



▲Buddha Shakyamuni (in the middle) is revered as the original teacher of Buddhism.
On the sides are his two close disciples, Ananda (left) and Kasyapa (right).

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Leading a Harmonious Family and a Joyful Life & Living in A Secure and Peaceful World

World peace, security and happiness are the common ideal of human beings from the past to present. In today's world filled with natural and man-made disasters, peace and security has become a particularly deep-felt wish of all.

Since the beginning of the 20th century, our Earth has undergone two world wars; experts and scholars have devoted tremendous human, financial and material resources to peace conferences and discussions. Can conferences and forums actually help to bring peace to the world and bring security and happiness to people? Reading news every day, we are sad to see that conflicts between individuals, families, nations, ethnic groups and religions, and wars have been progressively more severe.

Let us think carefully. Are world peace and security and human's happiness far beyond what we can realize? Many countries expended enormous funds in the development of hi-tech weapons, but were unable to effectively prevent the terrorist attacks. Many countries set the economic development as their central aim, but have created lots of social problems due to the lack of moral education and people's greedy mind. Conflicts have caused many noble people to lose their confidence in world peace.

However, I strongly believe, based on my understanding of sages' teachings, that the world and the universe are originally harmonious and the nature is intrinsically kind! Yet, this original harmony and intrinsic kindness can not be attained by military, political, economic, or even

scientific methods. It is said that "education is essential in building a country and in guiding its people". Only through the four teachings of ethics, moralities, cause-and-effect and wisdom is a country able to enjoy lasting peace and stability. Advancement of moral education is the most efficient and effective way to achieve true results. In order to eradicate all sorts of contradictions, conflicts, terrors, and wars, education and teachings are needed to enlighten people's intrinsic virtues of purity, kindness, compassion, harmony, love and humility.

We learn from the history that all sages in the East and the West were volunteers who engaged in the multicultural education for peace. Prophet Mohammed taught for about 27 years; Buddha Shakyamuni taught for 49 years; Jesus taught for 3 years; Confucius taught for 5 years. All sages' education focuses on the values of compassion, universal love, sincerity, respect, humility and peace, teaching people to abandon selfishness, arrogance, anger, greed, jealousy, and hatred and to respect and love one another and treat each other equally.

Buddha Shakyamuni's greatest contribution to human beings was that he gave up his kingship and wealth and became a role model of 'no competition'. He devoted his whole life to the multicultural education, helping all living beings to break through delusion and achieve awakening, to rid sufferings and attain happiness. The method he used was lecturing. He set the best example for us to learn that "a harmonious world begins in the mind".

Although the teachings of the East and the West differ in the form, they both focus on the moralities and virtues. Moralities and virtues are in accordance with the nature and the intrinsic harmony. The fundamental attribute of the moralities and virtues is "Love", while the root of "Love" is the loving relationship between parents and children. The teachings of how to practise "Love" can be found in the Holy Koran, in *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* in China, in the Ten Good Conduct Sutra in Buddhism, and in other holy scriptures of various religions. The teaching for "Love" should begin from the embryo stage and focus on the childhood. People are taught to live in accordance with the natural principles, to ultimately awaken to the nature of the Greater Universe and to be unified with the Universe as one entity.

The notion of one unified living entity is the theoretical foundation for the harmony and mutual caring between nations, races, factions and religions. My work to unify the nine religions in Singapore is based on this notion. Specifically, there is only one true God in the universe. God is Love. He manifests himself in different religions. Hence, all religions are members of one family. The nine religions in Singapore are indeed like brothers and sisters now. This proves that religions can be unified! The deep and permanent unification of religions must be built upon religious education that encourages mutual respect, mutual learning and collaboration.

I have started a teaching program in my home town, the County of Tangchi, Lujiang in China. I established a Lujiang Centre of Cultural Education using *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* as the teaching materials. We conduct

training of teachers in moral education. Our teachers put moral education into full practice. We also give free lectures to the local villagers so that our teachers can learn from teaching and influence others through self-practice. Within only a half year, the villagers were touched and started to make changes in their mind. Many stories about their kind thoughts, kind words and kind behaviour emerged like the bamboo shoots sprouting in the spring. This program proves that people can be taught to be good!

I only hope to offer my humble opinion to all people of our world. Let us build up our confidence and will. Let us collaborate, hand-in-hand, and promote the education of ethics, virtues, cause-and-effect, wisdom, and science. Let us help all suffering beings to break through delusion and achieve awakening, to rid sufferings and attain happiness. Conflicts shall be resolved, the social security and world peace shall be achieved! Thank you!

Shi Chin Kung AM

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The Thirty-two Aspects of the Buddha's Life

The Buddha's manifestation of how an ordinary being became a Buddha

The Buddha devoted his life to teaching: he taught us to thoroughly realise the truth of life and the universe.

To learn from the Buddha, we must first know who he was and what he had done in his life before we can emulate him.

How did Sakyamuni Buddha awaken? He saw people suffering from birth, aging, illness, death, association with those they dislike, separation from loved ones, unfulfilled desires, and the Five Aggregates. Therefore, he resolutely renounced his throne and wealth, and became a monastic to engage in cultivation. He had only one goal: to end suffering and attain happiness.

There are numerous paintings and images that depict the life of Sakyamuni Buddha. In this book, all the photographs are of the embossment of the thirty-two aspects of the Buddha's life at Yuanheng Temple in Kaoshiung, Taiwan. It was impossible to take a complete picture of the 24th aspect and of the 27th aspect due to their locations, so they are presented only partially.

Please note that all the captions are based on the original descriptions and illustrations at Yuanheng Temple with some modifications and additional explanations.

① Teaching in the Tusita Heaven, Anticipating the Descent to Earth. ② The White Elephant Dream, Maya Felt the Conception of the Buddha. ③ Lumbini Park, the Birth of the Buddha. ④ Astrology Reading, Prophecy of Buddhahood. ⑤ Naming Ceremony, the First Offering to the Field of Blessings. ⑥ Master of Civil and Military Affairs, Champion of All India. ⑦ Wedding of the Prince; Princess Yasodhara with the Prince. ⑧ At the Four

Gates, the Prince Witnessed the Four Miserias. ⑨ Biding Farewell to His Son and Wife; Prince Siddhartha Leaving the Palace. ⑩ Riding on a Starry Night in Search of the Truth. ⑪ Cutting Off His Hair, Prince Siddhartha Renounced the Secular World and Put on the Robe of a Mendicant. ⑫ With Determination, the Prince Lived Six Years in Austerity. ⑬ The Prince Wiping Off the Dust and Washing Away the Dirt, the Shepherdess Offering Rice Milk. ⑭ Misunderstanding the Prince, the Five Attendants Left Him. ⑮ Vowing to Attain Buddhahood, the Prince Conquered the Army of Demons. ⑯ Looking up at the Bright Stars, He Became the Fully Enlightened One. ⑰ The Rich Made Offerings, the Heavenly King Offered Alms Bowl. ⑱ Brahmadeva Invited Buddha to Preach, thus the Door of Nourishing Dews Opened. ⑲ At the First Turn of the Dharma Wheel, the Five Former Attendants were Converted. ⑳ Yasas was Converted, Order of Monks Established. ㉑ Leading the Three Kasyapa Brothers to the Right Awakening. ㉒ Preaching at Rajagha, Teaching at Jetavana Park. ㉓ Back to Kapilavastu and Redeemed his Cousin, Nanda. ㉔ Ananda and Others Joined the Sangha. ㉕ Devadatta Tried to Harm the Buddha and Destroy Buddhism. ㉖ Buddha Ordained his Aunt, the Beginning of Bikhunnis. ㉗ Death of King Suddhodana, Buddha Spoke at the Jhapita Ritual. ㉘ Preaching at the Trayatrimsha Heaven, Repaying his Mother Gratitude. ㉙ Descending to Earth, Welcomed by his Disciples. ㉚ Angulimalya Saved by the Buddha. ㉛ At the Twin Sala Trees at Salavana, the Buddha Entered Mahaparinirvana. ㉜ Distributing the Sarira, Human and Celestial Realms Fought to Obtain the Sarira.



① Teaching in the Tusita Heaven, Anticipating the Descent to Earth.

Upon the completion of his cultivation, Vessantara Bodhisattva resides in the inner court of Tusita Heaven, teaching celestial beings and awaiting the five conditions of sentient beings, time, place, country, and parents to come into existence. When they arise, he could be reborn on Earth to complete the path to Buddhahood.



② The White Elephant Dream, Maya Felt the Conception of the Buddha.

As the compassionate King Suddhodana worried about being childless, Queen Maya dreamed of a white elephant presenting propitious signs, and mountains of gold, silver, and various colored lotus flowers covering the earth. With this, a child was conceived.



③ Lumbini Park, the Birth of the Buddha.

On April 8, 543 B.C, Queen Maya took leave from the king to await labor at her mother's house. While resting at Lumbini Park she gave birth to the prince. Helping her to deliver the child were the four celestial emissaries from the Great Brahmaloкас Heaven. Rays of light and beautiful music adorned the earth and hundreds of flowers blossomed all at once. Immediately upon his birth, the prince stood up and took seven steps. As his feet touched the earth, lotuses sprang up. Raising his hand he said: "Worlds above, worlds below, I am the Noble One."



04 Astrology Reading, Prophecy of Buddhahood.

Asita, the celestial astrologer, foretold the fate of the prince as he praised him, "I will not worship the Bramalokas Heaven but I will worship this child." He prophesized that the prince, who had displayed sufficient signs, would become a Buddha, the one who will save all beings and become the noblest holy person.



05 Naming Ceremony, the First Offering to the Field of Blessings.

On the fifth day after the prince's birth, King Siddhodana invited authoritative Brahmin scholars to name the prince. The prince sat up unperturbed and everyone bowed to him. Due to all the auspicious signs at birth, he was named "Siddhartha," which means "he who has achieved his goals."



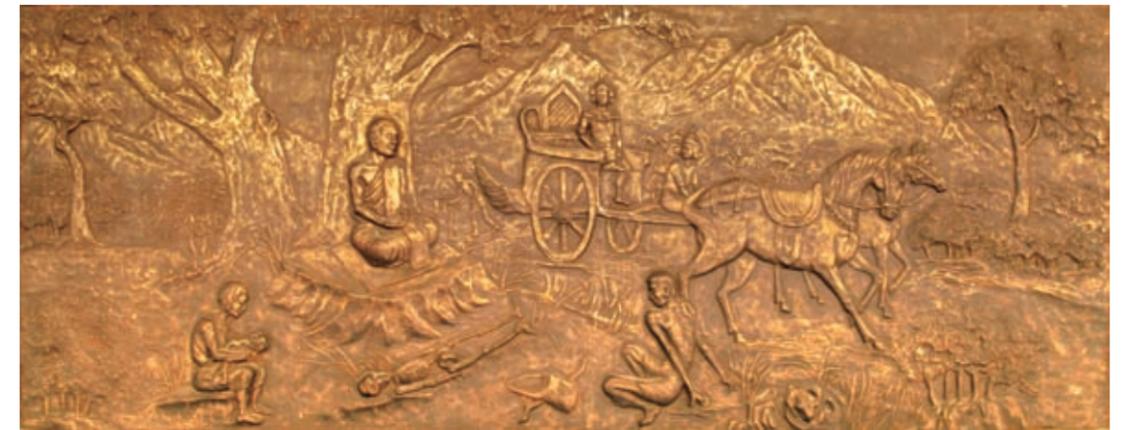
06 Master of Civil and Military Affairs, Champion of All India.

Seven days after the prince was born, Queen Maya passed away and ascended to the celestial realm. The prince's aunt, Mahaprajapata, nursed him. The prince grew to be intelligent and skillful in both civil and military affairs. None of the youths in India could match his physical or intellectual achievements.



07 Wedding of the Prince; Princess Yasodhara with the Prince.

The prince often thought about the injustice of the caste system. King Siddhodana worried that Asita's prophecy might come true and so he arranged a wedding for the prince even though the Prince was only seventeen years old. The king hoped that the beautiful and gentle Princess Yasodhara would help the prince forget about his yearning to leave home and become a wandering mendicant.



08 At the Four Gates, the Prince Witnessed the Four Miseries.

The pleasure of the palace could not bewitch the prince. He asked permission from his father to tour the four famous gates and he sadly discovered the four miseries of living, old age, sickness, and death. He deeply felt the approaching of impermanence and admired the serenity of the recluse. The prince's determination to leave home was reinforced.



09 Biding Farewell to His Son and Wife; Prince Siddhartha Leaving the Palace.

The Prince reflected on the reality of sorrow and joy, union and separation; birth, old age, death, and suffering. He wanted to seek a way to liberate oneself from sufferings. He made up his mind, and after lingering a few moments, left his wife and son to pursue his ideal.



10 Riding on a Starry Night in Search of the Truth.

On a starry night, the prince mounted Kanthaka, his white horse, while Chandaka, his groom, held on to its tail. They left the palace late at night. The men were as luminous as the bright moon and the steed as white as the white clouds. Together they galloped deep into the hills and wilderness to seek the way that will liberate humans from pain and suffering, and uncover the truth of life.



11 Cutting Off His Hair, Prince Siddhartha Renounced the Secular World and Put on the Robe of a Mendicant.

Unmoved by Chandaka's persuasion, the prince cut off his hair and put on a mendicant's robe. He gave his royal attire to Chandaka and left gracefully. His horse, Kanthaka, neighed and cried while Chandaka could do nothing but tearfully watch the departure of the prince.



12 With Determination, the Prince Lived Six Years in Austerity.

The determined prince set out to seek the truth but initially encountered disappointment. He diverted to follow the ascetics and for the next six years underwent severe deprivations while meditating in the Uruvilva Forest. The king was very sad, as he could not convince the prince to come back to the palace. He ordered five attendants to accompany the prince. The prince lived on one sesame seed and one grain of wheat a day until the shine from his face withered away and his body was nothing but skin and bones. But despite all this, his will to seek the truth did not falter.



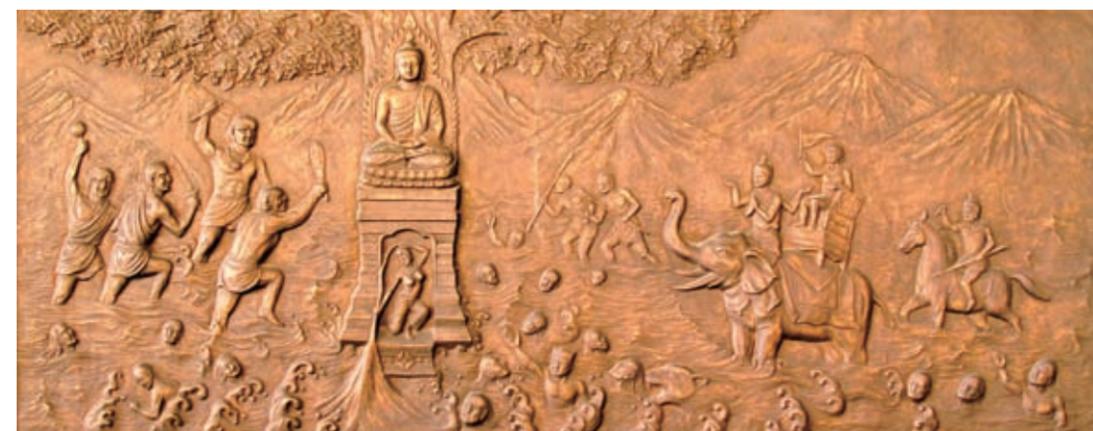
13 The Prince Wiping Off the Dust and Washing Away the Dirt, the Shepherdess Offering Rice Milk.

After six years of painful cultivation, the prince still had not found the truth. He realized that body and mind are one, and only when the mind is pure will liberation become possible. He arose from where he had been sitting and walked into the Nairanjana River. He washed away all the dirt on his body and finally fell because he was too frail. The shepherdess Sujata and her slave girl Punna saw this and offered rice milk to the prince. He accepted the milk and upon drinking some of it found his strength return. He continued to seek the truth.



14 Misunderstanding the Prince, the Five Attendants Left Him.

Ajnata Kauadinya, Asvajit, Bhadraka, Dasabala-Kasyapa and Mahanama-Kulika, the five attendants who had accompanied the prince for six years of austerities because they respected the Prince's noble ideal saw him accepting the rice milk from the shepherdess. Disappointed at seeing this and thinking that the prince had abandoned his ideals, they left him. The prince made a vow that when he became a Buddha he would teach the five attendants first.



15 Vowing to Attain Buddhahood, the Prince Conquered the Army of Demons.

The prince, sitting on the Diamond Throne under the Bodhi tree at Bodh Gaya, vowed, "If I do not attain complete enlightenment, I will not leave this seat." While the celestial beings rejoiced, the demons threatened and seduced the prince but to no avail.



16 Looking up at the Bright Stars, He Became the Fully Enlightened One.

Just before dawn on December 8, 513 B.C., Prince Siddhartha, seated under the Bodhi tree, looked up at the bright stars and realized the profound meanings of dependant origination and the middle way, and that all beings innately possessed the wisdom of the Tathagata but lost it due to deluded thinking and attachments. After exhaustive pondering and numerous painstaking experiences, the prince attained the great realization. Thus, all beings shall receive salvation as the Prince became the noblest Buddha.



17 The Rich Made Offerings, the Heavenly King Offered Alms Bowl.

After the path to enlightenment was completed, Buddha sat alone under the Bodhi tree for forty-nine days, rejoicing at finding the way to liberation from suffering. Two wealthy merchants passed by and so impressed by the sublimities of the Buddha that they offered the Buddha honey milk. The Four Heavenly Kings took an alms bowl from the dragon's palace and turned one into four, and used them to hold offerings for Buddha. When the offering was over, the four bowls turned into one again and became the alms bowl of Buddha in which offerings by human and heaven realms would be placed.



18 Brahmadeva Invited Buddha to Preach, thus the Door of Nourishing Dew's Opened.

The Buddha saw that sentient beings were stubborn and foolish, they will hardly trust the truth, and so he pondered about entering nirvana as a way to prevent them from blaspheming the Dharma. However, Brahmadeva appeared and invited the Buddha to preach the Dharma to nourish the field of sentient beings. Buddha accepted the invitation and thus, began the five period teachings of Avatamsaka, Agamas, Vaipulya, Prajna, and the Lotus Nirvana.



19 At the First Turn of the Dharma Wheel, the Five Former Attendants were Converted.

In order to fulfill his promise, the Buddha set out to the Deer Park at Sarnath to convert his five former attendants, among them was Ajnata-Kaundinya and the rest. When they saw the Buddha from a distance, they concurred to ignore the Buddha. As the Buddha approached, they could not help but be moved by the Buddha's sublimities. Together they knelt down and listened to Buddha's teaching on the Four Noble Truths, that "of pain, of coming together, of extinguishing of pain, and of the way to such extinction." Thus began the first turning of the Dharma wheel, and the five attendants attained arhatship and became known as the five bhiksus. This marked the establishment of the Triple Gems.



20 Yasas was Converted, Order of Monks Established.

Buddha ordained Yasas and his relatives, fifty people in total, to form the first regular order of monks who would follow Buddha as he moved around to teach. Yasas's mother took refuge with the Buddha and became the first upasika (Buddhist lay-woman) in Buddhist history.



21 Leading the Three Kasyapa Brothers to the Right Awakening.

Uruvilva Kasyapa, Nadi Kasyapa and Kaya Kasyapah had one thousand followers who worshipped the Hindu fire god, Agni. Buddha went into the fire serpent grotto and conquered the fiery serpent. Uruvilva Kasyapa and his followers were in awe. They listened to Buddha's sermon and let go of the three poisonous fire of greed, anger and delusion. The other two brothers were later converted and took refuge in the Buddha. From then on, one thousand followers became the disciples of Buddha.



22 Preaching at Rajagha, Teaching at Jetavana Park.

After listening to the Buddha's gatha, Sariputra and Maudgalyayana instantly awakened and led 200 students to follow the Buddha, followed by the three Kasyapas who led more than 1250 students to follow Buddha in his journey. When they arrived at the Rajagha city, King of Bimbisara offered the Venuvana-vihara to the Buddha. The northern state of Sravasti also yearned to hear the Dharma, and by the sincerity and enormous wealth of the elder Anathapindika, he impressed Prince Jeta to sell him a forest glade and erected monasteries in the named Jetavana park for the order of monks to stay, and thus began the propagation of Dharma in northern India.



23 Back to Kapilavastu and Redeemed his Cousin, Nanda.

King Suddhodana invited the Buddha to go back to Kapilavastu when Nanda, son of Buddha's maternal aunt, was about to be crowned and married. Buddha consoled his father and convinced Nanda to subdue his sensual desires to become a monk. Nanda later became one of the ten chief disciples of Buddha most famous for his ability to control his senses.



