95年，我幾次南下到洛杉磯，包括和方丈律法師、祖炳民教授，還有我的家人，一起去拜見師父。其中一次，上人對我講一句話，沒前沒後的，就問我這一句：「你為什麼也要加入他們的集團呢？」當時一下子不知道上人指的是什麼，也沒有問上人，因為還有人等著請示他更重要的事情。

二十幾年來，我思考著上人這個問題。「集團」雖然是中性的字，但也不是很好的。一般來講，有生意的集團、企業的集團，或者是政黨，一群人為了名聞利養結合在一起的集團。佛教裏頭比較少講集團，也許上人跟我指示：你要遠離集團。

然而，「集團」還可以有不同的解釋。剛剛講的是外面的集團，這也包括跟人保持適當的距離，「遠人要近，近人要遠」，君子之交淡如水，不要加入任何一個人的集團。就像今晚聽的上人開示：「太接近了，你就產生愛。愛，就有恨。」所以這是一層的解釋。

另外一層的解釋，就是我們自性裏頭的集團。妄想是一個集團，



continually practice mindfulness of our six sense faculties so that each moment is a conscious flow of pure awareness. This keeping mindfulness of each arising thought is just like the art of pouring water into a cup. We can take this approach to daily life, to be mindful in thought after thought, and not be too tight or too lax. When walking, we take one solid step at a time. When eating, we take one mouthful at a time, and the same with working – one thing at a time. Just like the Venerable Master often said, “Don’t worry about being slow, worry about not moving.” Then when we approach the end of life, we can successfully fulfill our vow of being reborn in the pure land.

I feel that the Venerable Master taught me a lot with a few words. They are profound to me, to the point that I am still learning from them now. Of course, there are deeper meanings to what the Master said – in fact, each movement of his was a wordless teaching. Because of my ignorance, I can only give a few examples.

The next story happened near Los Angeles in a town called West Covina, where the Master stayed until he entered Nirvana in 1995. I went to Los Angeles a few times with the Abbot Dharma Master Heng Lyu, Dr. John Tsu, and my family. During one of these visits, when we went inside the Master’s room, he spoke to me and asked without warning, “Why did you join their club?” I didn’t know about what “club” Venerable Master was referring to and did not ask him because others had more important questions.

For the last twenty-some years, I have considered why the Venerable Master asked me that question. Perhaps, he had his reasons. In the secular world, “club” is not necessarily a positive word; it usually refers to a circle with shared benefits, and to join such a club would imply that you are seeking some special interest or joining a party. Perhaps the Master meant I should stay away from affiliating myself and not join in any organized groups. That might have been his guidance to me.

I think his words had several levels of meaning. The one I mentioned just now refers to a literal club, which also could mean our relationship with everyone. One should keep a proper distance from others. We should develop a closer relationship with those we have less affinities with while keeping a distance from those whom we have a very close relationship. Friendship, between

執著是另外一個集團。妄想，就是還沒有來的，就先去想；還沒有來的，就是虛妄的，但是我們就期待它未來會怎麼樣、明天會怎麼樣、後天會怎麼樣。

執著，就是已經過去的事情，捨不得、放不下。留戀以前有什麼成就，覺得自己很了不起；或是以前有什麼痛苦的經驗，現在還執著那個痛苦、悲傷、難過。

另外一個大集團，就是貪瞋癡。這些自性裏的集團，是我這輩子，乃至生生世世，都要記得上人的提醒：「你為什麼也要加入他們的集團呢？」

第三個故事發生在聖城。通常下午六點我就離開辦公室，那天似乎有點心電感應，大概上人有事情找我，所以我就多留一下，結果到了六點十幾分，果然上人打電話過來行政辦公室，說：「大陸來的那個王居士想見我，你帶他過來三號房。」

我跟師父報告說：「師父，我一位朋友從台灣來，我們一起過來，可以嗎？」他說：「好，可以。」所以王居士、施居士、和我，三個人就一起到三號房子去。

那位大陸來的訪客因為機會難得，所以聽完上人開示之後，就請求師父給他灌頂。我平常是不會提出請求，那個時候心想我的朋友來，也是機會難得，於是就開口：「師父，我們兩個也請師父給我們加持、灌頂，可以嗎？」

上人很慈悲地給大陸來的王居士摩頂，接著給第二位台北來的施居士摩頂。我本來不為自己要求，但是他們兩個在前面呢，我也就跟著走上前去。於是，上人一面摩我的頭，一面跟我講：「你怎麼也貪這個啊？」

從那次之後，我知道好的也不要貪，不好的也不要貪。六大宗旨可以說是六大法寶，我們應該身體力行，不是在口頭上說說。能夠不爭，我們就遠離輪迴的因；能夠不貪，就遠離三惡道的因；能夠不求，就遠離苦海的因。因此，我們要時時反省自己做到多少，是不是一切都按照這六大宗旨來做？

two virtuous people, is immaculate like water. Don't join anyone's club. As we heard from the Venerable Master's talk tonight, "If you are too close with others, you will easily form an emotional attachment; then from love, hatred easily arises." This is one level of meaning.

Another level of meaning refers to the "clubs" of our own nature. One club is false-thinking; the other is our attachments. Before our conscious mind is aware, our thoughts are already formulated in our minds—these thoughts are "false." All day long we have false thoughts about what could happen today and in the future.

Attachments describe our not being able to let go of the past. Even though a situation has already passed, we still cannot let go of it. Maybe we feel self-satisfied about our achievements, or if we had a traumatic experience, we may dwell in those memories.

The third meaning of the club you should not join could be the three poisons of greed, hatred, and ignorance. Therefore, in life after life, I hope to remember the Master's question of "Why did you join their club?" as a reminder to wake up and not be attached.

The third story happened in CTTB. I usually leave and close the administration office at 6:00 PM. One day, for no particular reason I stayed longer at the office (until around 6:10 PM) and the Master called the office. Since I was there, I picked up. He said: "Upāsaka (layman) Wang just arrived from China, and he wants to see me. Bring him over to Cottage #3." I answered, "Yes, and I have a friend who just came from Taiwan. Can we come together?" He replied, "OK." So Upāsaka Wang, Upāsaka Shih and I went to pay our respects to the Venerable Master.

It was not easy for Upāsaka Wang, who had come all the way from China, to see Shifu. So he took this opportunity to ask the Venerable Master to rub this head and give him blessings (this was a traditional blessing from a teacher). I rarely made this request for myself, however, for the sake of my friend, I also asked, "May my friend and I also have your blessing?"

The Venerable Master nodded, and one by one, he compassionately rubbed our heads and gave us his blessing. I was last, and when he rubbed my head, he smiled and said, "Why are you greedy for this too?"

From then on, I learned that no matter what, there was no need to be greedy. The Six Guiding Principles are truly Dharma jewels. We should practice them rather than simply say them. By not fighting, we can stop participating in the cycle of rebirth; by not being greedy, we can eliminate the cause of the three evil realms; and by not seeking, we can eliminate the cause of the sea of suffering. So we should frequently check with ourselves, "Am I practicing according to the Six Guiding Principles?"