



BODHI FIELD

A Conversation with Dharma Master Heng Lai

(continued)

與恒來法師對話（續）

Given by Dharma Master Heng Lai to DRBU Students via Online Conferencing on July 11, 2020

Chinese Translated by Zhang Wei and Janet Lee

恒來法師講於2020年7月11日法大線上專題

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Question: We practice reciting the Buddha's name, the Shurangama Mantra, and the Great Compassion Mantra daily. Is this sufficient as a foundation for cultivation? And how did the Master promote the Pure Land practice?

Dharma Master Lai: I had a tough time when I first came and lived at Gold Mountain, because I'm really attached to Chan. I love Chan. Why do I love it? Because it's so simple. There's no religion involved. You just sit and meditate. You don't have to bow to anything. You don't have to recite anything. I'm a Westerner. Why would I want to do those other things?

But Shifu told me many times, "Don't be attached to Chan. Don't be attached to Pure Land either. Don't be attached to any of the five schools of Buddhism." When the Buddha was in the world, there were no five schools of Buddhism. There was just the Buddhadharma, which includes all of these. But people have their own attachments: some people like to do Chan, some like to do recitation or the secret school, and others like to study sutras. The schools are just ultimately expedients. Shifu says, "Actually, we should study all five schools. Don't be attached to any particular one of them. They all have merit. We should all learn from them."

In terms of the Chan School, the Master used to say, "I don't lecture on it because it's so simple. But it's because it's so simple that it's the most difficult." Why? Because it's the school that points directly to the mind. And very few of us are at the "astronaut" level, at a level high enough to cultivate it. He said that very few people, fewer than a hundred, can really pull off truly cultivating Chan. But, he also said that doesn't mean that you shouldn't do it. It means that you don't just rely only on Chan, and get attached to only doing Chan.

問題：我們每天都誦持佛名、〈楞嚴咒〉和〈大悲咒〉，這對於修行打基礎來說夠了嗎？上人又是怎樣提倡淨土法門的呢？

恒來法師：最初到金山寺住的時候，我確實有過不少困擾，因為我當時非常的執著修禪。我太喜歡禪了。為什麼？因為禪很簡單，它連一絲的宗教信息也沒有。你就只是在那裡坐著冥想，你也不需要拜佛，也不需要誦念什麼；我可是個西方人，我為啥要做那些事情？

但師父跟我說了很多次，他說：「不要執著禪宗，也不要執著淨土宗。不要執著五宗的任何一宗。」佛住世的時候，佛教可沒有五宗這個說法；只有佛法，而佛法包括了一切法。但每個人都有自己的執著，有的人喜歡坐禪，有的人喜歡念誦或者修習密法，有的人喜歡研習經典，然而這些宗派法門終究只是一個權宜方便。師父說，「事實上，我們應該修習所有的五宗，不要執著任何一個宗；五宗各有所長，我們都要學習。」

那麼關於禪宗呢，師父曾經說，「我不講禪，因為它太簡單了。就因為它簡單，所以也最難。」為什麼呢？因為它是「直指人心」的法門。但同時我們極少數人能達到修行的「宇航員」級別，也就是說那種很高的級別。

就參禪來說，師父說過一百人裡面，只有極少數人能真正透過修禪而修出成就來。

You should practice all the tools. In Chan, you have to sit still for a whole hour, not move, and totally focus a hundred percent on your meditation topic—that's really hard to do. Very few people can do it right. Most people sit, and their minds just wander or they go to sleep. He said that actually the most effective school for Westerners is the Pure Land School, the recitation of the name of Amitabha Buddha or Guanyin Bodhisattva, and all the other Pure Land dharma doors. Because it's something we can all do. And when you're reciting the Buddha's name and bowing at the same time, you keep both your body and mind busy. Reciting the Buddha's name is called active meditation, because using your body and mouth keeps you focused. While you can still wander off out of in a state of samadhi, it is still a little easier to stay focused when practicing the Pure Land Dharma doors. All in all, Shifu always encouraged us to not be attached to any one particular school, but to study them all. He taught them all.

Question: During the Buddha's time, there weren't five schools. Could you please help some of us break our attachments to certain schools? Some Buddhist disciples believe that only by reciting the Buddha's name will they be able to go to the Pure Land, and not by any other Dharma door. Is this so?

Dharma Master Lai: That's what Shifu did not like. He would really give you a tough time if you told him that. He said, "You all should practice all of the schools; don't be so attached." I wasn't just practicing Chan that one time, but a lot. To go back to the story I previously told, I was trying to break through a barrier in my sitting practice when Shifu walked downstairs. He used to walk down and go through the Chan Hall when we had a Chan session. He just walked by everybody and took a look at us to see what was going on. When he came by me, he saw that all my teeth were gritted, as I was trying to enter samadhi. He said, "What are you doing?" He leaned down and said, "What are you doing?" "Shifu, I'm trying to wake up," I replied. To which he replied, "Stupid!"