24 Ananda and Others Joined the Sangha.

Not long after Buddha's arrival at Kapilavastu, his cousins Ananda; Aniruddha; Mahanaman; Devadatta and others joined the Sangha (order of monks), while Buddha's son, Rahula, was ordained by Sariputra; and all had become great monks in due time. Rahula became the chief of esoteric practice, and Ananda became the chief among Buddha's hearers, who helped in the compilation of the Buddhist canon, thereby allowing the Dharma to remain in this world.



25 Devadatta Tried to Harm the Buddha and Destroy Buddhism.

Devadatta, the one who dreamt about betraying the Buddha and destroying Buddha and his sangha, deeply repented his deeds just before his death. He fell into hell as a demonstration of karma but in actual fact he was a constructive adversary of Buddha, who had vowed to help Buddha complete his path by going against the Buddha, life after life, to reinforce Buddha's determination to achieve enlightenment. Hence the Buddha considered him a good friend, and thus spoke of the Devadatta Chapter during the Lotus Sutra Assembly.



26 Buddha Ordained his Aunt, the Beginning of Bikkunnis.

The aunt of Buddha, Prajapati, and his wife, Yasodhara, led five hundred court ladies, approached the Buddha and asked to join the Sangha. Three times the Buddha refused. Ananda personally begged the Buddha for approval and Buddha drawn up the Eight Commands (12) for the ladies to follow, thereby permitted the establishment of the order of Bikkunnis.



27 Death of King Suddhodana, Buddha Spoke at the Jhapita Ritual.

King Suddhodana was old and ill. Buddha went back to Kapilavastu to wait on his father and spoke to his father about the Dharma. King Suddhodana immediately attained arhatship and passed away peacefully. Buddha gave away treasures and material goods, attended his father's funeral and spoke at the Jhapita (cremation) thus fulfilling his role as a son.



28 Preaching at the Trayatrimsha Heaven, Repaying his Mother's Gratitude.

Indebted to his mother's kindness, the Buddha ascended the Trayatrimsha Heaven and preached the Ksitigarbha Sutra (the Earth Store Sutra) to his mother. The talk also convinced King Indra, ruler of the Trayatrimsha Heaven, to take refuge in the Buddha, and he vowed to uphold and protect the Triple Gems.



29 Descending to Earth, Welcomed by his Disciples.

When the Buddha had fulfilled his filial duty toward his mother, he descended from the Trayatrimsha Heaven, escorted by Lord of Mahabrahma, who invited the Buddha to preach. The lay and monastic followers of the Buddha raced to become the first to welcome the Buddha. Bikhunni Uppalavanna used her supernatural power and appeared first to welcome the Buddha. Subhuti, on the other hand, sat still in a cave, welcoming the Buddha in the deep meditative state of Samadhi. The Buddha showed his disciples, the physical body of Subhuti, meeting the Dharma-body of the Buddha. Thus, he was the first to welcome the Buddha.



30 Angulimalya Saved by the Buddha.

Angulimalya in his quest for truth, believed in the practice of the fanatic Sivaitic sect, that if one killed one hundred people the truth will come forth. The one hundredth person he would kill was his mother. Fortunately the Buddha used his inspiring virtue and convinced Angulimalya to lay down his sword and took refuge with the Triple Gems.



釋迦牟尼應化事蹟

充滿仇恨與憤怒的苦惱世界是地獄
貪婪慾望與瘋狂的痛苦世界是餓鬼
忘恩負義寡廉鮮恥者的世界是畜生



佛陀為化解這三個世界而出生人間



The Events in the Life of Buddha Sakyamurni

An agonizing world filled with hatred and rage is a world of Hell.
A painful world filled with greed, desires and madness is a world of Hungry Ghosts.
A world of ungrateful, dishonorable, corrupt and shameless people is a world of Animals.
The Buddha was born to bring reconciliations and resolutions to these Three Worlds.



31 At the Twin Sala Trees at Salavana, the Buddha Entered Mahaparinirvana.

It was time for the Buddha to leave this world. Under the twin sala trees at Salavana, Buddha converted his last disciple, Subhadra. He briefly talked to his disciples about the essence of the Dharma. He admonished his disciples to learn from abiding in the precepts. At mid-night, on February 15, 364 B.C., the Buddha entered into nirvana, at the age of 80.



32 Distributing the Sarira, Human and Celestial Realms Fought to Obtain the Sarira.

The sarira that appeared after Buddha's Jhapita were divided equally among celestial, human and palaces of the dragon kings. In the human realm, eight kings were about to wage battles with one another in order to possess Buddha's sarira. After several negotiations, the eight kings agreed to divide the sarira equally among them. They erected stupas to house the sarira and the unusual and auspicious sarira remained until today.

Discover the Buddhist Contribution to Humanity

Celebrating the 2550th Birth Anniversary of the Buddha Learning from Buddha Sakyamuni: Reconciling Conflict and Promoting Social Stability and World Peace Through Teaching

By Shi Chin Kung AM

October 7, 2006, General Conference Hall, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris

Respected delegates, leaders, guests, venerable masters from various countries, ladies and gentlemen:

“Infinitely profound and wondrous is the Dharma, which is extremely difficult to encounter in a myriad of eons. Today I get to see, hear, receive, and practice it; I wish to perceive the unfathomable meaning from the Thus Come One.” [Opening verse to the sutras]

On this rare and wonderful occasion, the delegates from 191 countries around the world and I gather together to celebrate the 2550th birthday of the Buddha and to explore and learn from Buddhist contributions to humanity. Buddhist contributions to humanity refer to the Buddha’s devoting the rest of his life after his enlightenment to teaching all beings how to eliminate delusion and attain enlightenment, and to end suffering and attain happiness. He did this by lecturing on the Dharma at more than 300 assemblies for forty-nine years.

I have studied Buddhism for fifty-five years and have taught it for forty-eight years. Today, I would like to offer my humble opinions to everybody. The topic is “Celebrating Vesak.

Learning from Buddha Sakyamuni: Reconciling Conflict and Promoting Social Stability and World Peace Through Teaching.” Your comments are most respectfully welcome.

Desire for Selfish Gain Is the Origin of All Conflicts

In the past few years, after the tragedy of September 11th, 2001, the Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Queensland, Australia, invited me to participate in a symposium at the university attended by professors from the centre. From the centre’s report, I learned that eight universities around the world have such centers for peace.

The Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies was established eight years ago and has made considerable contributions to research on resolving conflict and promoting peace. After the September 11th tragedy, however, those at the centre underwent deep soul-searching and realized that the usual methods used in the past such as suppression, retaliation, cold war, and hot war, and so on, could not resolve conflict. They wondered about the feasibility of using only peaceful means to reconcile conflict and promote peace and stability. Thus, the

chancellor of the university invited me to take part in this symposium.

After I listened to the centre’s report on their research of the past few years, the chairman of the symposium asked me to make some recommendations. From the report, I realized that attempting to reconcile conflict is like a physician trying to cure an illness: it is essential to determine the cause of the illness to effectively cure the illness. Where is the root cause of conflict?

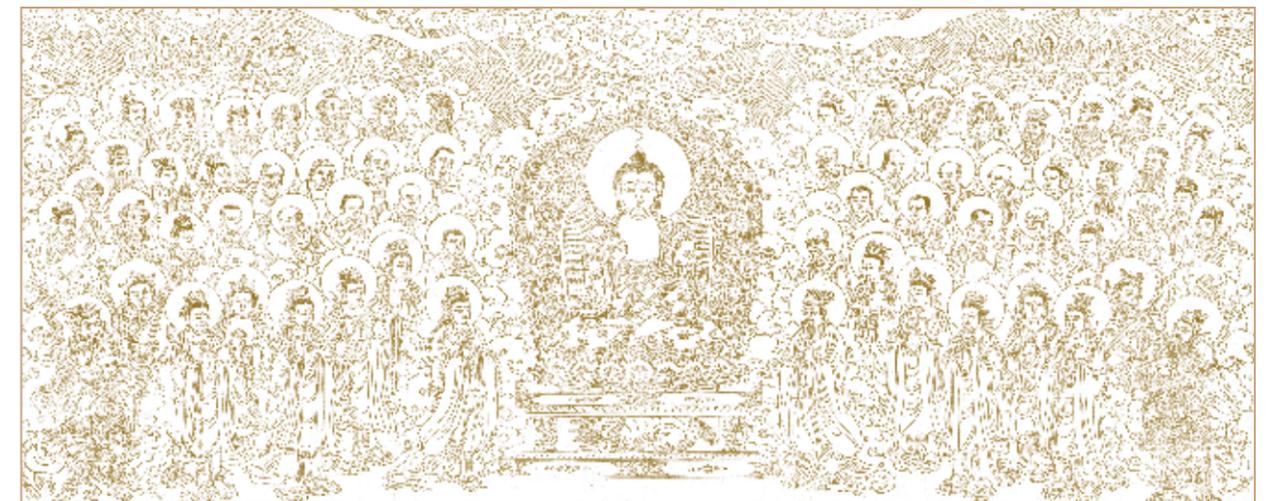
I proposed that the root cause lay in the family. A high divorce rate is a common social phenomenon in today’s world. This phenomenon denotes conflict between husband and wife. Within the family, there is also conflict between parents and children, and among siblings. In China, there are three generations of family members living together. In this kind of family, there is conflict between mothers- and daughters-in-law. Various family problems are all causes of conflict. When the family members leave home and interact with others, conflict will naturally occur.

Actually, the root cause of all conflicts does not lie in the family. Where is the real root cause of conflict? It lies in oneself. The Buddha said

“Delusion is the root cause of suffering, while enlightenment is the source of happiness.” The conflict between one’s delusion from one’s habits and the awakened state of one’s true nature is really the root cause. Confucianism also holds that there is conflict between one’s nature and one’s acquired habits.

Why does conflict arise? Because one’s thoughts, speech, and behavior do not accord with the innate virtuousness of one’s nature. When one’s thoughts and behavior do not accord with one’s nature, conflict will arise. Why can’t one’s thoughts and behavior accord with one’s nature? If we look carefully, we will find that the origin of conflict is greed. Therefore, in the teaching of Buddha Sakyamuni, greed, anger, and ignorance are considered the root causes of conflict and are called the Three Poisons. The most fundamental among the Three Poisons is greed—one’s greed for any form of selfish gain.

In today’s society, is there anyone who does not seek selfish gain? Mencius lived in the Warring States Period (372-289 BCE). When he had an audience with King Lianghui, the first thing the king said to him was, “Old man, you came to our state from afar. I think you must have recommendations that will yield benefit to my state.” Mencius replied, “Your Majesty, why



▲Buddhism is a virtuous teaching directed by the Buddha towards all sentient beings.

do you speak of beneficial gain? What I have for you is benevolence and justice, and that is all.” The meaning of Mencius’ words is very profound. People compete for and are greedy for selfish gain. Therefore, desire for selfish gain is really the origin of all conflicts.

To reconcile conflict, it is imperative to decrease and eventually let go of the desire for all selfish gain. The opposite of selfish gain is benevolence and justice, which is compassion (cibei) as taught in Buddhism. Benevolence is “ci”—helping all beings attain happiness and sacrificing oneself for others. Justice refers to helping all beings end suffering. It is equivalent to “bei”. Therefore, Buddhism advocates “Compassion is the essence, and expediency is the means,” while Confucianism teaches benevolence and justice. Although the words used are different, they convey the same meaning. Mencius’ method of solving a problem is exactly the same as that of the Buddha: they both start from the root causes.

From this, we realize that to resolve conflict and promote social stability and world peace, we have to stop competing for recognition and its gain, and actively promote the teaching

of benevolence, justice, and compassion, a teaching that will help all beings attain enlightenment. This teaching is the same as the teaching of love taught in religion: God loves people. Through careful observation, we will really appreciate that all the great sages in every country throughout time and the founders of the major religions, who were all sages, had completely renounced selfish gain and greed, and had a pure mind. Therefore, they practiced what they taught and were able to teach others to practice. They exerted far-reaching influence during their times and on future generations.

Education Can Help Reconcile All Conflicts

Love is a virtue innate in our true nature. When we are loving, benevolent, just, and compassionate, we accord with our innate virtues. To accord with our innate virtues will bring good consequences. Think about this carefully. One who accords with one’s innate virtues will surely love others and treat them benevolently, justly, and compassionately. How could such a person harm other people? On the contrary, competing for selfish gain will certainly lead to behavior that benefits

oneself at the expense of others. If everyone has such a mentality, conflict among people will naturally arise. Therefore, suppression by force and retaliation cannot truly reconcile conflict or promote social stability and world peace. Neither can conferences.

What method can achieve reconciling conflict and promoting social stability and world peace? Sages of our world and Buddha Sakyamuni, all reached this goal through teaching. Confucius taught. Buddha Sakyamuni also taught most of his life. According to the sutras, he lectured on the Dharma at more than 300 assemblies. In other words, he held more than 300 courses in his entire life. As the students were different in each course, the objectives, methods, and course duration were also different. Long sutras, such as the Mahaprajnaparamita Sutra (Wisdom Sutra), are rich in content and are divided into many medium and small sections. They required several years of teaching.

Another example is the Avatamsaka Sutra. The Chinese version we have today comprises thirty-nine chapters, each of which is a big section that further comprises smaller sections. It also took a long time to teach it. This is just like running a school. The learning period of some of the students lasted four years, five, six, or even ten years. For other students, their learning period lasted three days, five days, one week, or one month. There were also many instances in which the teaching of the smallest section lasted two to three hours in a day, which occurred when the Buddha directed his answers to particular students.

During his lifetime, Buddha Sakyamuni held more than 300 courses teaching big sections. His teaching was very rich in content. He began teaching at the age of thirty and passed away at seventy-nine. He spent forty-nine years teaching without interruption. We know that

Confucius taught for only five years, and Jesus taught for three years before he was killed. Mohammad taught for twenty-seven years. Among the ancient and contemporary sages of all ethnic groups, Buddha Sakyamuni indeed was the one who taught for the longest period of time, and the content of his teaching was the richest. Therefore, the results of his teaching are outstanding. His life provides a good example for us. Only through education can we really reconcile all conflicts that are complicated and complex.

After I attended the symposium at the Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, the university invited me to become an honorary professor at the centre and encouraged me to attend, on behalf of the university and even Australia, international peace conferences. This is how I began participating in international peace conferences, and I have participated in eight so far. This peace conference that allows me to meet with you today is the ninth one. Of the previous eight conferences, five were hosted by UNESCO. After participating in so many conferences, I deeply feel that it is really hard to solve problems through conferences.

Looking back at the 5,000 years of history, we see that China never launched a war against its neighbors or occupied one inch of their land. There were changes in regimes and dynasties, but those were events within the country. China did not take the initiative in invading other countries. Therefore, many experts and scholars in the world agree that the Chinese are a peace-loving people.

Six hundred years ago, Zheng He led several fleets to explore overseas. They visited many countries, but wherever they went they did not colonize the land. Instead, they whole-heartedly helped the local people develop agriculture, handicrafts, and culture. That is the reason why



Zheng He was held in high esteem by the local people and called Eunuch Sanbao. Today in Southeast Asia, there are still many places that have Zheng He temples, and many people still visit the temples and pay respect to him. This is a clear example. At that time, China was the most powerful country in the world, and the fleets led by Zheng He were the most powerful ones in the world. Why then didn't they establish colonies? Why didn't China have the thought of expanding its territory? What is the reason? Frankly, this is because of the teaching of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism.

The Chinese Educational Ideas Are Developed from Love

Since ancient times, the Chinese way of thinking has been to accord with one's nature and innate virtues. The Chinese call it the teaching of "daode lunli" [ethnic and morality] and the law of cause and effect. What is "daode" In today's language, "dao" [the path] is the rules of nature, the order in which nature functions, and "nature is harmonious—supreme harmony." "De" [virtue] is following the rules of nature. For example, a year is divided into the four seasons of spring, summer, autumn, and winter. This is a phenomenon of the rules of nature. This is "dao" [the path]. The natural path of virtue is called morality in Chinese. If one's life and thinking (thinking belongs to the mental world, and body to the physical world) accord with the seasonal rules of planting in spring, growing in summer, harvesting in autumn, and storing in winter, one will enjoy good physical and mental health. Therefore, following the rules of nature and according with harmony are "de" [virtue]. If one violates the rules of nature and breaches harmony, one will certainly suffer from bad health and be prone to illness. So we have the definition of "daode".

"Lunli" is ethics and it is also part of "dao" [the path]. It is following the rules of nature and according with harmony. The Five Morals, that between husband and wife, between parents and children, among siblings, between rulers and subjects, and among friends all are natural phenomena and the natural harmony of the universe. The nature of these relationships is not created or invented by any particular individual. Therefore, the relationships among people are just the same as the rules of nature. The Five Morals are "dao" [the path], and to accord with the Five Morals is "de" [virtue].

To accord with these relationships, parents should love their children, and children should be filial to their parents; elder siblings should be friendly to younger siblings, and younger siblings should respect elder siblings; rulers should be benevolent to their subjects, and the subjects should be loyal to their rulers; husbands are responsible, and wives are attentive; elders are giving, and young ones are dutiful. These are called the Ten Honors. These ten kinds of harmony are "de" [virtue]. These are the standards for harmony that the Chinese ancestors taught for their descendents to follow.

The starting point and the noumenon of "daode" [moral] is love. Therefore, the starting point of Chinese moral concept is the affection between parents and children in the cardinal relationships. Affection refers to benevolence and justice in Confucianism, compassion in Buddhism, and "God loves people" in Western religions. The starting point is the natural affection between parents and children. This affection is the supreme harmony of nature with no conditions attached. Careful observation will tell us that when a baby is three or four months old, the love between it and its parents is apparent. The Chinese educational ideas come from this starting point.

Therefore, all these years we have been spreading love to the whole world. We agree that human nature is innately good and that everyone has Buddha-nature. We hope that everyone will learn to love him- or herself, love others, love his or her family, love the country, love the world, and love all beings. Love starts from the heart and is received by heart. To feel love with the true mind is justice. The feeling of a sincere heart is love. Sincerity embraces all space, and benevolence pervades the universe. To achieve this, non-Buddhists should practice the teachings in *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*, and Buddhists should rely on the teaching of the Ten Virtuous Deeds.

When compassion pervades the universe and goodwill fills the world, it means that practitioners of the Ten Virtuous Deeds and *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* are everywhere in the world.

Love is the perfect practice of the Ten Virtuous Deeds and of the teachings in The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child.

Love is the true mind, the true nature, the ultimate reality, and Dharma-nature.

Love is one's nature, innate goodness, purity, and pure virtuousness.

Love is the truth, true essence, life, and eternity.

Love is sacredness, God, Allah, and the Holy Spirit.

Love nurtures everything in the universe. Everything originates and grows from love.

Love is the source of all virtues, all powers, and all happiness.

What Buddhas and sages realized and gained is love for self. What they taught is love for others. The teaching of all sages is the teaching of sincerity, love, and the standards of behavior in life as enunciated in *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* and in the Ten Virtuous Deeds. The teaching of all sages is the inheritance of human wisdom and experience as well as the heritage of world civilizations.

The first goal of ancient Chinese education was to ensure that the affection between parents and children would remain unchanged during their lifetimes. The second goal was to enhance this sincere love and to expand its scope to include the family, brothers and sisters, the community, society, the country, humankind, and even all beings. One should love not only humankind but also animals, trees, flowers, and grass. This was the concept, and it was the desired goal of Chinese education to expand the scope of this love.



Chinese education is a teaching of benevolence and justice, love, and supreme harmony. It does not teach one to compete for selfish gain. Therefore, children should be taught to give precedence to others at a young age. In addition to learning to refrain from competing with others, they should also learn to sacrifice themselves. It is different from today's education, which starts teaching competition in kindergarten. Competition denotes selfishness. When children are taught to compete for recognition and selfish gain at a young age and are instilled with the concept of benefiting oneself at the expense of others, as grownups they will not realize that benefiting oneself at the expense of others is wrong. Therefore, the teaching of love teaches people to love others as they love themselves, always thinking about making sacrifices and about serving others—society, the country, and all beings. When doing so, they never consider their own interests. The teaching of the sages starts from here.

The most famous example of education in China is the prenatal education advocated by three queen consorts, Taijiang, Tairen, and Taisi, of the Zhou dynasty. Tairen, mother of King Wen, knew that her thoughts, speech, and behavior would have an impact on the fetus. According to historical records, Tairen would not look at anything that was not virtuous or listen to anything that conveyed evil thoughts. She spoke softly, and her speech and behavior were never arrogant or angry. She was deeply aware that her thoughts, speech, and behavior would have an impact on the fetus.