He asked me, "How are you doing it?" and then basically told me that I can't wake up that way, by forcing myself. He said, "You shouldn't be so attached. Be patient! Don't

但他也說這不表示你就不該去修禪，這只是說你不要只依賴禪，執著禪；你應該修習所有的法門。修禪的時候，你必須在那裡靜坐一整個小時不動，並且百分百的專注在你的參話頭——這是很難做到的，很少很少的人可以真正做得到。絕大多數人坐在那裡，他們的心就到處跑，或者乾脆睡著了。

師父說，事實上，對西方人來說最有效的就是淨土法門，也就是持念阿彌陀佛名號或者觀音菩薩聖號，以及所有的淨土修行法門；因為這是我們所有人都能做得到的。並且當你在念佛和拜佛的同時，你的身體和意識都在忙著；念誦佛名也被稱作動中禪，因為你在動中用你的身體和嘴讓自己保持專注。雖然在禪定三昧中你也能出離你的身體，但修習淨土法門的時候要持續專注還是稍微容易些。總之呢，師父一直都鼓勵我們不要執著任何一宗；五宗都要學，他都教我們。

問題：在佛住世的時候是沒有五宗的。您能否幫助我們如何破除一些執念，好比有的佛弟子相信只有持念佛名才能往生淨土，而其它的法門都不行。

恆來法師：這就是師父不喜歡的一點了。如果你跟他說這個觀念，他會好好說你一頓。他說過，「你們都應該修行所有的五宗；不要那麼執著。」拿我來說，我當時可不是修習了一時的禪，而是修了很久的禪。回到我們剛才說過的話題，曾經有一次我在坐禪，我在拼命的想要突破，就在這時候師父從樓上走下來了。他經常在我們禪七的時候下樓來禪堂，到每個人旁邊看一看，看看我們都怎樣了。那次他走過我身邊，他看到我緊咬牙關，因為我當時在努力想要入定。他說：「你在幹什麼？」他側下身子又說，「做什麼？」我說：「師父，我在努力開悟。」他說：「愚痴！」

他問我：「你要怎麼開悟？」然後就告訴我說，這樣逼迫自己是無法開悟的。他說：「你不要這麼執著，要有忍耐心。」

be so attached to Chan. You should start learning the other dharma doors, learn them all, since all of these help you with your Chan and vice versa.” Also this is like using your recitation beads. So don't get attached to any one Dharma door, just practice all five schools. Shifu said in the future there'll be ten schools and then even more later. It's just people's attachments that manifest the various schools, but ultimately it has nothing to do with the Buddhadharmas; they just bring us back to the “it.” As I said before, Shifu always taught like the Buddha. You can look up the stories of the Buddha in the *Jataka tales*, and learn how the Buddha taught, and you will see that Shifu taught in the same fashion.

Question: How do we not get attached to any of the five schools and yet focus on one for us to make daily progress?

Dharma Master Lai: First of all, you're going to be attached to them anyway. We have grasping minds, so our minds attach to everything. Just be aware of your attachments and that's how you eventually break them. If you find that you are really attached to something, maybe you should just ease up a little. Be honest with yourself. Don't try to hide your motivations, be totally honest with yourself—that's how you start breaking attachments. Of course you're going to have attachments. We all have attachments, and every day we have them. Don't go around saying, “Oh, I don't have any attachments.” You do have attachments; everyone does. Until you can really wake up to your true nature, and become an eighth-stage, you're going to have a lot of attachments. Our dualistic minds grab on to everything, so just be aware that you're on the fast moving train of your own false thinking. With awareness and honesty about your attachments, they will naturally loosen, even if they do not completely dissolve at first—you can start to get some real results this way.

Question: Somehow we need to focus on one thing, right? If we learn all the Dharma doors and don't master any, then what?

Dharma Master Lai: The vow of a Bodhisattva is to

他說不要那麼執著禪。「你應該開始學些其他的法門，什麼都要學，因為所有這些都能幫助你在參禪上進步，反過來也是一樣。」——好像數念珠似的。所以，你不要執著於任何一個特定的法門，要五宗並進。

師父說過在未來會出現十宗，甚至更多。但這些宗都是由於人的分別知見而生起的流派，從根本上說這些和佛法本身都沒有直接關係，但它們最終都是把我們帶回到那一個佛法本處。就像我以前說過的，師父總是像佛陀一樣在教導我們。你可以去查一下那些佛本生故事，看看佛陀是怎麼教化弟子的，你就會發現師父也是用同樣的方式在教化我們。

問題：那我們怎樣能做到既不執著五宗的任何一宗，同時又能專注於修習一個作為日常的定課呢？

恒來法師：首先，你會有執著的。我們的念頭就喜歡執著，所以我們的心就會執著於一切事物。你只是要清楚地覺察到你的執著，這就是你最終能夠破執著的關鍵。如果你發覺你真的很執著某件事情，也許你應該先放鬆一些。要誠實面對自己。不要試圖隱藏你的內心動機，對自己要完全的誠實——這才是你破除執著的條件。

你當然會有執著了，我們都有執著，每天都有。不要炫耀說「啊，我沒有任何執著了」。執著，你有，每個人都有。在你真正開悟回到真如自性，要成為八地菩薩以前，你都會有很多的執著。我們那個二元對立的識心總會抓住一切，所以你要覺察到你自己正坐在一列由妄想所驅使的高速列車上。有了這樣觀照，有了老實面對自己的執著，最終它們就會自然而然的鬆動，哪怕一開始的時候不會完全的破除——用這個方法你就會逐漸開始收到一些實質的效果。

問題：但我們終究要專修一門，對嗎？如果我們每個法門都學，最後沒有一門精通，那怎麼辦？

ultimately learn all doors, but that doesn't mean you have to learn them tomorrow. You can work on this. We're all attached. For instance, scholarly people might really like the teaching school, because such people like to dig into things, read and study texts, which would assist them in breaking their attachments. Yet if you really look honestly at a sutra, it's not an intellectual study. A sutra is about a cultivation. To me, if you look at the way a sutra is written and the way the Buddha spoke it, it's almost like listening to a symphony. As you listen to the chanting of a sutra, you might enter a state that would be as if you're listening to the songs of the Bodhisattva. At least, this is my experience. You start to tune-in to them, and the sutras turn into very beautiful orchestrated pieces of music. To get down to it, don't be attached to any one Dharma door; everybody's going to have a little bit better skill in one Dharma door or another. Some people are really good at sitting in Chan, others at reciting the Buddha's name, or studying the sutras, or are skilled at practicing the secret school. (Many Tibetans focus on the secret school). But again, you need to be honest with yourself. Are you becoming too attached to something? If so, then you should let it go and do another kind of cultivation. You don't have to be embarrassed by it.

Nobody even knows what's going on in your head, unless somebody out there is an Arhat. So why do you care? You need to recognize your attachments. Begin investigating and ask yourself, "Why am I so attached to this? What is making me so attached? Why?" No matter what it is, anytime you get attached to something, it's not good. It will just keep you trapped and turning on the wheel of birth and death. The idea is to become unattached to everything, not attached. ❸

無論什麼法，都沒有超出我們每個人的自性；我們的自性，也是盡虛空、遍法界。所以，你若能把你的
心量放大，你就和《華嚴經》合而為一，所謂「二而不二」。人人都能依《華嚴經》的境界，做為自己的
境界，來收攝為自己的智慧。你看！這有多麼的廣大！所謂「致廣大而盡精微」，「放之則彌六合，卷之
則退藏於密」，真是妙不可言！

——宣公上人法語

None of the Dharma-doors or samadhis goes beyond the self-nature of each one of us. Our self-nature, too, exhausts empty space and the Dharma Realm. Therefore, if you can expand and enlarge the measure of your mind, you will unite with the *Flower Adornment Sutra*, being two and yet not two. If all people can make the states of the *Flower Adornment Sutra* their own state, and receive the *Flower Adornment Sutra's* limitless principles and infinite wisdom as their own, how vast and great that will be! As it is said: Roll it up, it secretly hides away. Let it go, it fills the whole universe. That is ineffably wonderful!" — By Venerable Master Hua

恒來法師：菩薩的誓願中說「法門無量誓願學」，但是這不是說你明天就要學一切法，你可以慢慢學。我們是有執著的，比如學院派的人可能很喜歡教宗，因為他們喜歡深入去鑽研，研讀經典，這也能幫他們破除執著。但如果你真正去認真地看一部經典，你能看到它不是一個有關知識的著作，而是一部關於修行的著作。

對我而言，如果仔細地看經典是怎樣描寫的，以及佛陀是怎樣述說的，這幾乎像是在聽交響樂一樣。當你在傾聽讀誦經文的聲音，你就可能進入像在聆聽菩薩所吟唱的歌聲這種的境界。至少這是我的體驗。你會開始順應它，然後這部經就開始變成一曲非常美妙的管弦樂。

實際做的時候，就是不要執著任何一個法門。每個人都會在某個法門比較拿手一些，例如有的人很能坐禪，有的人念佛很專注，或者擅長研習經典，或者歡喜修習密宗（藏人著重修密宗）。但還是那句話，你要誠實面對自己：你有沒有變得太過執著在一個法門了？如果是的話，那你就應該先放下它，去學習另一種修行方式。你完全不需要因此感到不好意思。

沒人會知道你腦子裡在想什麼，除非那個人是個阿羅漢；所以你何必在意這些？你要做的是找出你的執著，著手去審視並問自己：「我為什麼如此執著這個？是什麼讓我這樣執著？為什麼？」不管它是什麼理由，任何時候只要有執著一個東西，都是不好；它只會把你圈住，並讓你不停地陷入生死輪轉。我們要達到的是無所著，而不是有執著。 ❹