Education of children should start from pregnancy. Although many parents may not try to exert good influence on their children before birth, they know that after a baby is born it will be influenced by what it sees and hears. Regardless of whether a baby is able to understand, as soon as it opens its eyes it will

see and hear, and it starts learning and imitating. Doing so is its nature, and nature is “dao” [the path]. At this time, the parents should exert positive influence on the baby, and this is teaching of “de” [virtue] or teaching of morality.

Fully aware of the importance of childhood education, the mother of Mencius moved three times in order to provide a good learning environment for her son. Originally, they lived close to a graveyard. At a young age, Mencius amused himself by learning how to bury the dead. Feeling that her son was not learning something good, she moved near a market. However, her son began to learn from the butchers at the market how to butcher a pig and sell pork. Seeing this, the mother moved again. This time she moved near a school. Mencius started to learn how to properly greet people, how to bow, and how to study. Seeing that her son was learning something good, she finally settled down there. The mother of Mencius moved three times to provide a good learning environment for her son, and she truly did a good job on childhood education because Mencius became a sage whose greatness was considered second only to that of Confucius in China's academia.



▲ A mother is the closest teacher for her children.

Mencius learned from Confucius. At that time, Confucius had already passed away, but he left behind his writings. Mencius was the first person in China to learn from the teachings of a deceased person. Therefore, if one cannot find a good teacher, one can study a deceased person's works. There were Confucius' third-generation students around. Having an inquisitive mind, Mencius would go to ask them anything he did not understand in his study. He succeeded in his learning and cultivation of virtues, and he made outstanding contributions to Chinese culture.

In his lifetime, Mencius upheld Confucian ethics and teachings, opposed selfishness, and advocated benevolence, justice, and morality. However, the rulers or kings of his time did not adopt his propositions. What was the reason? It was because Mencius lived in the Warring States period (Confucius lived in the Spring and Autumn period), a time when people gradually attached importance to competition for recognition and selfish gain, and were used to turmoil and wars. The situation then was similar to today's world. Mencius felt very distressed when he saw all this. As no ruler would adopt his propositions, he dedicated himself to teaching, imparting his wisdom, experience, morals, and viewpoints to future sages.

An objective analysis will reveal that Buddha Sakyamuni surpassed Confucius in wisdom and insight. Buddha Sakyamuni was a prince, and if he had wanted to implement his ideas through political means he was in a position to do so. But he gave up his throne, power, and wealth, content to live an ascetic life. For the rest of his life, he engaged in multicultural social education. This is the conduct of a sage. If we observe carefully, what he did in his life is perfectly correct. He set the best example for us to follow. This is his greatest contribution to humanity.

Originally, Confucius and Mencius wished to have legitimate authority, as did the Duke of Zhou, so that they could fulfill their aspirations and benefit people. This was a manifestation, or taking on a role. Buddha Sakyamuni likewise took on a role to teach people to refrain from competing for recognition, selfish gain, wealth, power, and social position. It is because the best way to serve people is to teach them. This would benefit individuals, families, society, countries, and the world. What Buddha Sakyamuni did required great insight and wisdom, not something an ordinary man could have done. Buddha Sakyamuni was thorough in what he did.

All sages have their way of doing things and they are correct in doing things that way. We should clearly observe and consider all viewpoints. Then we will be able to uncover our wisdom and to truly learn the virtues and abilities that we should learn. It is inappropriate to say that Confucius was wrong to seek a position at the imperial court and that Buddha Sakyamuni was correct to renounce worldly attachments. Both of them were correct; they simply had different ways of doing things. We must learn from different people to make our learning complete. If one has position or power, one should work conscientiously while maintaining a pure mind as Buddha Sakyamuni did. This way, one will achieve perfection in his undertakings.

The teachings of Mahayana Buddhism emphasize perfect harmony, perfect wisdom, perfect undertakings, and perfect merits. People today should try to appreciate this point and learn from the teachings. Only the sages' teaching of wisdom can help us improve ourselves. Buddhism, teaches us to eliminate our afflictions and bad habits. In other words, we are to correct our wrong thoughts, wrong mindsets, wandering thoughts, discrimination,

and attachments, and accord with the rules of nature and the order in which nature functions. We should understand the relationship between the entire universe and the rules of nature: the ultimate truth is that everything is indeed one entity and is harmonious. The universe and we are one entity.

God Teaches People by Means of Different Forms

For the purpose of facilitating teaching, Buddhism divides the entire universe into three parts: noumenon, mind, and matter. These three parts are actually one entity. Noumenon is the essence, which is considered by Buddhism to be able to manifest and alter phenomena. In the statement “manifested by the mind and altered by the consciousness,” the mind is the noumenon, and the consciousness refers to discrimination and attachments, both of which manifest everything in the universe.

That which can be manifested and the manifested are one, not two. From here, we try to understand that the entire universe is oneself.



▲ Mr. Abdurrahman Wahid, former President of Indonesia (left).

Our minds merge with Dharma-nature, and our bodies merge with Dharma-body. Dharma-body refers to the physical phenomena in the universe, and seeing, smelling, cognition, and knowing refer to the mental phenomena in the universe. These two kinds of phenomena come from the same origin. This origin is called Dharma-nature in Buddhism and is called God or deities in other religions.

Today, many religious scholars believe that God or a deity has no physical body; He is omnipresent. This statement also applies to Dharma-nature in Buddhism. Therefore, we know that although different terms are used, all religions speak of the same thing. I have discussed this basic concept with many religious leaders, and we all agree that the gods worshipped in all religions are the one and only True God in the universe. I asked them, “Do you agree that the True God has perfect wisdom?” They agreed. “The True God has miraculous powers, which are inconceivable, and can transform into anything.” They believed this. And then I said, “He has turned into Sakyamuni of Buddhism, Confucius of China, Jesus Christ of Christianity, and Mohammad of Islam. All these people were in fact the True God. Therefore, we are all family.” It is admirable of these religious leaders to accept this idea with open hearts. I thought that a lot of discussion might be required before they would accept this idea, but it has been warmly received by my religious friends. This is quite rare and commendable.

Founders of all religions were actually the different forms and identities that the True God took for the purpose of teaching diverse ethnic groups at different times, and with their varied cultural and historical backgrounds. Though the teaching methods are different, when we look at them carefully, we will see that their directions, goals, and purposes are the same. The starting

point of all religions is love. That the starting point is the same means that they share the same goal and direction. Therefore, religious groups can work together. There were nine religious groups in Singapore while I was there. They really worked together as one and got along harmoniously like brothers and sisters. This helped to bring stability and peace to the country. While in Indonesia, I also worked to promote religious harmony and cooperation and attained very good results.

Before becoming the president of Indonesia, Elder Wahid had already been engaged in promoting religious cooperation and harmony and had laid a good foundation. On my visit to this country, I was fortunate to get along well with religious friends there. I accompanied their delegations to visit Egypt, the Vatican, and, later on, China. I was invited to join both trips as consultant to the aforesaid delegations. A trip provides a good learning opportunity. These religious leaders do not often get together, and so when a traveling group was formed, they talked about everything and exchanged ideas every day for more than ten days. This way, they



▲ Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad (right), former Prime Minister of Malaysia.

got to understand and learn from one another, and they thus truly became friends.

Dr Mahathir, the former prime minister of Malaysia, had already retired from the political arena when I called on him in 2005, but he was still deeply compassionate and was often concerned about how to resolve conflict and avert disasters in the world, and how to restore social stability and peace. I was touched by his deep compassion and greatly admired him for it. When he asked me how to achieve these goals, I told him that four conditions had to be fulfilled before the goals of reconciling conflict and restoring stability and peace could be achieved.

He asked me what the four conditions were. I said that the first was that all countries had to treat one another equally and get along harmoniously. The second was that different ethnic groups also had to do the same. The third was that political parties or political factions that could exert influence on global stability had to broaden their minds and vision. They should think of the wellbeing of all the people in the world instead of thinking only of themselves.

Political factions should work together for the common goal of promoting what is beneficial, getting rid of what is harmful, and seeking wellbeing for the entire humankind. The fourth was that all religious groups had to get along harmoniously and treat one another equally. I said that it was hard to fulfill these four conditions, but it was relatively easy to start with the fourth condition. If religious groups could get along harmoniously and treat one another equally, they would surely influence politics, political parties, and ethnic groups.

Dr Mahathir agreed with my view, and the next day he decided to invite me to attend the Perdana Global Peace Forum held in Kuala Lumpur under his sponsorship in December 2005. I attended this activity with pleasure and appreciated the courtesy he accorded me during the forum. Seeing that he was in good health, I urged him in his old age to continue promoting world peace and wellbeing of humankind for at least another ten years to make the greatest possible contribution to reconciling conflict and restoring world peace and stability.

Practice of *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* Lays the Foundation for Moral Conduct

Over the past several decades, many deeply compassionate people of vision and foresight around the world tried to reconcile conflict and promote stability and peace via conferences but to no avail. When I remembered what Laozi had said about a small country with a small population, I wanted to conduct an experiment and to find a small community for this pilot project. I wanted to do this experiment in the United States but the conditions were not ripe. Later on, when I tried to do it in Singapore and in Australia, the conditions were still not ripe.

A few years ago, I had a rare opportunity to return to my hometown. When I was chatting

with my kinfolk, I told them about this idea of mine. To my surprise, they responded enthusiastically, “We would like to do it!” Greatly delighted, I chose Tangchi, a small township in the same county as my hometown, to be the location for my experiment. This township is situated in a rural area. There are twelve villages with a total population of 48,000 under the administration of the township of Tangchi. The people there had neglected the teachings of Chinese sages for eighty years. We set up a multicultural center, The Lujiang Centre of Cultural Education, in the hope of implementing the teaching concepts, teaching methods, and the spirit of Confucius and Buddha Sakyamuni in this small township.

The top priority was to train teachers. Without teachers, it is impossible to teach. We used the Internet to broadcast our ideas and recruit teachers. We wanted to recruit teachers from kindergartens and from primary and junior middle schools. Very soon, more than 300 teachers responded to our recruitment. We carefully selected more than thirty teachers for interviews, and after that we chose thirty who truly shared our aspirations and desired to join this undertaking. They quit their jobs and took part in the teaching activities of our center. For the first two months, we used *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*, the basic textbook of Confucianism, as teaching material and asked these teachers to truly practice the teachings in the book to the full.

In teaching this book, the most important thing is that parents and elders must set an example for the children. Babies see and hear upon their birth. They start to imitate others even before they can speak or walk. The speech and conduct of their elders must conform to moral principles and ethics so that what the babies see, hear, and come in contact with will positively influence them. The Chinese proverb

“The behavior of a child three years old will reveal what this person will be like at the age of eighty. The behavior of a child of seven will reveal what this person will be like throughout his or her whole life” makes a lot of sense.

What children see and hear during their first three years will leave a deep impression on them and they will be able to tell right from wrong and good from evil at the age of three. These children will be immune to many harmful pollutants in the contemporary world. This immunity will have been instilled in them since birth.

When they start attending primary schools at the age of six or seven, if teachers make sure that the children adhere to moral principles and ethics every day, this will enhance and extend the moral education that the children have been receiving since birth. This will help them lay a foundation for good character, which will ensure virtuous thoughts, speech, and conduct for the rest of their lives. The children will give priority to others, treat others with respect and humility, engage in tasks with caution, and get along harmoniously with others. Therefore, no dispute will arise. After they have laid the foundation for moral conduct, they should be taught the writings of the sages to receive the



▲ Learning of *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* by all regardless of age and gender.

teaching of ethics, morality, the law of cause and effect, and wisdom.

Childhood is the phase in one’s life when one’s memory is at its best. Children under the age of twelve should therefore concentrate on memorization. They should read and memorize all the texts that they need to study so that they will always remember these texts for the rest of their lives. At this stage, children should pay attention to reading and memorizing, rather than understanding. They should also pay attention to developing good virtues and learning how to properly interact with people and engage in tasks. When they have learned how to respect and attend to teachers at school, on returning home they will know how to be filial to and serve their parents. Therefore, teachers in primary schools should only teach children to read and memorize texts, not explain.

Children have different learning capacities. It is reasonable for a child to be able to memorize a piece of writing after ten readings. This child should be asked to recite it from memory one hundred to two hundred times. What is the reason for this? This is to ensure that the child will remember this piece of writing for the rest of his or her life. The next day, he or she should be asked to recite from memory the piece of writing learned the previous day before learning something new. Importance is attached to reviewing. One should review what one has learned and acquire new knowledge.

There were only two stages in ancient Chinese education. After completion of primary school education, students at thirteen went on to a “taixue”, which was equivalent to a university. Teaching in a “taixue” focused on explanation, analysis, and discussion. Having learned the text by heart there was no need for textbooks, so studying in a “taixue” was very enjoyable for both teachers and students.

When someone quoted from ancient or contemporary writings, everybody could tell exactly where the quotation came from and even exactly where it was in the book. This is because the layout of ancient Chinese books was uniform. There were ten lines on a page, twenty characters in a line, and no punctuation. All printers followed this rule. Therefore, regardless of the printer, all editions of a book had the same number of characters on each page. This rule is more systematic than those in publishing today. In publishing today, a word will be in a different line and on a different page in different editions. As a result, it is difficult to do research.

Thanks to this uniform layout of ancient Chinese printing, all scholars throughout China could tell exactly where a passage was in a book. This is why there was no need for books in a “taixue” class. Teachers would generally travel around with their students. Importance was attached to actual research at historical sites and to the use of virtual teaching materials so as to deepen the students’ understanding and learning interest. Therefore, when talking about a geographical area mentioned in an ancient scholar’s writing, a teacher would take his students there to see, study, and discuss the historical relics left by the ancients. It became a virtual classroom. As a result, study was quite enjoyable, very different from today when study is considered painful by many students. During study and discussion, students could freely express their ideas and views to seek thorough comprehension and attain true wisdom so that their academic studies would suit the needs of society.

It is worthwhile to integrate the teaching concepts of the East and the West, such as the above-mentioned educational ideas, so as to draw on each other’s strong points to make up for one’s own weak points. We hope that all

humankind can receive the teaching of ethics, morality, the law of cause and effect, wisdom, and science, and reach a consensus. This concerns not only our lifelong happiness but also the infinite happiness of all humankind living and flourishing side by side. The teachings will help everybody resolve from his or her heart the conflict with others and the external environment, and the misunderstandings, doubts, and misgivings about other people and the external environment. This will then help him or her attain inner harmony, good health, and happiness.

Nature is in harmony. The universe is in harmony. Everything is in harmony. People should also be in harmony and be in collaboration with the universe, other people, and all things on earth. This way, we can truly reconcile all conflicts in the world, achieve



▲Paying respect to those who are elderly and wise.

social stability and world peace, and achieve the goal of Buddha Sakyamuni’s teaching of “ending delusion and attaining enlightenment, and ending suffering and attaining happiness.”

Education Can Preserve Social Values

We conducted an experiment in the ancient oriental teaching method in Tangchi. Our center required every teacher to practice the 113 rules in *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* to the full. The essence of these rules is the same as that of the fifty-five rules proposed by Ron Clark, an American educator, but the 113 rules are richer and more extensive in content.

Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism also have their own basic principles. The Accounts of Request and Response serves as a basic Taoist teaching, and the *Ten Virtuous Deeds Sutra* serves as a basic Buddhist teaching. The Ten Virtuous Deeds are guiding principles, which can be developed into over 100 rules. A beginning student of Confucianism, Taoism, or Buddhism must conscientiously practice the respective basic teachings to the full and then progress from this basis to the next stage.

After successfully applying the 113 Confucian rules within just two months, teachers from the Lujiang Centre of Cultural Education started to teach the local people and encouraged them, male or female, young or old, and of any occupation, to learn together. These teachers were students themselves at the center, but they became teachers when they left the center to teach. As there are twelve villages under the administration of the township, the teachers were assigned to these twelve villages and took turns in teaching.

To our surprise, there were good results after two months. In this township, there is no conflict, and therefore no quarrelling between

husband and wife. As mothers- and daughters-in-law now live in harmony, no conflict exists. People who used to quarrel over trivial things with their neighbors now live in harmony with them, giving precedence to them. Children know that they should be filial to their parents. The ethical standards and behavior of the people in the township improved, and good social values were restored. Storeowners told us that there used to be many shoplifters, and if the owners failed to keep a close watch, they would often suffer thefts. After the local people received the center’s teaching for two months, shoplifting stopped even when the owners were not watchful.

A taxi driver said, “We taxi drivers used to have very bad thoughts. If the passengers were visitors from somewhere else, we tried to cheat them by overcharging them or taking the long way or even driving in circles. We realized that what we did was wrong and changed our attitude. Now we treat the passengers with sincerity and warmth. Once, a passenger from another place left his briefcase in my taxi. In it was tens of thousands RMB in cash. In the past, I would have kept the briefcase and money for myself—I would not have returned the money. Now that I have received moral education from the center, I know that I should take care of the passengers, so I returned the briefcase intact to its owner.”

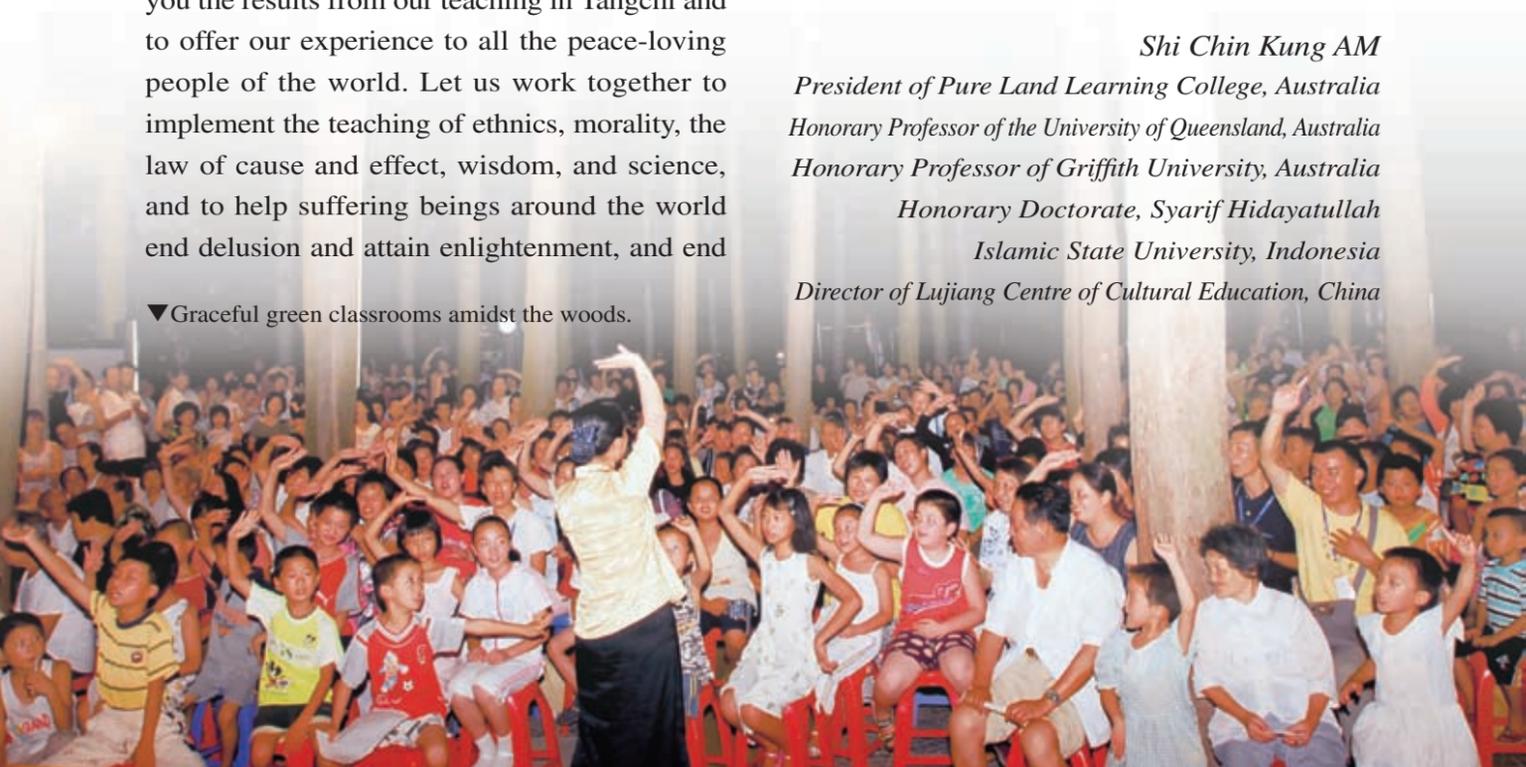
The passenger was a business-owner. He was very impressed by the taxi driver, “What an honest person you are to return my lost briefcase!” The driver replied, “Thanks to the teaching by the center, not only I but also any other taxi driver here will return anything left in our cars to its owner.” This is the good result from our teaching. Ms. Yang Shufeng, the dean of studies of the center, will make a detailed report to you.

The experience we gained from these past six months of teaching in Tangchi has strengthened our confidence in reconciling conflict and promoting social stability and world peace. We firmly believe that it is possible to teach people to be good, that all people are innately good, and that all beings have Buddha-nature as taught in Buddhism. Everybody is originally a good person because human nature is innately good.

Why then does a person turn bad? Because he or she follows bad examples, and nobody taught him or her otherwise. This is the case of “One who mixes with vermilion will turn red; one who touches a black ink stick will be stained black.” Everybody would like to receive teaching that exerts good and positive influence and that teaches him or her to accord with innate virtues. Everybody wants to be a good person; nobody wants to be a bad person. This is the truth we see from the six months of teaching in Tangchi.

There are many such examples. Today I have this rare and wonderful opportunity to exchange ideas with you and to learn from you here at UNESCO headquarters. I hope to share with you the results from our teaching in Tangchi and to offer our experience to all the peace-loving people of the world. Let us work together to implement the teaching of ethnics, morality, the law of cause and effect, wisdom, and science, and to help suffering beings around the world end delusion and attain enlightenment, and end

▼ Graceful green classrooms amidst the woods.



suffering and attain happiness.

These teaching concepts, methods, and results are inspired by Buddha Sakyamuni and Confucius and may serve as reference for the U.N. in reconciling conflict and promoting social stability and world peace.

I hope that our modest achievement will help strengthen the confidence and determination of those who work to reconcile conflict and promote social stability and world peace. As long as religious groups work together and teach people, all conflicts will naturally be reconciled, and harmony in society and in the world will not be mere words but will be achieved.

I wish that those who have the same aspirations would work together to make the greatest possible contributions, as Buddha Sakyamuni and Confucius did, to all humankind. Finally, on behalf of our center, I sincerely invite all of you to visit the Cultural Education Center in Lujiang County, Anhui Province, China, and to give us your comments. Thank you.

I wish all the delegates and distinguished guests good health and happiness!

Shi Chin Kung AM
President of Pure Land Learning College, Australia
Honorary Professor of the University of Queensland, Australia
Honorary Professor of Griffith University, Australia
Honorary Doctorate, Syarif Hidayatullah
Islamic State University, Indonesia
Director of Lujiang Centre of Cultural Education, China



▲ Universal harmony begins with sincere loving-kindness.

Celebrating the 2550th Anniversary of the Buddha



▲The Buddhist Contribution to Humanity.



▲The Buddha's manifestation of how an ordinary being became a Buddha—the twelve aspects of cultivation to attain enlightenment.



▲The Three Sages of Avatamsaka.

▲Amitabha Buddha.



▲Calligraphy on the pillar.

The 1st exhibition

The Buddhist Contribution to Humanity The Three Sages of Avatamsaka, Amitabha Buddha, Calligraphy on the pillar

The Buddhist Contribution to Humanity : If Buddhists truly practice and realize the Buddha's teaching, then the goals of a pure land, all beings at peace, a world enjoying equality can be attained.

The Three Sages of Avatamsaka : Vairocana Buddha, Manjusri, and Samantabhadra symbolize Buddhist practitioners cultivating in the troubled Saha world and reaching the perfect world of great wisdom and great practice. To learn and practice Avatamsaka teachings is to attest to the idea of everything in the universe being a single living community.

Amitabha Buddha : Amitabha means “infinite wisdom, infinite good fortune, and infinite life.” Buddha means “wisdom and awakening.”

Calligraphy on the pillar : In the exhibition hall there are several pillars, which are almost 700 cm high. On them hang scrolls of calligraphy of the teachings of various religions. These calligraphies are prayers for people to treat one another equally and get along harmoniously regardless of nationality, race, and religion.

The Buddha's manifestation of how an ordinary being became a Buddha—the twelve aspects of cultivation to attain enlightenment

The Buddha, as an ordinary being, engaged in cultivation and attained perfect wisdom. There were many important events in his life. In this exhibition, his cultivation to attain enlightenment is illustrated in twelve aspects, through which one will understand how an ordinary being can become a Buddha.



The 2nd exhibition

Embracing multiculturalism and promoting world peace

The Buddha dedicated his life to voluntary teaching. His purpose was to help people end delusion and attain enlightenment, end suffering and attain happiness, and understand the truth of life and the universe. His teachings incorporate various doctrines, religious teachings, science, and culture. This is to help harmonize diverse groups and races so that all people can live and flourish side by side, treat one another equally, and love one another.





The 3rd exhibition

Painting of Confucius Teaching Six Arts

The Most Revered Teacher Confucius re-edited the Six Classics—*Book of Odes*, *Book of History*, *Book of Rites*, *Book of Music*, *Book of Changes*, and *Spring-Autumn Annals*—and taught widely. They contain the truth and the natural rules of the universe, and can help people awaken to their true nature. If those who learn the Six Classics have a good understanding, they will abide by the teachings of etiquette and music, cultivate in accordance with the true nature, and use all their skills to benefit all people and help them become sages.

Teaching without borders

In order to make the Buddha's teaching available to all, the Internet and satellite television are utilized. People can learn at any place and any time according to their capacity, so their learning is individualized and self-reliant.



▲Painting of the Sacred Saga of Confucius.



▲Seals carved by children.

The 4th exhibition

Painting of the Sacred Sagas of Confucius, Painting of the Scenes of the Hells, seal carved by children

The Painting of the Sacred Sagas of Confucius depicts Confucius' important deeds and teachings in thirty-two scenes. They illustrate Confucius' spirit of teaching regardless of students' backgrounds, and his thoughts on loving-kindness, filial piety, courtesy, and righteousness.

The Painting of the Scenes of the Hells is not intended to scare people. It conveys a profound meaning of teaching the law of cause and effect. The scenes of the hells are so vividly portrayed that they have a far-reaching impact on people. After seeing the painting, people would do nothing that is bad and do everything that is good for the rest of their lives.

A group of young students at the Seal Carving Class in the Lujiang Cultural Education Center show the beauty of the Chinese seal carving.



▲Painting of the Scenes of the Hells.



Meeting Hall



▲The venue of the Celebration of the 2550th Anniversary of the Buddha.



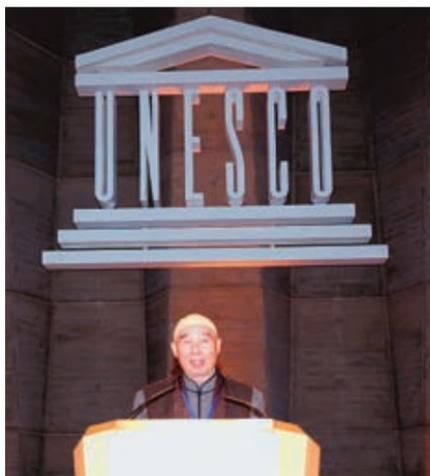
▲The movie - "Buddhism Today" was shown to help the audience understand the Buddhism of the past, and present and its future mission.



▲Presenting the Painting of the Scenes of Hells as gifts to the distinguished guests.



▲With heart and soul, the audience prayed for peace and harmony together.



▲In his keynote address, Venerable Master Chin Kung emphasized that "religions can be united, and people can be educated for the better".



▲Representatives from 9 religions, hand in hand, symbolized that religions can be united.



▲Praying for world peace in the event of the "Celebration of the 2550th Anniversary of the Buddha" in the main hall of UNESCO headquarters, Paris.

Sharing of Ideas



▲ Director General of UNESCO, Koichiro Matsuura (second from the left); Deputy Permanent Delegate of Thailand to UNESCO, Dr. Preeyanuch Jariyavidyanont (third from the left).



▲ Picture on the left is the Chairman of Council of Progressive Rabbis for Australia and New Zealand, Rabbi Uri Themal.



▲ Picture on the left is the Permanent Delegate of China to UNESCO, President of the Executive Board of UNESCO, H.E. Mr. Zhang Xinsheng.



▲ Secretary General of WFB, Thailand, Mr. Phallop Thaiarry (first from the right); WFB Liaison Officer to UNESCO, France, Ven. Dr. Dhammaratana (second from the right).

▼ Conference room.



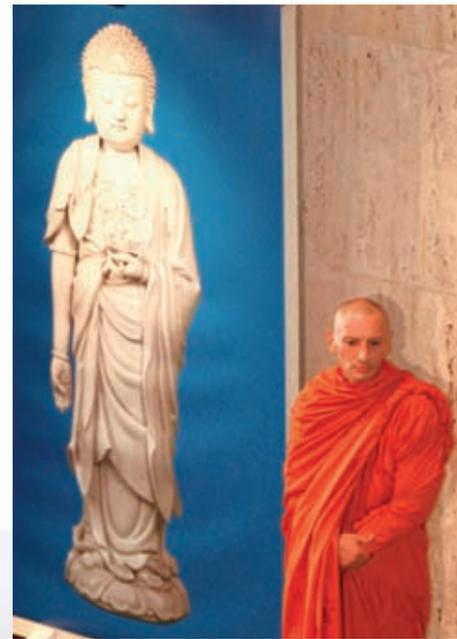
Photo Gallery



▲ Focusing on the program booklet.



▲ Seals carved by children.



▲ The Buddha and the sangha.



▲ The beauty of the seal carvings.

▼ Master Chin Kung.



Trip to England for the Celebration of Vesak



▲Speech given by Master Chin Kung at the University of Cambridge in October, 2006.



▲Speech given by Master Chin Kung at the University of London in October, 2006.



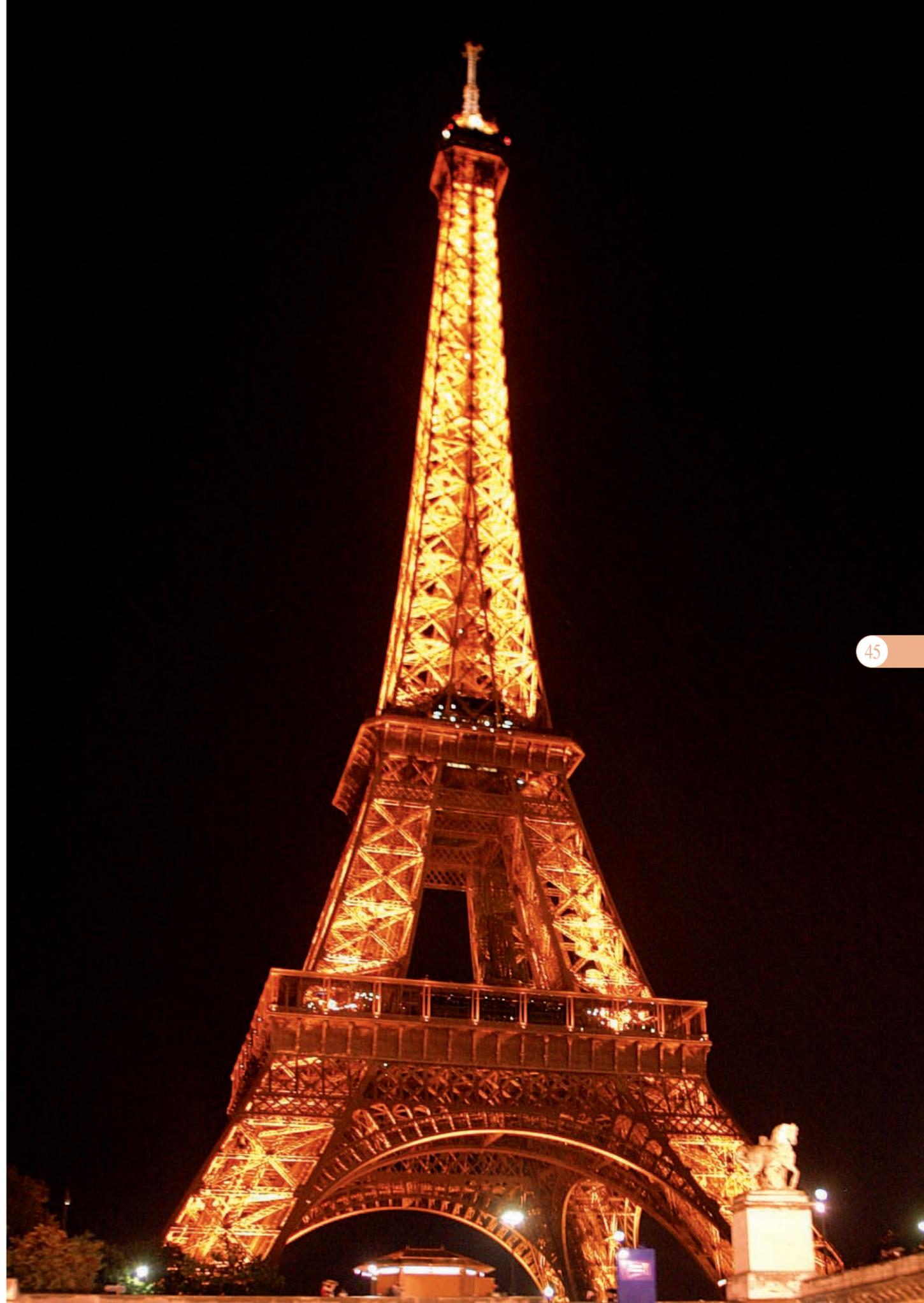
▲A scene from a lecture given by Master Chin Kung at Friends House in London in October, 2006.



▲A scene in the University of Cambridge.



▲Learning the teaching of saints and sages together regardless of nationality.

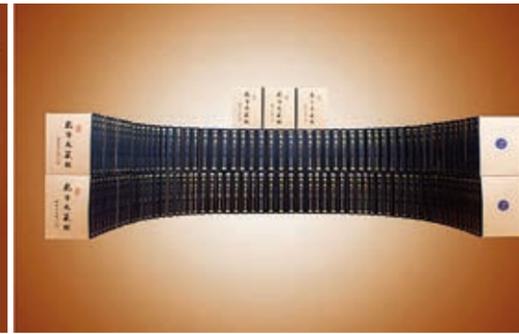
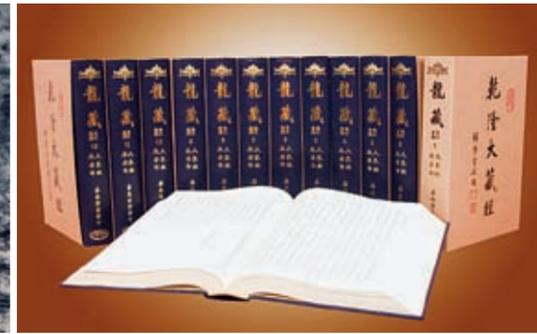


Presentation of gifts at the Celebration of the 2550th Anniversary of the Buddha

These three educational treasures would lead the way in appeasing chaos in our world as well as enhancing our affinities to one another

The reason for the gift – Lung Zang

The Pure Land Learning College, Australia presented the Great Buddhist Canon (Qianlong edition), the Painting of the Scenes of Hells, and the Painting of the Sacred Saga of Confucius as gifts to the guests of this event, in the hope that these enlightening gifts will help all people learn from the saints and sages, their compassion and love for people, and work in unity for a harmonious society and a peaceful world.



Around 600 BC a baby boy was born. He grew up to be a teacher who enlightened the minds of people in this world. We call him a *Buddha*. He pointed out to us a way to be free from suffering and to reach for happiness. He not only influenced the people of India, but his teachings transcended time and space, and continue to impact even on people today.

The *Lung Zang* contains 1,675 Buddhist Scriptures. Their topics include philosophy, history, cultural study, language, literature, poetry, astrology, medicine, architecture, and many other topics. It could well be called the World Encyclopedia of Civilization.

The Pure Land Learning College, using the modern printing technology, reproduced 121 sets of *Lung Zang* for wide circulation, ensuring that even after 2,550 years, people can still have access to Buddhist teachings.

Under the current increasingly complicated world situation, the important multicultural educational Buddhist Canon, the *Lung Zang* can become the basis of solving the problems of humankind by promoting the security and the harmony of our world.

The reason for the gift – the painting of the Sacred Saga of Confucius



Shakyamuni Buddha deeply felt the afflictions and the pain suffered in this world. In order to find a way out, he led an ascetic life and tried to learn the Way. Under a Bodhi tree, he attained enlightenment. He realized that only education could help sentient beings to become awakened.

During his lifetime Shakyamuni Buddha worked as a multicultural social worker for 49 years. After he entered Nirvana, his disciples put his teachings into written words to ensure they would be passed on to the later generations and be the basis of their learning and practice.

Later, people systematically compiled all the Buddhist Scriptures into a book called the Great Buddhist Canon. The Qing Dynasty's *Qianlong* edition is the only edition compiled and printed by a royal household. Known historically as *Lung Zang*, the engraved edition stands forty stories high when folded, and is a very unusual spectacle.

Confucius was born in 551 BC around the same time as Shakyamuni Buddha. He was the first person in Chinese history to advocate free public education for all. People call him *the most accomplished and the most sacred teacher*.

The goal of Confucian teachings aimed for a state of Utopia and a nation based on proper etiquette and fairness. He was once a county magistrate of Lu. After only one year on this job, he was able to improve the county's old established practice.

In his later years, Confucius returned to his homeland and dedicated his life to teaching. He taught people to abide by the teachings of proper etiquette and music, to be fully developed in their capabilities for the benefit of the people. Throughout his life, Confucius was never bored with learning or teaching. After he passed away, his students mourned him for three years as if he was their father.



The original painting of the Sacred Saga of Confucius is 42.8 cm high and 2,850 cm long. It was painted by the well-known artist Mr. Jiang Yi-zi. The picture consists of a series of 32 separate paintings, describing some of the most important subjects of Confucian teachings and deeds in Confucius' life. Attached behind the painting is a picture of the Ten Wisdoms demonstrating how Confucius' disciples put his teachings into practice.



Buddha repeatedly pointed out in the Scriptures that it is very difficult to be born a human and to come into contact with Buddha's teachings. Therefore, we must abide by his teachings before we can be free from the cycle of rebirth.

Our environment changes according to the changes in our minds; therefore, we have heaven and hell. The moment we turn back from our evil ways, we find ourselves in the World of the Ultimate Bliss.

The painting of the Scenes of the Hells is 70 cm high and 6,000 cm long. The Pure Land Learning College has reproduced many copies, giving them away to various museums, universities, and centers for circulation and exhibition, hoping when the sentient beings see the paintings they will become enlightened.

The reason for the gift – the painting of the Scenes of the Hells



In recent years, there have been frequent devastating, man-made and natural disasters and catastrophes. They are mostly because we have neglected the teachings of the sages and because we no longer believe in the Law of Cause and Effect. Most religions have stories about the images of hell. The function of hell is not to frighten people, but to offer a much deeper meaning and to educate people about the law of cause and effect.

The changing images of hell caught on canvas are realistic and have a deep and long-term impact on people, stopping them from having any more evil thoughts or doing any more evil deeds. This far-reaching effect is what an education about the law of cause and effect has on people. We justly receive what we deserve according to our karma. The innumerable changing forms of hell are merely the reflections of the ever-changing minds and deeds that are evil.



Conclusion

The three gifts, the *Painting of the Scenes of Hells*, the *Sacred Saga of Confucius*, and *Lung Zang* all teach us to be dutiful children, to serve our teachers, to abstain from killing, and to cultivate the Ten Virtuous Conducts. They are the basic elements required to be human and the foundation of becoming a Buddha.

While we warmly celebrate Vesak, we hope all Buddhists, regardless of nationality and race, get along peacefully and in harmony, and treat each other equally. World harmony stems from our minds. Let us learn from Shakyamuni Buddha and in his spirit, give classes and teach with the purpose of resolving conflicts, helping to stabilize our society and keeping our world at peace.



A Letter to President George Bush of USA

Dear President,

Thank You for awarding me the certificate of “Honorary Citizen of Texas” in 1995. I have always admired you trying to re-establish traditional values and following the teachings of God. I have, for a long time now, wanted to tell you how much I have appreciated your award, and to show you my respect.

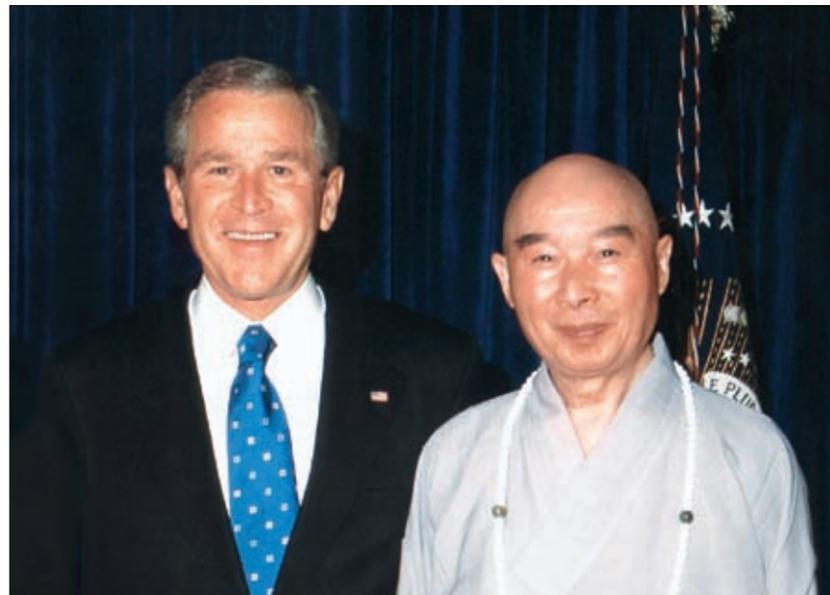
Republican Senator Bill Frist has invited me to the annual Republican Senatorial Dinner on September 25th. I was hoping to use this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to you personally. However, we are in the beginning stages of establishing our Pure Land Learning College and many things require that I be here. I sincerely regret that I am unable to get away at this time. I deeply appreciate the Republican Senatorial invitation but I will not be able to attend the dinner.

To show my respect and with my blessing, I have asked Mrs. Judy Hsieh to bring you the two seals I have carved especially for you. One seal says, “GOD LOVES ALL PEOPLE” and the other one says, “ANGEL OF PEACE.” Being knowledgeable of God’s teachings, I am sure you will carry the spirit of “God loves all people” to act as the “Angel of Peace” for our present world; and to be the messenger to resolve conflicts, promote world peace, prosperity and growth for the purpose of turning enemies into friends, to change the feelings of hatred to that of love, to change bad to good, to change from being confused to becoming enlightened, and to wisely give happiness to the people of this world. “To lead the Country onto the right path and to educate people with virtues”, the United States of America will always be the world leader. As it says in the Bible, creators of peace are indeed fortunate because they are called the children of God.

I hope that the Republican Senatorial Dinner will turn out to be a big success, and that the United States of America will always be prosperous. I wish Mr. President good health, safety and peace.

Respectfully yours,

Chin Kung
President, Pure Land Learning
College Assoc. Inc.
9 September, 2002



▲President George Bush, on left. Venerable Master Chin Kung was invited to the Washington D.C. in 2005.

A Letter to President George Bush of USA

Dear Mr. President,

It is a great honor and pleasure to have the opportunity to meet you today. We share a common goal of a more peaceful and secure world.

Between fellow man lies a universal connectedness that is without opposition, doubt, or conflict. We all live on the same planet, and we are all part of the same family. Our bond of humanity calls for mutual tolerance, respect, and compassion so that we may live harmoniously with each other.

To achieve this objective, your leadership is vital to the moral and virtuous education for all people. A few weeks ago, I read *The Essential 55* written by Mr. Ron Clark. This book provides a foundation for rebuilding morality and virtues for all people. In today’s society, regardless of nation or ethnicity, there is a dire need among our youth for this type of education. It is my sincere wish that you would take the lead, starting with our own country, to promote moral and virtuous education for people of all ages and all walks of life. Please help us to put these “Essential 55” standards into practice by utilizing the widely available internet, cable, and satellite television networks to broadcast such teachings to the entire world. When humanity is encouraged to learn together, all conflicts will naturally resolve. Peace and stability would then become a more attainable reality.

Traditional Chinese teachings such as Mahayana Buddhist scripture “*Ten Virtuous Deeds Sutra*” and “*The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*” by Confucius expound upon similar themes as *The Essential 55*.

Throughout the world, we are facing an unprecedented decline in morality. When humanity no longer values morality and virtue, it would be “the end of our world.” Mankind would then face chaos and disaster in a scope unparalleled in history. It is our hope, Mr. President, that you would continue to act with great compassion, wisdom, and strength to guide us from darkness. You would be a true savior amongst us. This is my one personal appeal to you.

May you continue your tremendous success in leading our country and may our country continue to be prosperous and strong.

Sincerely yours,

Chin Kung
14 June, 2005



淨宗學院

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God loves all people.
Blessed are Angels of Peace.

神愛世人和平天使

A Letter to President George Bush of USA

Dear President Bush,

On June 14, 2005, I, Chin Kung, attended the Presidential Dinner at which the warm hospitality offered was deeply felt. I was equally honored to be able to take a photograph with you, and later received the same photograph personally signed by yourself. Many honorable guests were present at the dinner. By the end of the dinner it was clear that there was not enough time for me to express my humble but sincere view on how to build a harmonious world to you. However, seeing that the whole world is in turmoil, with both natural and man-made disasters unceasing, I believe that your faith in God's love and humanity will give rise to thoughtfulness about resolving conflicts, promoting world peace and human happiness. Hence, please pardon my bold but sincere attempt to present you with a point of view based on my fifty-five years of studying the teachings of ancient sages. Please enlighten me with your wise words in return.

Peace and harmony are the immediate needs of people anywhere. From ancient and modern history we know that economic, political and military retaliation and even conducting conferences or forum discussions cannot resolve conflicts. On the contrary, they could complicate and worsen conflicts. Only by promoting education based on ethics, morals and karma (the law of cause and effect) can we resolve conflicts and promote peace and harmony. Our ancient sages taught us that "nation building starts with correcting oneself and education". Benevolence and compassion, sincere respect and humility can be realized by utilizing "long distance education" and training of 30 to 50 educators whose teachings can be prerecorded on tapes and reviewed by

a national religious education body. These educational materials can be given to national television and Internet broadcasters for release. Such teachings that promotes morals, virtues, causality and religious education --starting by correcting oneself and then extending help to others--constitute the foundation and standard toward the path of national stability and world peace.

Today, people advocate technology and economy and pursue materialistic civilization. The media such as the Internet and video games are full of images of killings, thefts, sexual misconducts, lies, violence and pornography. When the youths are submerged in this environment, they can easily develop a personality that is impatient, flighty and selfish with no concern for others. Even in the United States, the hidden worry of rapid-escalating crimes committed by youths is evident. Youths represent the hope of our nation. Without a compassionate and wise education, they can hardly become the supporting pillar that will uphold service for the nation and its people. I sincerely wish that you could actively promote an education program based on morals, ethics, karma and wisdom to avert the catastrophe that humanity faces, and no longer resort to the use of military force as means to resolve our problems. This is a matter that will affect a country's rise or decline, and survival or death for humanity. The old eastern sayings of "an eye for an eye and retaliations will never end"; and "one will have to pay for his or her actions when the time is ripe", are reflections of karma. The existence of karma has been proven by scientific evidence (see attachment) and is not a figment of the imagination.

In order to seek world peace and happiness for humanity, I pray that you would lead the

leaders of the world to promote morals, ethics, karma and wise education. I pray that all nations will stop making atomic and nuclear weapons. I also pray that all existing atomic and nuclear weapons be destroyed. Destroying one nuclear weapon means saving the lives and properties of millions. Only then can humans leave behind the shady haze of wars and chaos and live in a great harmonious world of mutual respects, love and cooperation.

We all know that a nuclear war can be easily triggered. The present leaders may guide their nations with rational wisdom but the youths of the next generation may not. When these youths became leaders of the government, the decisions they make may have dire consequences. The happiness and survival of humanity are suspended on one thread of thought. As a kind and compassionate President, surely you must be concerned about preventing this disaster from happening by destroying all nuclear weapons.

United States of America is a great nation that is intrinsically connected with the fortune or misfortune of the survival of human race. If you truly follow the spirit of God So Loved the World, as Messenger of Peace, Mr. President, you would lead all nations, all ethnic groups, and all religions with equality, harmony, cooperation, mutual respect, love and care, and coexist with each other in prosperity. This vision could be initiated by the peaceful unity of religions. Such inter-religious harmony would surely affect the peaceful unity of different ethnic groups and nations. Eventually, the education of moral, virtue, causality and religious wisdoms need to be spread to the whole world. The education of love and kindness must flow through all humanity. If you can guide the world thus, it would be a mission that will surely save our world. Not only will the American people be

grateful, but all human race will praise your leadership and accomplishment. Countless people will be able to enjoy the fruit of peace and happiness through the opportunity you give them.

The above are merely my prayers and I sincerely hope that you would heed these humble words from a humble mind.

I sincerely wish for the prosperity of our country, and auspiciousness to our government.

Sincerely,

Chin Kung AM

President of Pure Land Learning College, Australia

18 June, 2006

Attachment

Dr. Bryan Jameison, a past-life regressionist, accumulated 30 years of research experience in his book, The Search for Past Lives: Exploring Reincarnation's Mysteries & the Amazing Healing Power of Past-Life Therapy. In this book he noticed that many hippies who underwent regression therapy had been North American Indians in their previous lives, and these hippies who defied parents and public securities were killed by white people who are now either their father or mother in this lifetime.

Professor Ian Stevenson observed another example, concerning one Charles Porter, a North American Indian born in Alaska in 1907. Since childhood, Porter had said that he was killed in a spear fight during a tribal warfare. He recalled his name being Tlingit and he could name Tlingit's killer and the place where Tlingit was killed. The man who killed Tlingit was his maternal great uncle. The tribal record confirmed Porter's recount.

American books, journals and information sources are full of similar accounts. Karma is a universal truth. Numerous accounts had been recorded, and the oriental world is particularly rich with such accounts. The law of karma exists, whether you believe it or not. Many of the resentful souls of the conquered and the oppressed will be reborn as children to those victors who used armed forces against them. These children will grow to perform acts that overthrow the government, disobey social order and seek retaliation and compensation, to name a few. Empress Dowager Cixi, was an obvious example. Moreover, military retaliation is a negative example for the next generation. Over time, the next generation will further intensify violence and resort to violence at will. When that day comes, the end of the world will not be far away. End of attachment

A Letter to Queen Elizabeth II of United Kingdom

Your Majesty,

I would like to express my gratitude to Your Majesty for awarding me with the AM Honor, which the Governor of Queensland conferred on me on 15th September 2005. I send Your Majesty my sincere greetings.

In recent years, as a representative of both the University of Queensland and Griffith University, Australia, I traveled all over the world promoting the sages' teaching of sincerity, love and peace in an effort to unite religious and ethnic groups, resolve conflicts, and advance world peace. The famous historian Dr. Arnold Toynbee said in the 1970s that to solve problems in the 21st century, one must rely on the thoughts of Confucius and Mencius, and on Mahayana Buddhism. These words have great personal resonance. Today's world is ravaged by global disturbances, natural disasters, conflicts, terrorist attacks, and epidemics. Living in such a world makes people feel that life is crisis-ridden, creating a state of anxiety and disturbance. Your Majesty must also feel concern for people who are suffering in this world and hope to find a way to improve their lives. Therefore, I take the liberty of putting forward my humble opinion for your consideration.

Having attended several international peace conferences, I have heard and met many people with vision and foresight who are aware of the crucial need for conflict resolution. And yet, despite hundreds of peace conferences held and tremendous human, financial, and material resources expended in

the past few decades, the world is becoming progressively more chaotic. People are filled with anxiety, restlessness, and enmity. Not only have the suicide and crime rates increased, but the age ranges of those involved is broadening. Talk and conferences alone cannot truly solve problems. From studying China's 5,000-year history, I have come to understand that "education is essential in building a country and in guiding its people". It is only through education that a country is able to enjoy lasting peace and stability. Advancement of moral education is the fastest and most effective way to achieve true results.

In the past two years, a few young teachers of Chinese descent have actively engaged in the advancement of the sages' moral education. They elicit positive responses wherever they go. In June last year, we made a special effort to hold a three-day seminar in Paris. More than six hundred people came from all over the world attended. They were all deeply moved by the experience. They examined themselves, their families, and society and changed in a positive way. We can clearly see that the effect of teaching far surpasses the influence of international peace conferences.

Look at the world today. Many countries spend a lot of money to develop high-tech weapons but find it impossible to guard against terrorist attacks. Some countries focus on economic development. However, due to the lack of moral teaching, people's greed causes even more social problems. People do not know that military power, politics, economics and even

technology cannot bring harmony and stability to the world. Education - the sages' moral teaching of sincerity and love - is the fundamental, and indeed only, path to harmony and stability. All government policies should be guided by the teaching of loving-kindness and peace. They should teach people to live in harmony and to treat others equally.

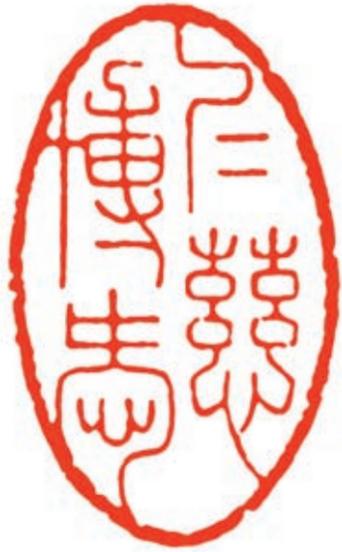
A successful leader should assume the role of mediator and be able to resolve conflicts and discord among different political factions, ethnic groups and religious groups, resulting in harmonious cultural diversification. If all groups seek common ground while putting aside differences, they can get live, work and prosper together. Then the leader will have helped to create to have a peaceful society. A

harmonious and stable social environment is the basis of economic, commercial, scientific, and technological developments, and ultimately a country's prosperity.

Many countries however are doing the exact opposite. Nations focus on economic, commercial, scientific, and technological developments, ignoring moral education. Therefore, although the material comforts and luxuries that we enjoy today are unsurpassed, global disturbances are also unprecedented and social problems continually emerge. The root cause of these problems is incorrect prioritisation: the teaching of loving-kindness and peace is paramount over all else. However, if all countries are striving to outdo each other in economic, commercial, scientific, and



▲ Queensland Governor Ms. Quentin Bryce on behalf of the Queen, awarded AM to Venerable Master Chin Kung.



▲Loving kindness and universal love for all.

technological advancements, and disdain moral education, then human relationships and morality will deteriorate. We will have a world in turmoil.

Many sages prophesied the end of the world. After careful consideration, I feel that the end of the world is not about the physical destruction of the world but rather the corrupt state of human minds - from being with people one dislikes to being constantly fearful and suspicious, and even to parents and children hurting or killing one another. When life is full of worries, fears, and sufferings, it truly is the end of the world.

When we study Chinese history, we see that the golden age of the Qing dynasty covers the reigns of Emperors Kangxi, Yongzheng, and Qianlong. These three emperors ran the country well as a result of their receptiveness to education and learning. They invited scholars of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism to give lectures at the imperial court everyday in order to immerse the royal

family, nobles, and ministers in the sages' teaching. Thus, when these people interacted with others in daily life, they were naturally compassionate, loyal, filial, kind and just. They would follow the teachings of the sages in meeting their responsibilities and helping others. Therefore, although these emperors were of an ethnic minority, they brought happiness to the people and prosperity to the country. Their political and military achievements were impressive.

Alas, the last few emperors neglected to study the sutras, and they abolished the lectures on the teachings of the sages. The dynasty went into decline and was eventually overthrown. Therefore, we know that teaching is the only means to completely resolve conflicts and prevent terrorist attacks. Teaching can achieve this because it inspires the innate virtues of purity, kindness, compassion, amiability, benevolence, and modesty.

Sakyamuni Buddha set a good example for us three thousand years ago. He renounced his position as prince and relinquished all the wealth and enjoyment that went with it. He lived a life of simplicity and walked barefoot throughout India and actively taught sincerity, love, and peace. Today we would call Sakyamuni Buddha a volunteer engaged in multicultural education. In fact, all sages of both the East and the West were volunteers engaged in the teaching of peace; all sages focused their teaching on compassion and love.

Those engaged in the promotion of peace should be deeply aware that they must first resolve their internal conflicts and become

completely selfless. They should treat all beings and situations with sincerity and love. Only then can they resolve all external conflicts and achieve peace and stability.

We can see proof of this theory in the recent water crystal experiment of Dr. Masaru Emoto of Japan. After hundreds of thousands of experiments, Dr. Emoto found that thoughts of love and gratitude can produce the most beautiful water crystal. If inert water can be thus affected, so can vegetables and animals, not to mention humans, the most developed of creatures.

Buddha's once said: "All phenomena are manifested by the mind". This statement is quite true. Everyone's mind is indeed closely linked to world peace and human happiness. The mind is the original source of both world peace and conflict. Natural disasters are caused by malevolent minds and the accumulation of grudges. It is thus clear that the promotion of moral education is indeed a major cause of relieving the suffering of the human race and is an extremely urgent task.

When we look at the news, we see incidents of family members killing one another. It is now time to promote moral education all over the world and to help people understand causality in order to resolve conflicts. If we do not act now, our families and friends may become terrorists in ten years. Why? Enmity accumulated over countless lifetimes may cause people to kill each other because of a small quarrel. One may encounter unexpected misfortune even at home. Even a king who has great wealth undergoes suffering. One cannot help but admire Dr. Toynbee for his

foresight, which not only reflected his wisdom, benevolence and selflessness but also carved out a path to a bright future for people of the 21st century.

In Confucian and Buddhist teaching and learning, order is most important. If the order is reversed, it is hard to benefit. The foundation of the thoughts of Confucius and Mencius is *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*. A Buddhist practitioner must begin with the *Ten Virtuous Deeds Sutra*. If one has read Buddhist sutras extensively and is skilled on lecturing but cannot truly practice the teachings in *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* and the *Ten Virtuous Deeds Sutra*, one's knowledge and skill cannot help resolve conflicts and achieve the goal of world peace and stability.

The distinguishing feature of traditional Chinese education is the emphasis on the child. *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* is a comprehensive book drawing from China's 5,000-year experience in childhood education. It contains standards for the conduct and speech of children. From the beginning of the pregnancy, a mother should act and speak carefully in order to lay a solid foundation for the child's moral development. There is an old Chinese saying that one's childhood education determines one's life's accomplishments or, as Wordsworth wrote, "The Child is Father of the Man". Childhood education teaches filial piety, fraternal love, loyalty, forgiveness, kindness, love, trustworthiness, and justice. It also teaches a child to put others' interest before one's own, to give up self-benefit and to benefit others, and not to harbor thoughts of competition and conflict.



▲The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child and Ten Virtuous Deed Sutra are Chinese sages' teaching of sincerity and love.

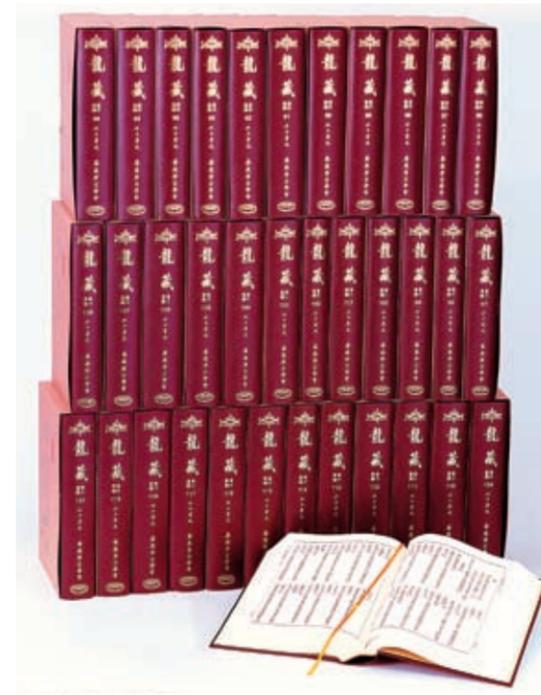
This is the sages' teaching of sincerity and love, and is the fundamental path to conflict resolution and disaster elimination. Thanks to these teachings, Chinese culture lasted 5,000 years. However, since forsaking these teachings less than a hundred years ago, China has suffered disorder.

The most powerful force in the whole universe is sincerity. Sincerity and love can resolve all conflicts, and prevent natural disasters and calamities instigated by man. As long as one's mind is perfectly pure and good, one's foes and opponents will not have the heart to hurt one. One who receives the teaching of the sages will not harbor any grudges when hurt by others, for one who is pure minded and kind will not have a single thought of revenge. If one does not retaliate when attacked physically or verbally, as time passes, one's foes will naturally be moved and all their enmities will be completely resolved.

Turning hated foes into close brothers, enemies into friends, and malevolent people into good ones are some of the greatest effects of teaching Mahayana Buddhism and

the thoughts of Confucius and Mencius. If we do the exact opposite - causing conflicts, taking revenge, hitting back, and engaging in competition - then we will face endless retribution. We can see proof in the Iraqi War. The United States seems to have won the war, but Iraqi insurgents still pose a great threat within the country, while Al Qaeda can exploit the conflict to cause harm to the whole world. As a result, there is a climate of fear and anxiety. The U.S. did not win the war. I am afraid that this threat will continue and spread. If we do not resolve the conflicts with sincerity and love, there will never be days of peace for people of the world.

Can we save the human race? We are facing a critical time. The whole world sincerely wishes for conflict resolution and world peace. Ancient Chinese sages emphasized that in order for people to enjoy happiness, families to enjoy harmony, countries to enjoy stability, and the world to enjoy peace, self-cultivation is fundamental and education is essential. I deeply believe that if Your Majesty would take the initiative in promoting moral education globally, you would definitely elicit a great



▲The Qing dynasty edition of the Buddhist Canon.

response. Then happiness, social stability, harmony and world peace could be expected soon. I wrote to President Bush of the United States in June to offer my humble suggestions, sincerely hoping that he could bring eternal peace and stability to the world. I also hope that Your Majesty would strive to be a savior of today's world.

In view of the importance of passing down the sages' teaching, many Buddhist practitioners from all over the world, including myself, have donated funds to print 4,000 sets of the Qing dynasty edition of the Buddhist Canon, several thousand copies of a Chinese traditional-style painting called the Scenes of the Hells Painting (also known as the Ten Kings Painting), and several hundred copies of *The Painting of the Sacred Saga of Confucius*. We have been giving them to libraries, museums, institutes of higher learning and religious groups all over the world. In October this year, at the request of the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, we

gave two hundred and sixty sets of the Buddhist Canon to various religious groups in that country for cultural exchange and learning.

The Qing dynasty edition is a comprehensive collection of books and records of the Buddha's teaching. In this edition, there are one hundred and twenty volumes, and a newly added catalog. The Scenes of the Hells Painting was a teaching device in art form for wise Chinese emperors to urge their people to refrain from wrongdoing and to cultivate good deeds. The original painting is sixty meters long.

At the investiture ceremony, when Ms. Quentin Bryce, the Governor of Queensland, conferred the AM Honor on me, I presented a set of the Qing dynasty edition of the Buddhist Canon (121 volumes are packed into ten boxes, height of 27 cm, width of 26.4 cm, and length of 36.8 cm, weighing 202.6 kg), and a set of the Ten Kings Painting to her and I have asked her to present to Your Majesty a similar set of the Buddhist Canon, a set of the Ten Kings Painting, and a copy of *The Painting of the Sacred Saga of Confucius*. These gifts will help Your Majesty to further understand Asian cultures. Your Majesty's comments will be greatly appreciated.

Lastly, I wish Your Majesty good health and Great Britain continued prosperity.

Respectfully yours,

Chin Kung AM
 President of Pure Land Learning College
 Honorary Professor, the University of Queensland
 and Griffith University, Australia
 Honorary Doctor, the Syarif Hidayatullah State
 Islamic University, Indonesia
 24 march, 2006

A Letter to Former President Megawati Soekarnoputri of Indonesia

Dear Madam President,

It was my honour to have met you at the Commemoration Ceremony on the 13th May, 2004. I believe that Indonesia is fortunate to have such an understanding and wise leader, and I envisage the future stability and prosperity of Indonesia.

Indonesia, with a population of over two hundred and twenty million, of which eighty-six percent are Muslims, is the largest Islamic country in the world. The majority of your people follow the holy teaching of Allah and I found that they also believe in the law of 'cause and effect'. I have visited Indonesia three times in the past and I have also had the pleasure of meeting various friendly Indonesian religious leaders and loyal Indonesians from all walks of life. Being a Buddhist monk of Chinese descent, I have even had the honour of being invited by the Department of Religious Affairs to give a speech at the welcoming dinner for the International Islamic Scholar Conference. I found Indonesia to be very welcoming and tolerant of different cultures and religions, and it is from my own personal experiences that I feel Indonesia is indeed a country full of hope and prosperity.

During the course of my three visits to Indonesia, I had conversations with Ministers of various Departments and found that they all shared the view that poor economy and social instability are the most severe problems in Indonesia today. Development of the economy relies on social stability. Social instability stems from conflicts between political parties, factions, and different religious and ethnic groups. These conflicts are the result of misunderstandings and lack of understanding which turn the intrinsically kind nature of humans into an "unkind" nature.

The ancient Chinese emphasised a word "Tong", which means open or transparent. To govern a nation is to have transparent politics and harmonious people. When all members of one family have no secrets and always keep open and honest attitudes towards each other, this family attains harmony and it prospers. So it is with a nation. Lack of openness between people results in misunderstanding and confrontations. If all Indonesian people uphold the qualities of sincerity, purity, equality, correct understanding and compassion, and should they think of benefiting other people, benefiting the nation, and follow the holy teachings of Allah, the country will change for the better. Social stability, harmony and prosperity would be realized and Indonesia would become a heaven on earth.

It is most important to carry on the spirit of the Koran and all other holy teachings of saints and sages. The methods of teaching should include the sharing of resources, speaking of kind words, helping others and working together with common goals. When good relationships between people are established, conflicts diminish, and social stability and world peace can be achieved.

The ancient Chinese also said, "Given a good chance from heaven is not as good as being placed at a good location. Being placed at a good location is not as good as being with harmonious people." To be with harmonious people is a most important issue in Indonesia and the world today.

In this current world, leaders should assume the roles of saints and sages to govern with wisdom, compassion and courage. They should take the initiative to visit leaders of different political parties (especially leaders of opposition parties), factions and leaders of different religious and ethnic groups so as to combine different

ideas, to clarify misunderstandings, to resolve confrontations and to seek cooperation.

Indonesia is a nation of islands, therefore it would be proper for the President to have an annual visit to different parts of the country to gain a first hand insight into the different needs of the people.

It would also be a good idea to have a "Dinner of Harmony" once year, with representatives of all political parties, factions, religions, ethnic groups to celebrate such an important national day. The goal being to unite all people and to enhance understanding.

Another suggestion may be to encourage leaders of different political parties, factions, religions and ethnic groups to travel abroad together as delegations. By doing so, the delegations would have a chance to stay together and to learn from each other and deepen understanding between them. It would effectively resolve misunderstanding and promote future cooperation.

Education is the foundation of a country. Education in the areas of morality and virtue would secure long-term stability of the country and religious teaching is the most important form of such education. It would be highly recommended that a "University of Religions" be established with the aim of providing training to religious teachers. With properly trained teachers, it would be possible to provide education to all people.

With the use of modern hi-tech tools, long distance moral education can reach everyone and everywhere. If everyone starts to learn and awakes to the teaching of saints and sages, appreciation of equality and mutual respect for all people would prevail. Everyone should know

that no one is more important than another. No religion is more important than another and no race is more important than another. All are equal. Everyone should respect each other and love each other. With such pure love, society would be more harmonious and stable, employment would be increased, foreign investment would multiply and the economy would thrive. If this could be achieved, Indonesia would be harmonious yet a strong 'model' country from which all other countries should learn. If all countries achieve this, world peace could be achieved.

I acknowledge that I am in no position to comment on all the above mentioned, and in writing to you I am simply providing my humble opinions and manifest my total sincerity in the hope that it may be of some value to you. My wish is that Allah will bless Indonesia and all its people and guide you towards peace and prosperity.

Sincerely Yours

Chin Kung

Honorary Professor

Griffith University, University of Queensland, Australia

1 July, 2004



▲ In 2004, at the invitation of President H.E. Megawati Soekarnoputri of Indonesia, Venerable Master Chin Kung attended the commemoration ceremony of the 1998 riot in Indonesia.

Self-Cultivation is the Foundation Education is our Priority

A harmonious society starts with a single person

By Shi Chin Kung

Keynote Speech at Perdana Peace Forum
16th December 2005, Kuala Lumpur

Introduction

It is a great honour to be invited to attend the Perdana Peace Forum. Dr. Mahathir has inspired many with his dedication and reputation. We deeply hope that under the guidance of Dr. Mahathir, this peace forum will invigorate the effort for world peace using practical actions to achieve true results.

I have had the opportunities to attend five peace conferences hosted by UNESCO where I learned from many experienced scholars and experts in the promotion of peace. Since the end of World War II, many people from around the world have dedicated enormous time, energy, and resources to the realization of peace. Yet peace remains elusive. Many people nowadays

believe that war is the means to peace. The letter of invitation identifies this false belief: “Increasing tension on the world scene, continuing belief in war as solution to world problems, arms buildup, and high-pressure sales of arms...” In the post-September 11th era, we see that terrorists wage a different type of warfare in the name of revenge, resulting in many living in perpetual fear. When we observe world affairs as a whole, we notice that poverty is on the rise; more people are filled with anger and frustration; the belligerence of powerful states increase; and natural and man-made disasters increasingly occur. Humans today seem to walk on a path of uncertainty and difficulty.

I have devoted fifty-four years of my life to the study of teachings by saints and sages, and forty-seven years as an educator on those teachings. As a result, I developed an understanding of the intrinsic goodness of human nature, and now truly believe that self cultivation is the foundation, while teaching is our priority. It is a great honour to be invited to attend this wonderful event. I will share what I have come to appreciate with everyone and I would be grateful for any feedback, direction, or guidance from the peace workers and colleagues at this forum.

I. Root Cause of Conflicts

Two years ago, a group of young students from around the world visited the Pure Land Learning College, and a student from Pakistan asked me, “Is world peace possible in the real sense?” My answer was yes, yet I could not help but feel saddened by his question. Our world today is full of turmoil and unrest, and many people have lost confidence in reaching the ideal of peace. In fifty-four years of learning and practicing the teaching of the saints and sages, I now deeply believe that our living environment

and our whole universe of existence are inherently harmonious, as are all beings on Earth. Human minds are born pure and kind. All thoughts and deeds of evil are the unfortunate products of contamination by the external world after birth. I truly believe that a good person is the product of good teaching, whilst a bad person is the product of the opposite kind of teaching. As a Buddhist, I see that good teachings create buddhas and bodhisattvas. The root of all turmoil in today’s society is the consequence of ignoring the importance of indiscriminate love and compassion as taught by the saints and sages. The prophets instructed us that without the belief in karma and destiny, people would casually commit sinful acts. The unfortunate results are great conflicts between humans, the natural environment, and beings from different worlds and dimensions. When we read newspapers and magazines, and watch television news, it is easy to see a global problem of conflicts and rivalries between nations, ethnic groups, and religions.

In my humble opinion, conflict and turmoil originate from the basic unit of our society: the family. When husbands and wives cannot get along with each other, when parents and children are in disharmony, or when siblings are in discord, it is not surprising that members of such families have difficulty interacting with the wider society. This leads to greater turmoil in our living community, negatively impacting our entire society. If we probe deeper, we find that the root cause of all conflict lies within our own minds. It is really an inner conflict between our intrinsic self and our acquired habitual behaviors. The intrinsic self is full of pure kindness. The habitual self is the product of contamination by self-benefiting viewpoints based on information acquired later in life. More simply, this is the conflict between altruism and selfishness. Therefore, conflict resolution



▲ In 2005, Venerable Master Chin Kung was invited to speak at the Perdana Global Peace Conference in Kuala Lumpur. Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad (middle), former Prime Minister of Malaysia.



▲The “Peace Gong,” a symbol of praying for world peace. Vice President Jusuf Kalla of Indonesia(1st from right), Mr. Din Syamsuddin, leader of Muhammadiyah(3rd from right), Mr. Hassan Wirajuda, Foreign Minister of Indonesia(4th from right), Ven. Master Chin Kung(5th from right).

should start with resolving the contradictions and conflicts within our own minds by letting go of selfishness and the ideas and behaviors of controlling people and acquiring objects. This is the ultimate method for resolving all conflicts in the world. In other words, to obtain harmony for the society, one must seek harmony within oneself and within one’s own family; it is not something that we can demand from others.

II. Conflict Resolution and Peace Restoration Must Rely on Education

In the 1970s, English historian Dr. Arnold Toynbee said that in order to resolve the social problems of the twenty-first century, we must rely on Confucianism and Mahayana Buddhism. What are the strengths and values of both teachings? The essence of Confucianism and Buddhism emphasize that the intrinsic nature of human beings is full of pure kindness. Both teachings seek to change the world with compassion and universal love by transforming evil to good, enemies to friends, lost to awakened, and ordinary people to saints and

sages. When we examine the holy scriptures, we see that such goals are common to the various faiths and religions. The holy teaching of Islam asked its followers to help those who renounced you, care for those who abandoned you, forgive those who have wronged you. Christians asked its believers to love their enemies. Buddhist sutra said, “Remember no past sins; resent no sinners”. Similarly, Confucians asked people to reach the “ultimate perfection in compassion and honour”. These are but minor examples of how we could resolve conflicts and restore peace by facilitating the teachings of the saints and sages. With the teaching of morality, compassion, and universal love for all, we can truly achieve peace and resolve conflicts.

Five thousand years ago in China, great scholars taught five principles:

1. There shall be a loving relationship between parents and children;
2. There shall be loyalty and fairness between leaders and followers;

3. There shall be distinct responsibilities between husband and wives;
4. There shall be order between seniors and juniors;
5. There shall be trust between friends.

All these relationships are part of the natural way of our life rather than rules invented by people. The Chinese people think that “morality and virtue” is the rule of nature. They define the word “virtue” as the quality that people possess when they obey the natural way or path of life. Chinese saints and sages mentioned the following virtues:

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| Filial piety, | fraternal love, |
| loyalty, | trustworthiness, |
| courtesy, | honour, |
| honesty, | love, |
| compassion, | harmony and equality. |

Another way to put it would be to treat others with filial piety, love, loyalty, trust, compassion and love, and live in accordance with all with courtesy, honour, honesty, harmony and equality.

These are the essence of moral and virtuous teachings of the saints and sages for all people. Saints and sages use these virtues to guide their own thoughts and actions and to pave the way for harmonious relationships between families and ethnic groups. These principles provide a way to stabilize the society and offer the underlying basis of education for all people.

Emperor Tang of the Shang Dynasty was commonly recognized as a saint. He said that, “If any of my people are at fault, all faults are mine.” As the leader and the emperor, he felt that it was his duty to educate his people. For without proper education, people were bound to make mistakes. The difference between the saints and ordinary people is that the saints

will reflect and see faults within themselves. For instance, when a member of a family does something wrong, the parents should reflect on how they failed. Have they been good role models for the others in the family? Have they taught the children properly? Once they understand this, they can begin to understand the philosophy that the responsibility for all family discord—and projected globally, social unrest—lies within oneself. By embracing this responsibility, it is our duty to act and speak as role models so others can learn from our examples. This is the difference between the saints and ordinary people. A person’s typical reaction is, “the others are to be blamed for the wrongs, and I solely receive all credit for the rights.” This is a grave mistake. For the same reason that Buddha, Confucius, and all the saints and sages of the world taught us to reflect and ask only of ourselves when any problem arises, no blame should be assigned to others. Emperor Tang said that when any group failed in any way, its leader must take responsibility. Ultimately, the duty and responsibility of any leader is to fulfill three roles: Ruler, Parent, and Teacher. Success of a leadership is fulfilled only when these three roles are performed appropriately.

III. The Three Roles of a Leader: Ruler, Parent, and Teacher

The idea of being a ruler, a parent, and a teacher is very important to the teachings of Confucianism. The three roles are often inseparable from one another. Ruler refers to a person in a leadership position. Regardless of the position in the organization, the leader has the responsibility to guide, plan, and lead his people or employees along the path of moral, tolerant, caring, loving, cooperating, peaceful, and harmonious relations with others in the society. Parent means that the leader should love and care for his people as he would his

own children, by helping them to secure their livelihood and happiness. Teacher refers to a person in the position to teach and direct people. The statement of “Learn to be a teacher and act as a role model for all” describes this role well. A teacher will attest to the goodness of human nature. While cultivating his own wisdom, a teacher must also place teaching as a priority in life. Attaining virtue and transforming his students are more important than anything else. As a leader who holds an obligation to be a teacher, he must teach his people how to act and think in moral and virtuous ways. By reasserting morality and honour, and not going against the natural way or path of life, wandering minds will have a place to rest and gain peace from within.

If we observe carefully, every single person has the same three roles to play in life. If everyone could perform one’s duty in his or her particular position in life, while completing responsibilities for these three roles, then personal success, family happiness, and harmony for the whole society is attainable. If leaders of nations lead their countries by abiding to the moral teachings of the saints and sages, then social harmony and world peace would be achievable. On the other hand, a misguided leadership could plunge the society, the country, and the world into disaster.

When we observe the world today, we see that many nations allocate massive resources to the funding and development of weapons of mass destruction. Even those nations that focus on economic developments, sometimes fail to provide the moral and ethical teachings for its people. As a result, people possess more greed than ever before, and consequently more social problems arise. Military, political, economic, and technological means cannot bring peace and stability to the world. Only by implementing education based on the teaching

of the saints and sages emphasizing sincere love, compassion, morality, and virtues, can we hope to achieve world-wide fundamental peace and stability. A Confucian statement, “To establish and guide a nation, education is the top priority,” demonstrates the importance of proper education. The national policy of any country should be guided by the peaceful teaching of compassion and love, which encourages all people to live in harmony and treat one another with equality. A successful leader is a leader who can resolve the confrontations and conflicts between all factions, ethnic groups, and religions. Such a leader would direct the country to be progressive in the face of diversity by finding a commonality and providing solidarity for all sides. With such leadership, a stable and peaceful environment would then be the perfect setting from which to develop a prosperous economy and advanced technology. Prosperity and wealth would naturally follow. This is the ultimate goal for being ruler, parent, and teacher.

Focusing on the development of the economy and trading would only fulfill the role of parent. An ancient Chinese saying states that, “When a person only cares for wealth and material needs, and cares not for the proper moral and virtuous education, he or she is closer to being a beast than a human being. Saints and sages being concerned for this moral regression, set out to have teachers educate students regarding the proper relationships between all people. A respected and efficient ruler is one who leads his people with the nourishment of proper education and teachings.” This was a statement recorded over four-thousand years ago. The role of teacher is tremendously important. Using war and revenge as a means to solve problems only leads people into perpetual fear and unrest. The leader thus fails in the ultimate responsibility bestowed upon him by his people, namely being

their ruler, parent, and teacher.

I sincerely hope that leaders from around the world exercise their wisdom, compassion, and courage, with the guidance of the loving and compassionate teachings of the saints and sages, to help all people comprehend the meaning of our existence in this universe, help alleviate pain and suffering, and help attain enlightenment by breaking free of delusion. If this vision is actualized, our forum today would have contributed greatly toward achieving eternal happiness and peace for the human race.

During the 18th century, many countries sent envoys and delegates to visit China during her prosperous and strong era of the early Qing dynasty. The tribe of Qing ruled the vast China as a minority group. If we look at the history of the Qing dynasty, we can see Qing’s proficiency and adeptness in rulings and governance. Emperors of Qing invited Confucian scholars and experts to teach in the palace. The Emperors required their officials to attend these lectures daily. Qing Emperors paid great attention to the teachings of the saints and sages and lived by the teaching to act as role model for others. As a result, the royal families and the higher government officials also were influenced by these moral teachings. These teachings became the fundamental values that guided the ruling class to use wisdom and compassion to benefit its people through the qualities of loyalty, filial piety, mercy, and honour. This is how the Qing Dynasty was able to establish such a strong reign in the vast land of China, uniting fifty-six ethnic groups, and achieving success. It was not until much later when Qing’s successors decided to ignore the teachings of the saints and sages that the Qing Dynasty had its downfall.

In order to completely resolve confrontation, conflict, fear, and war, we need to rely on education and teaching to rekindle people’s

inner goodness, compassion, and peace to gain true benefit. At the same time, the roles of ruler, parent, and teacher can only be perfected by following the teachings of the saints and sages.

IV. Four Types of Education

There were four types of education in ancient China: family education, formal education, social education, and religious education.

Family education was the basis of all other types of education. Formal education was the extension of family education. Social education introduced diverse learning and helped to shape skills. Religious education explained the meaning of our existence in this life.

In September of this year, I had a meeting with the vice chancellor from the University of Southern Queensland and several professors in Australia. One topic of our conversation was about a study that was done before World War II. Several European scholars researched the question of why Chinese civilization still stands while the other three ancient civilizations had virtually disappeared. The research concluded that the most likely explanation was the strong emphasis that the Chinese placed on family education.



▲ All human beings are innately good.

I can't agree more with their findings. The Chinese traditional education has always focused on family education. Parents started educating their infant from the day they were born. Parents lived as role models for their child, believing that their every single gesture and word would leave an imprint on their infant's mind and later affect the infant's life. An old Chinese saying stated that, "At the age of three, one sees how a child will behave at eighty years of age. At the age of seven, one sees the rest of the child's life." Since ancient time, Chinese have always put great emphasis on family education. Building of the ancestral memorial halls serves as a monument of everlasting filial piety. Temples of Confucius were built to remind people of the importance of proper education and respect for teachers. The Temple of the Underworld reminded people of the consequences of their actions by teaching cause and effect. I have grown up in such an environment. All of these aspects had taught me to appreciate my parents, my teachers, and the consequences of my actions, and has influenced me throughout my life.

Again referring to Dr. Arnold Toynbee statement that to resolve the social problem of the twenty-first century, we must rely on Confucianism and Mahayana Buddhism, we must ask why he made this claim. Without an understanding of the principles behind this claim, it is difficult to comprehend and practice



▲In 2004, Ven. Master Chin Kung visited Dr. Emoto in his research lab in Tokyo, Japan

such traditional teachings. To simplify this rationale, we can refer to a simple elementary text for young children: *"The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child."* This seemingly simple book has integrated the essence of five-thousand years of Chinese family education. What we now know as the Chinese classical books, such as "Four Books" and the "Five Classics," are all but superficial shells of the core values of the traditional teachings. If we do not focus on the foundation, no matter how colorful or ornate the words may be, the true spirit will soon wither and die away. Only by embracing *"The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child"* as the core values, can we see Confucianism manifest as a practical way of life. The same applies to Buddhism. Even if a person has memorized the whole Buddhist Canon Encyclopedia, without fully appreciating and practicing the content of the *"Ten Virtuous Deeds Sutra"* in daily life, he or she will never be able to enjoy the statement, "Learning the teachings of Buddha is the highest form of joy".

Those who dedicate their lives to the promotion of peace must realize that only by resolving their inner conflicts and letting go of selfish gain by treating others with sincerity and love, can they hope to resolve world conflicts and confrontations, and ultimately gain peace and harmony. Practicing *"The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child"* and the *"Ten Virtuous Deeds Sutra"* would lead to developing words and thoughts that will resolve conflicts. Both books describe the natural way of life for all beings. They are similar and complimentary to all the holy teachings of our world. Today, disasters, man-made and natural, occur in our lives with greater frequency. Only by abiding to such teachings of compassion and unconditional love from the saints and sages of all regions of the world, can people hope to find true happiness and peace.

Dr. Emoto from Japan has performed tens of thousands of experiments on water crystal formation. He discovered that the mere thoughts of "love" and "gratitude" caused the water crystal to form beautiful structures. Dr. Emoto was invited to speak to the UN assembly on his finding. Water is but a natural substance of earth. If water can sense people's thoughts and words, so can human beings. Buddhist sutra stated, "All phenomena arise from our mind. Our mind is the painter and our consciousness is the canvas that gives rise to everything." Each of our thoughts truly does link to the happiness and world peace for the entire human race.

Our mind is also the root of conflicts and peace. Disasters are another form of contamination of people's minds. From this point of view, it is imperative to promote the education on morality and virtues. It is a significant effort that could change the misfortune of all people.

V. Practical Suggestions

As previously mentioned, in order to bring lasting peace and stability to a society, a nation, or the world, promotion of moral and virtuous education should be the top priority. In practice, a country needs to train twenty or thirty teachers who will take turns in propagating these teachings. The leaders of the country should attend these teachers' classes and learn diligently. These lessons should be recorded and mass produced on suitable mediums such as DVDs. It would be best to air these lessons on national television stations at primetimes. This will start a trend for all to follow. Imagine the audience in front of the television witnessing leaders of their country learning the teachings of the saints and sages. Interest would rise and people would start to follow a similar path of study. If two to four hours of such daily learning could be achieved over a long period, significant

social trends would show improvement within one year.

Starting at the New Year's Eve of 2003, Hwazan satellite TV station, which was established by followers in the U.S., officially began broadcasting. This satellite TV station broadcasts programs featuring teachings of the saints and sages. Without any advertisement or entertainment programming, this TV station has been successfully running for the past three years relying solely on donations from people around the world. In today's increasingly materialistic world, the rating of the Hwazan satellite TV station indicates that many people still long for moral and positive teachings. It is a testament to the statement, "the intrinsic nature of human beings is full of goodness."

The ancient Chinese said that "Having the right timing is not as important as having the right conditions; having the right conditions is not as important as having harmony between your co-workers". Achieving harmony of people is the most important issue for everyone. In today's democratic society, national leaders should visit the leaders of different factions (especially the leaders of the opposition party), and religious, and ethnic groups to exchange ideas and learn from each other. Resolving misunderstanding and dissolving confrontation would be the first step toward cooperation and solidarity.

Leaders of nations could hold a "Harmony Festival" at least once a year during a special national holiday, inviting people from different factions, religions, and ethnic groups, and consuls from different countries, to meet together. The goal would be to promote friendship and resolve misunderstandings. In the past, I have jointly held three annual festivals with nine major religious organizations in Singapore. Each event facilitated a

wonderful multicultural atmosphere and mutual appreciation. Although I left Singapore four years ago, whenever I travel through Singapore, I attempt to invite representatives from the nine religions to dine together and renew our friendships. The wonderful friendships and the great experiences I had in Singapore with so many friends from different faiths and religions had firmly encouraged me to boost my confidence in promoting multicultural solidarity internationally.

To promote mutual learning, leaders can encourage different factions, religions, and ethnic groups to travel together as a group to visit other countries. This simple exercise will deepen mutual understanding and facilitate learning. In 2000, we invited representatives from the nine religions of Singapore to visit China. All representatives lived as a group for over ten days. Under the relaxed atmosphere, each member learned and communicated with the others. The gaps between members dissolved away quickly. In July 2004, I accompanied the Indonesian delegation, comprising of representatives from five major religions, for a formal visit to Egypt and the Vatican. In December of the same year, I was

invited to join the religious delegation headed by Mr. Abdurrahman Wahid to China. While traveling on a tight schedule, everyone learned from one another. A sense of caring and mutual respect grew within our visiting group, which far out-weighed what a long, drawn-out speech could ever achieve. This trip dissolved many misconceptions and facilitated a closer working relationship between all parties.

Today all human beings and our planet earth are facing critical challenges at a pivotal moment. In my lectures, I often talk about the two most important types of people who have had the greatest influence towards the prosperity or the downfall of both humankind and our world. They are the leaders of nations and the operators of the news media. The policy of national leaders and the power of media have decisive influence on the quality of peoples' lives.

It is far more effective for a state or nation to promote proper education and facilitate peace than to rely on a civil group, who needs to overcome many obstacles to achieve mere marginal success. What a state or nation can achieve in a year would be far greater than what we, or any private group, could achieve in ten



▲ Staying in Lujiang, listening to the harmonious sounds of nature.

or even twenty years. It truly requires leaders with great wisdom, compassion, and courage to shoulder the immense task that will influence countless generations to come. This is my sincere wish for Dr. Mahathir and everyone here at the forum.

Conclusion

I have always educated my students in lectures that the promotion of moral and virtuous education of the saints and sages requires more of a classroom than conference environment. Teaching in a classroom takes advantages of the latest technology to increase its effectiveness. For the past few decades, we have freely given out digital mediums and books to promote education of morality, virtue, compassion, and universal loving kindness. In the past few years, we have used the internet and satellite television to spread the teachings of the saints and sages to reach almost everyone in the world. In China, many young teachers took

the initiative to practice and teach these seeds of compassion and love to all who were interested in learning. Their efforts have touched many people, young and old. This influence has gradually extended overseas. (We have held many lecture series in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Australia, and Paris.) This year, in my hometown Anhui province of China, we have established a "Cultural Education Center". We wish to train more teachers of morality and virtue and to continue the teachings of the saints and sages. It is our hope that the message of compassion and universal loving kindness will reach the world. All the efforts have begun to show results. If chance permits, I would welcome everyone here to visit our center and share your thoughts with us. Lastly, I would like to share a few words with all participants, which concludes my talk today.

Harmonious Society Exists

When

All Countries are in Harmony;

Treat All with Equality

And

All will Live and Prosper as one Unity.

Harmonious Society Exists

When

All Races are in Harmony;

Treat All with Equality

And

All will care and help one another as a

Family.

Harmonious Society Exists

When

All Religions and Faiths are in

Harmony;

Treat All with Equality

And

All will share Peace and Cordiality

My sincere wishes for the well-being and prosperity of your countries; and sincere wishes for your welfare and success.



▲ Master and Indonesia Multi-Faith delegation members touring the great pyramid, one of the Seven Wonders

Discover the Spirit of Zheng He Inspiration Towards Peace and Prosperity

East Asia Religious Leaders Forum Remembering Zheng He 600 Years Ago: Cooperation for Peace and Prosperity

By Shi Chin Kung

12 February 2006, Jakarta, Indonesia

I. Prologue

It is a great honor to be invited by the Indonesian Committee on Religion for Peace and Multi-Culture Society and to have this opportunity to share my experiences and views on the topic of “Unity and Solidarity of Religions and Resolution of Conflicts Towards Peace and Stability of the World”. I am very grateful to have this chance to learn from religious leaders, scholars, and experts at this forum.

II. Travel Around the World; Manifestation of the Spirit of Peace and Loving-Kindness

Zheng He, both Chinese and a Muslim, was born in the fourth year of Emperor Tai Zu of the Ming dynasty and passed away in the tenth year of Emperor Xuan Zong (1371-1435). Six-hundred years ago, he received an imperial decree from Emperor Cheng Zu of Ming dynasty to commence seven seafaring explorations and discovery of the world with

the goal to “befriend and propagate moral education to countries of distant shores”. He embarked on his first voyage during the third year of Emperor Cheng Zu’s reign (1405) and his last voyage during the fifth year of Emperor Xuan Zong’s reign. In the eighth year of Emperor Xuan Zong’s reign, he returned home after the completion of his task. According to the “Four Treasuries of Assembled Essentials” under the section “History of Ming”, his seven explorations took place in the following years:

- 1)1405 (3rd year of the reign of Emperor Cheng Zu)
- 2)1408 (6th year of the reign of Emperor Cheng Zu)
- 3)1412 (10th year of the reign of Emperor Cheng Zu)
- 4)1416 (14th year of the reign of Emperor Cheng Zu)
- 5)1421 (19th year of the reign of Emperor Cheng Zu)

6)1424 (22nd year of the reign of Emperor Cheng Zu)

7)1430 (5th year of the reign of Emperor Xuan Zong)

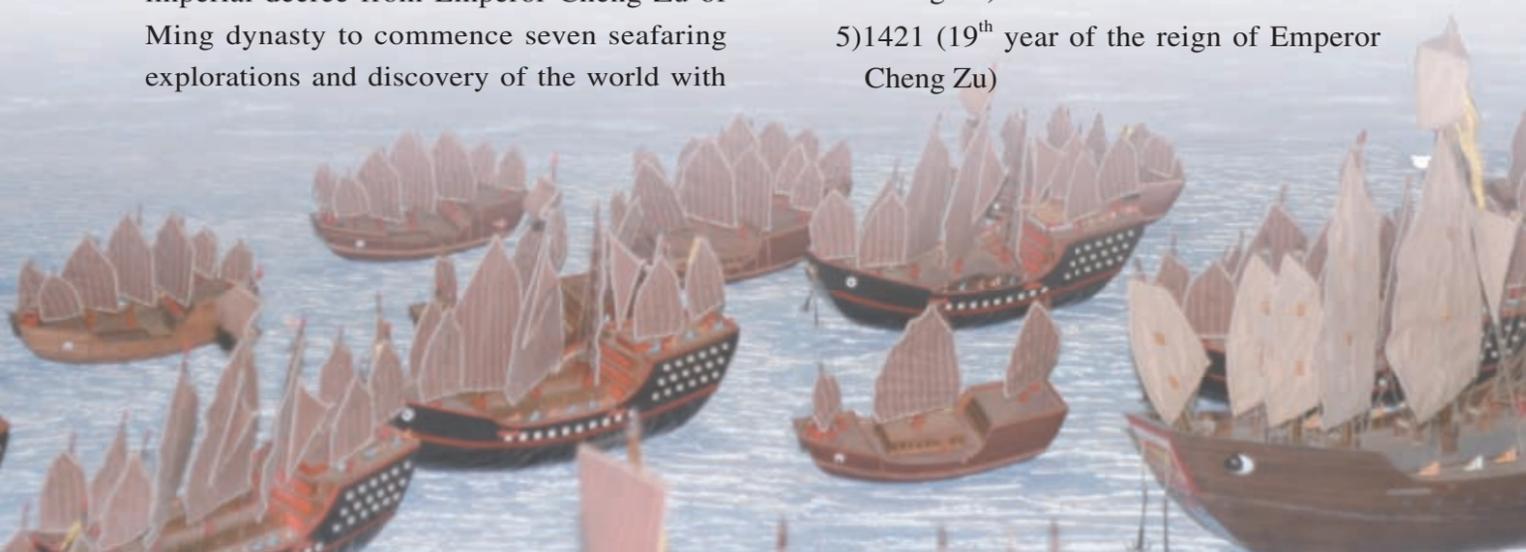
Each voyage lasted approximately two years, and in his twenty-eight years (1405-1433) of travel, he landed in major cities from the central and southern parts of today’s Vietnam, Thailand, Malay Peninsula, the south Pacific Islands, and India, and as far away as Iran, Arabia, and the east coast of Africa. Zheng He’s fleet visited over thirty countries. His fleet was the largest in the world at that time with more than twenty-eight thousand sailors. The number of ships in each voyage numbered from sixty-two to over two hundred. His flagship “Boat of Treasure” was one hundred fifty meters long, twice the length of the main hall in Beijing’s Forbidden Palace and comparable in size to modern aircraft carriers. Unlike modern ships, Zheng He’s fleet was built of wood and used sails. While normal sailing ships have three to six masts, the “Boat of Treasure” had a dozen masts. This was many times the size of Columbus’s ship.

On his voyage in the nineteenth year of the reign of Emperor Cheng Zu (1421-1423), Zheng He made his most important discoveries. Zheng He divided the fleet into four teams, each sailing a different route. They traveled to every continent in the world, passing through sixty-two archipelagos, totaling over one thousand seven hundred islands. As a result, cartographers were able to make tens of thousands of coastline maps. His fleet passed through the Indian Ocean and arrived at the east coast of Africa. They then navigated through the Cape of Good Hope, passing through the Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea and found the Arctic and South America. They then traveled south and found Antarctica. From there, they sailed through

the Pacific Ocean and landed in Australia and New Zealand. This tells us that Zheng He’s fleet discovered Australia and Antarctica three hundred fifty years earlier than Captain Cook, traveled around the world one hundred years before Magellan, and landed on the American continent seventy years ahead of Columbus.

Zheng He truly was a great navigator! He possessed the wealth of knowledge, courage, and wisdom to command his fleet through vast oceans amidst trying conditions, and found new lands and discoveries for the human race. His rarest quality was that as a faithful Muslim, he adhered to the moral and virtuous teachings of the Koran; he personally exercised the infinite mercy of Allah for all human beings and displayed his traditional Chinese cultural wisdom of peace and loving-kindness. During his seven expeditions, no colony was ever established and not an inch of land invaded or claimed by his presence. He contributed to the local people by providing better farming techniques, technical advances, and cultural exchanges. The locals gave him the title “Three Protector Eunuch”. Even today, there are still many popular temples of Zheng He in the various regions of the South Pacific.

Gift exchanges were prominent events for Zheng He. When the locals sent their regards to the Chinese Emperor in the form of local produce, the Chinese Emperor reciprocated by giving at least double the amount of gifts received. This was the way of expressing friendship and sincerity. The Chinese cultivated this mentality through years of moral education starting from youth. Traditional Chinese family education taught their young to always exercise kindness, generosity, consideration, and sincerity to others. This was seen in Zheng He’s foreign policy of harmony and peace towards different countries, groups, and religions.



The core of traditional Chinese education could be summed up with the word “love” or education of love. Since ancient times, Chinese have been nourished by such education. In the five thousand years of recorded history, whenever the tribe of Han ruled the land, China had never invaded other countries. One will not find a war initiated by the Chinese for the purpose of occupying another’s land. It was a country of peace simply because they had been receiving education of peace and love. They would willingly sacrifice their lives for others and would not invade or take from others by force.

Zheng He, the navigator from the fifteenth century, brought Chinese skills and knowledge to benefit people around the world across great distances. At the same time, he spread the peace loving spirit of the Chinese to the five major continents of our world. He brought prosperity and wealth to people at that time. Today, after six hundred years, his past deeds give us much inspiration about how we can bring forward peace and harmony through the spirit of honesty, sincerity, compassion, and love. The message of “benevolence, compassion, universal love, sincerity, respect, humility, and harmony” was not just the essence of Chinese traditional education: it was the common teachings and guidelines of all religions and their saints and sages. It represented the innate purity and goodness that all beings possess originally. It was no wonder that many eastern and western scholars, including the renowned English historian Dr. Toynbee who extensively studied and thoroughly understood the traditional Chinese culture, believed that the education of benevolence, compassion, and universal love was real. Such teachings and education were all part of the cultural inheritance of humankind. These treasures of wisdom, when properly implemented and enhanced, truly would bring long lasting harmony, peace, prosperity, and

wealth to the twenty-first century.

III. Saints and Sages’ Education that Inspires “Wisdom, Benevolence, and Courage”

From history, we saw that Zheng He’s exploration was not an easy undertaking and there were many experiences to be gained. He measured the accurate longitude of earth three hundred years before the Europeans and mapped out the positions of many new islands. European navigators relied on his map to find the New World. He adapted to the constantly changing seafaring conditions and always had long-term supplies for his twenty thousand crews. There were times when he encountered pirates and robbers. These problems were resolved with wisdom and courage. He would defeat these enemies and yet always showed mercy and leniency. He made passages safe for friends and visitors from afar to see China. Visitors and delegates from overseas were numbered well above any other times in history.

We may wonder where did Zheng He’s spirit, compassion, wisdom, and courage come from. In actuality, it was the result of education from both Chinese traditional education and the education of the Koran. In my lectures, I often mentioned that saints, sages, Buddhas, and bodhisattvas were the end result of appropriate teaching. A good person was the product of good teaching, whilst a bad person was also the product of another kind of teaching. Terrorists were no different. Everything depends on how we conduct education. In order to resolve all conflicts and seek peace, prosperity, and social stability, we have to rely on the education of saints and sages.

In terms of education, China has had rich experiences and achievements. While more than five thousand years ago, the Chinese began emphasizing the importance of education, it

was not until the reigns of Emperor Yao and Shun that a clear structure was established. According to historical records, in ancient times, Emperor Yao instructed Hou Ji to teach people how to farm. Once the five types of crops were harvested and people’s basic needs were met, the way or path to humanity could begin. After attaining basic needs, if humans were not educated, they would resemble beasts. The saint (Emperor Yao) worried about this outcome and sent Qi to teach the five moral principles to the people: (1) There shall be a loving relationship between parents and children; (2) There shall be loyalty and fairness between leaders and followers; (3) There shall be distinct responsibilities between husband and wives; (4) There shall be order between seniors and juniors; and (5) There shall be trust between friends. This recorded history described how Emperor Yao and Shun started their educational system more than four thousand five hundred years ago in China.

There were four types of education: family education, formal education, social education, and religious education. Family education formed the basis of all other types of education. The content of these four types of education centered on morals, virtues, causality, and religion. Other subjects such as science, skills, arts, and applied knowledge were only secondary in importance. When all four types of education were achieved, social harmony and world peace would be attainable.

In September 2005, I had a meeting with the Vice Chancellor of the University of Southern Queensland and several professors in Australia. One topic of our conversation was about a study that was conducted before World War II. Several European scholars researched why Chinese civilization still stands while the other three ancient civilizations had virtually disappeared. The research concluded that the most likely explanation was the strong emphasis that the Chinese placed on family education.



▲If people are not taught, their nature will change for the worse.

I could not agree more with this conclusion. The Chinese traditional education had always focused on family education. Parents started educating their infants from the day they were born. Parents lived as role models for their children, firmly believing that their every gesture and word would leave an imprint on their infant's mind and later affect his life. Chinese education began three to four days after an infant's birth. This gave rise to the following Chinese saying, that "At the age of three, one sees how the person will be at eighty years of age. At the age of seven, one foresees the rest of the person's life." According to history, "the youngest son of King Zhou Tai married Tai Ren, who was a demure and graceful lady. She followed the way of virtues. When she was pregnant, her eyes avoided sight of sin; her ears listened to no frivolous sounds; her mouth did not utter words of insolence. She was educating her son in the womb. Later, she gave birth to Emperor Zhou Wen, one of the greatest

emperors in China. Both the mother and son were in the league of saints." This is what the Chinese understood as "pre-natal education".

When children reached five to six years of age, they were sent to private school founded by private individuals. For every twenty-five families, there would be a school; for every five hundred families together, the larger school would be called "Xiang" 「庠」; for every twelve thousand families the school was called "Xu" 「序」; the schools in Imperial or the royal capitals were called "Xue" 「學」. State administered schools began in the Han dynasty when the university was created. Later in the Tang dynasty, an official education department was established, completing the educational structure. This system was able to train many future government officials. In the area of social education, there were whole arrays of educational entertainment for various generations of people. Plays, songs, dances, recitation of books were parts of what

was available. They taught people to see the importance of loyalty, filial piety, integrity, and honor. Such education gave man, woman, young and old, even the illiterate, a chance to understand the guideline for being a decent human being. The long term stability and peace of the society could thus be preserved.

Religious education, such as Buddhism, was introduced to China by the Emperor's invitation in the tenth year of the reign of Emperor Xiao Ming of Han dynasty (AD 67). A Buddhist temple was a combination of Buddhist education and arts center. It was much like the present day university and museum combined. Its main tasks were translating and providing lectures on sutras. The Buddhist Canon we see today is the result of generations of Chinese Emperors who brought together Buddhist masters and experts to compile and systematize this tremendous encyclopedia of Buddhist texts. The "Qian Long Buddhist Canon" compiled in Qing dynasty was especially recognized as the most comprehensive and complete collection of works, which included not only the translated sutras from Sanskrit, but also notes, reflections, reports, and commentaries written by Buddhist masters and experts over a period of seventeen hundred years. It was the most valuable cultural treasure of wisdom for the human race.

In the second year of the reign of Emperor Tai Zong of Tang dynasty, the prophet Mohammed sent delegates and an official letter to the Emperor. Tai Zong warmly received the delegates and praised the Islamic teachings. He gave imperial decree to build a mosque in the Guangdong Province for the benefit of Arabian traders so they would have a place of worship. This was the earliest recorded event that Islamic religion had been introduced to China. After over one thousand years of development, Islamic teachings incorporated cultures from Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, which

gave fuller interpretation of Koran's teachings. This enhanced the follower's faith in Allah, spreading love and peace, and leading to inner tranquility and social serenity. These teachings molded Zheng He's character, which helped his achievements in life. Six hundred years ago, Zheng He was able to command over twenty-eight thousand crewmembers, and to travel through seemingly endless oceans over a prolonged period of time. This was achieved with the help of his knowledge and learning of morals, virtues, and religious teachings since young. If these individuals, such as Zheng He, did not have a true understanding about the relationships between people and had not discovered love, honesty, and courage through true wisdom, no matter how strict the rules and laws were at that time, they could never have had such a great achievement in life.

IV. Urgent Need for Improving Moral Standards of All people

The education that we discussed today differs from the skill-based teaching of modern learning institutions. The true meaning of education in the past was to re-initiate the purity, goodness, sincerity, and loving-kindness that each person intrinsically possess and continually sustain and enhance these qualities. This education can be categorized into moral education, virtuous education, causality education, and religious education.

1. Moral education:

- a) Teachings that promote understanding of the true relationships between human beings. For example, loving relationship between parents and children, distinct responsibility between husbands and wives, loyalty and fairness between leaders and followers, order between seniors and juniors, and trust between friends.



▲ In Sep. 2005, more than 2000 Buddhists from various parts of Indonesia, gathered outside the Guang Hua One Vehicle Temple to receive a set of the Qianlong Buddhist Canon presented by Venerable Master Shi Chin Kung.

b) Teachings that facilitate real world enhancement to develop caring relationships between people and real practice in sincerity, respect, humility, and harmony.

2. Virtues education:

a) Teachings that promote compassion towards all people, matters, and objects. For example, treat every person, matter and object with equality, harmony, respect, and cooperation.

b) Teachings that promote understanding of people and the environment, which naturally brings forth equality, love, and the awareness of ecological survival.

c) Teachings that enhance personal development in virtues. Self cultivation is the essence; When we cannot obtain the goal we seek, we should reflect upon ourselves and not blame others; and human beings need to acquire knowledge that will shape them into good and decent human beings, and not about concerning themselves with riches and social status.

d) The ultimate goal of this teaching was for all people to return from bad habits to the intrinsic kindness that all people possess.

3. Causality education

a) The cause and effect of continuity that extended from past to present and from present to future: Faith leads to understanding; Understanding leads to humbly seeking evidence and attainment; thus such teaching leads to true benefit and enjoyment in the future.

b) There were four applications:

i) Teachings that help the poor to leave poverty and to create wealth.

ii) Teachings that remove ignorance and gain wisdom.

iii) Teachings that alleviate pain and

suffering to gain happiness.

iv) Teachings that help all people to be dutiful and contented while breaking away from the habit of wrongdoing, and accumulating goodness through good deeds.

4. Religious Education:

a) Religious Education was the most sublime of the previous three educations, and the highest form of enjoyment in life.

b) Religions need to be modern and in accordance with local customs; be tolerant and live in harmony with all factions and religions; use concentration and wisdom to resolve all confrontations, ambiguities, doubts, and conflicts; promote and enhance intrinsic compassion and love to attain harmony among all people and treat all with equality; and provide a haven for all beings in our society to learn the ultimate education that will lead to happiness and fulfillment.

c) Religious education should help us to understand the relationship between human and beings of different dimensions

d) Religious education should help us to understand the relationship between human and the natural environment

From the above, we saw that “the education of saints and sages” was the very foundation to building a harmonious society and world that would lead to a happy and fulfilling life.

If a person did not accept such education, all the wealth and power in the world could not bring true meaning to life. The Confucian teacher, Mencius, once said: “When a person refuses to accept moral and virtue education, he is no different from a beast.” Today, our societies are facing moral dilemma and ethical crisis. With the current never-ending critical

issues that our societies are facing today, we need to contemplate in depth the words of Mencius.

The ancient Chinese understood this fact perfectly. During the time of Wang Mang (1st Century), aerial gliding techniques were already discovered. During the time of the Three Kingdoms, Zhu Ge Liang developed wooden cow and flowing horse. Mechanical transportation replaced human labor. When we looked at the seven explorations of Zheng He, his navigation through oceans relied on advanced knowledge in the areas of astronomy, navigation, and minerals extraction. The ships were equipped with cannons for self-defense. Various extraordinary technologies were developed by the Chinese much earlier than the West. Why was it that the Chinese declined to develop them further? Why was this knowledge not preserved and passed down to later generations? Was it because the ancient Chinese were selfish? No. The answer was simply that ancient Chinese, with great wisdom, understood that when technology was blindly advanced without proper guidance of morals, virtues, and

religions to guide them, this knowledge would bring disasters to humankind. When the demand for materialism surpassed spirituality, humanity would head towards annihilation. When we calmly observe all the problems we face today, be it political, economical, or social issues such as suicides and divorces, all were resulted from the neglect of the teachings of morals, virtues, and religions.

Using politics as an example, Confucius said: “The legacy of any political system will only last as long as its leader is still in power.” True leaders possessing wisdom and morals would bring happiness and peace to people whether in a democratic or feudal system, or through separation or unification of church and state. If leaders of nations did not possess morals and thoughts to benefit all people, then no matter how thorough and meticulous the laws were created, they would only be tools for personal gain. Thus, bringing disasters for all. Hence, a democratic system requires all people to hold high standard of morals and virtues. This way people could elect the right person for the government without ill effects. However,



▲ The education of saints and sages was the very foundation to building a harmonious society and world.

if the population could not reach a high moral standard, monarchy would be a better choice for the benefit of the majority. A monarch would want to solidify his reign and he or she had to employ the best possible teachers to train a good successor. He had to be responsible for the reign of his whole family. In so doing, he must exercise caution and do his best for his people. Otherwise, revolts would usurp his power.

Now we look at how ancient Chinese selected talents and capable people. The Emperor instructed the local government officials to privately investigate those who were truly “loving (filial piety) and had integrity” and to escort them to state learning institutions for learning to be of future service to his people. A person who was dutiful and loving at home would certainly be loyal to his country. A person with integrity would not be easily corruptible. Today in every country, from government level down to private sector, we saw corruption and disloyalty run rampant.

“Loyalty, filial piety, integrity, and honesty” were the fundamental teachings of the Chinese traditional education system, as well as the teachings of all saints and sages of our world. From this, we see that a saint or sage is a product of good teaching, whilst a terrorist is also the product of another type of teaching.

Today, family, formal, and social educations are about teaching people to compete with others for self gain even if it brings harm to others and the society as a whole. Most productions of mass media encourage greed, anger, ignorance, killing, stealing, lust, and deceit. This actually cultivates terrorists and rioters within our society. How could there not be turmoil in the world? To teach is to be a role model for students to follow. To learn is to correct faults and enhance goodness. Today, children are watching adults exercising hatred

and revenge to solve problems. In the future, these children will exercise even more violence and hatred to resolve issues. With war, turmoil, and natural or man-made disasters in abundance today, could we not conclude that our present education has gone terribly wrong? To establish a nation and guide its people, education must be the priority. This is the best solution to our current dilemma. All the issues that we face today, some more urgent than others, must be resolved by proper education. All other means are only secondary and can not be used to solve our problems. The improvement of morals and virtues for the entire human race certainly requires urgent attention.

V. Promotion of Religious Dialogue, Resolution of Conflicts and Confrontations

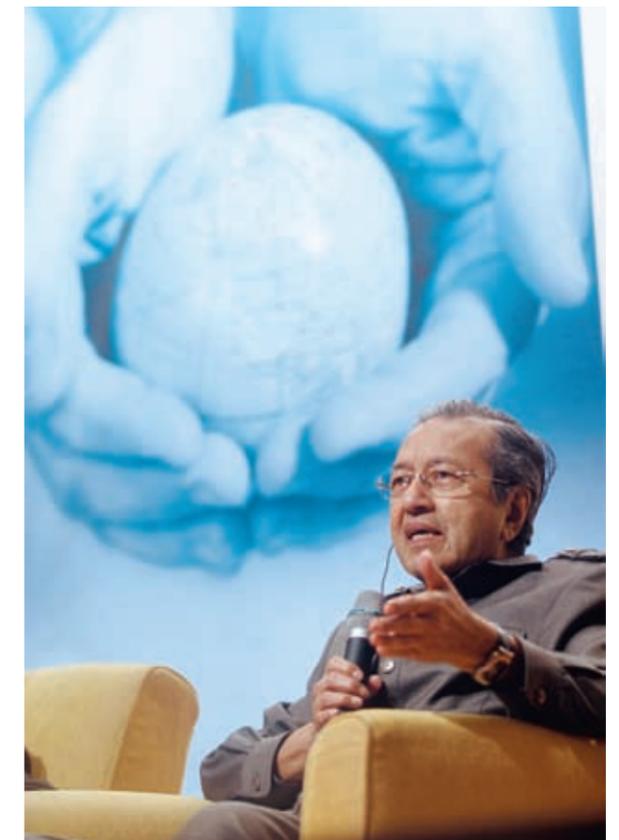
In the 1970s, English historian Dr. Arnold Toynbee said that in order to resolve the social problems of the twenty-first century, one must rely on Confucianism and Mahayana Buddhism. What were the strengths and values of both teachings? The essence of Confucianism and Buddhism emphasize that the intrinsic nature of human beings is filled with pure kindness. Both teachings seek to change the world through compassion and universal love, by transforming evil to good, enemies to friends, delusion to awakening, and ordinary people to saints and sages. Actually, these goals are common to the scriptures of all faiths and religions. The holy teaching of Islam asked its followers to help those who renounced them, care for those who abandoned them, and forgive those who have wronged them. In Catholicism, its believers are taught to love their enemies. The Buddhist sutra said: “Remember no past sins; resent no sinners”. Similarly, Confucius asked people to reach the “ultimate perfection in compassion”. Mencius asked people to perfect their honor. Saints and sages, no matter when or where they exist, always teach all people compassion and love.

However, very sadly, such traditional education has discontinued for at least a whole century in China. Both the East and the West had been neglecting the dissemination of the teachings by the saints and sages of religions. More emphasis was placed in formality. In October 2005, I met with former Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dr. Mahathir. We talked about this problem. Dr. Mahathir said that followers of Islam were not really exercising the teachings of Koran. This has caused many to misunderstand Islam. I must acknowledge that this problem was not unique to Islam; Buddhism was no exception. Most people trivialized the learning of the scriptures, only wanting formality and rituals. When religion was the topic of conversation, many people relate it to superstitions and reject it as such. In the worst possible scenario, opportunists use the zest of ignorant religious followers to create arguments, confrontations, conflicts, and war.



These are very sad phenomena.

In reality, the teachings of all religions of our world were about the teachings of saints’ and sages’ compassion and universal loving-kindness. I dedicated fifty-five years to study the teachings of saints and sages, and forty-eight years as a lecturer on these teachings. I found a commonality among all the religious scriptures. Buddhists talked about “compassion and mercy”. The Christians and Catholics talked about “God loves all people”. The Koran of Islam talked about “Allah is truly merciful”. In summary, “compassion and universal love” are the central focuses of the founders of all religious teachings. Once we learn the way of compassion and universal love and direct it towards all ethnic groups, countries, religions, and cultures with a loving-kindness that shows care, respect, concern, and cooperation, then when this sincerity is complete, people will be



▲In August 3rd, 2007, Master Chin Kung and the former Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad (right) participated a forum entitled “Achieving World Peace through religious harmony and unity” .

moved. Today, those of us who are working in the line of multicultural social education should realize that true sincerity and love is the key to change all people.

Those who believe in various religions, affirm that there is a true God in this universe (theism). In Buddhist terms, we refer to true God as “true self nature”. Flower Adornment sutra says that all beings are “manifestation of our mind (true self nature) and changes according to our consciousness”. It talks about the origin of life and the universe. Every thing in this universe comes from the same origin. In a planet like Earth, people used to live in different parts of the world and they would never have communicated with each other. Saints and sages had the responsibility to teach them how to live among people, how to live with the natural environment, and how to regard

beings of the different dimensions. These are the objectives of the teachings in all religions. Thus, the true God was able to use different identities, different forms, different languages, and writings to express these teachings. The aim was simply to facilitate equality, harmony, and peaceful coexistence between fellow human beings, between human and the natural environment, and between human and beings of the different dimensions. Through these teachings, all confrontation and conflicts will naturally be resolved. Peace will then be tangible. Prosperity, success, happiness, and fulfillment (in the areas of family, career, and the living environment) will befall all beings. When we embark to do our work with this ideal, we will see that all religions are one family. There should not be any barrier and conflicts between religions.

All conflicts between religions originated from our failure to understand our own religion at an adequately profound level. At the same time, we lacked knowledge of other religions. Without communication and interaction, doubts give rise to misunderstanding and misunderstanding escalates into intolerance; thus conflict becomes unavoidable. As a follower of any religion, one must be more than just familiar with one’s own scripture. We need to truly understand our own religious theories and principles, and practice what our religion has taught us in relation to interaction with others. If we do that, problems will be resolved. Chinese often talked about “Tong” or “finding a clear path”. A Chinese saying described such situation perfectly: “All people would be in harmony and all politics would be without hindrance.” Communication is foremost. Frequent communication leads to friendship and understanding of ourselves and others. In this way, conflicts will naturally be resolved.

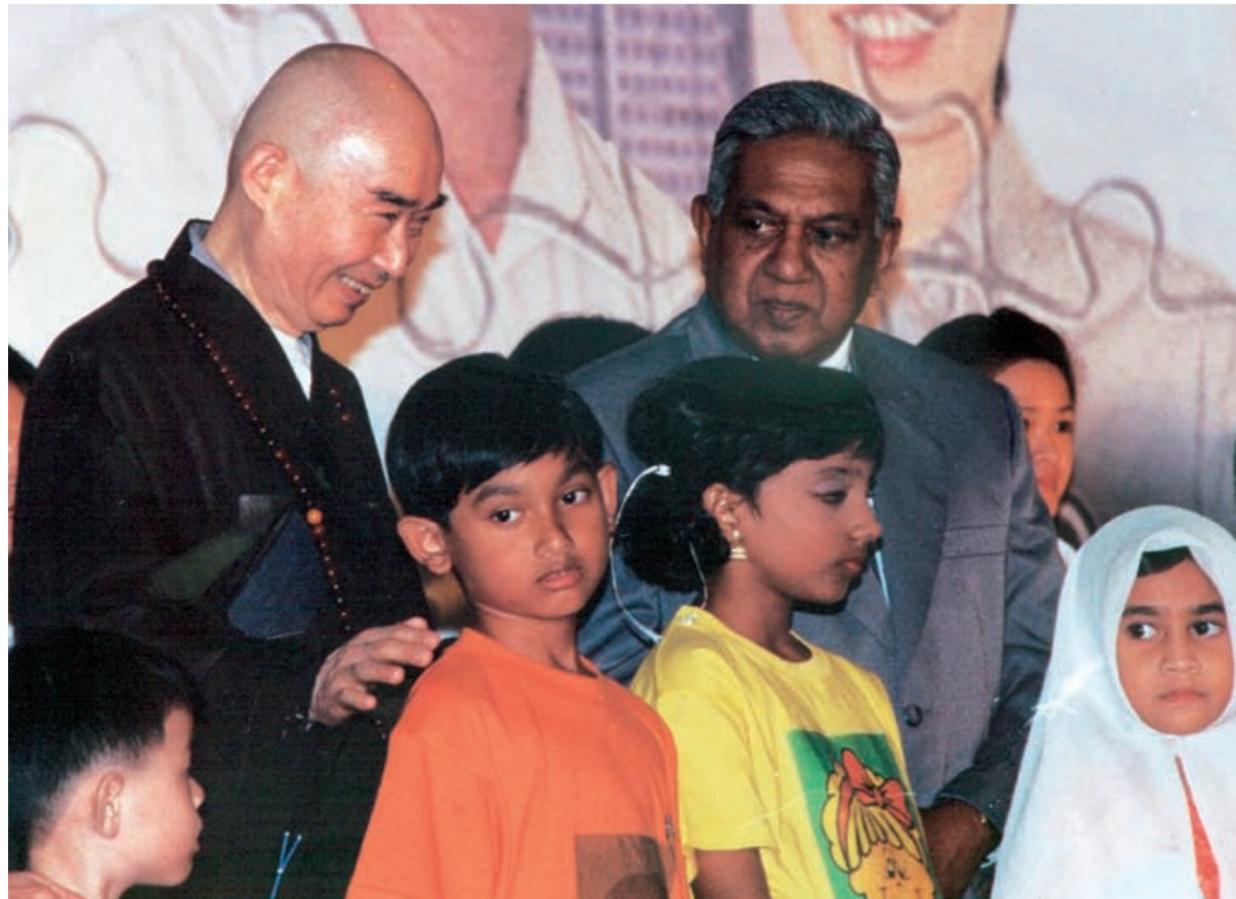
I have used the following analogy to describe the five major religions in Indonesia to my friends here. These five religions were much like the five petals of a flower. If we viewed it from the top, each petal was independent from one another. However, if we trace it down from its leaf to its stem to its root, we see that each petal grows from the same root. All are one entity. In the same way, all religions in our world are one entity.

In my lectures, I often mentioned that our Earth and our society were like the body of a man. We are all earthlings. We belong to one family. We hope that all countries, groups, and religions are the most important ones. No one is of secondary importance. It is much like a physical body, all the countries, groups, and religions are like different organs in the body. Buddhism could be the eye, Christians could be the nose, and Islam could be the ear. If I claimed

that I loved only myself and forgo the others, then, with no nose or ears, the eyes would be the only organ that functioned in this body. How could this person not be ill? We should realize that each religion is first in importance. Every group and every country is first. When every organ in body is of highest importance, when everyone is first, when every cell in our body is first, then our body will be healthy.

When we extend this analogy to the whole universe, we realize that the universe is in harmony and it is equal in nature. The whole universe is one big family. Having such broad and encompassing view towards all things is the key to be able to truly respect, treat others as equals, and cooperate with all beings. This is how religious education can be actualized. The success of religious education will certainly influence and improve family, formal, and social education in morals and virtues. This is a task that can be accomplished when many awakened people work together.

A few years ago, while I stayed in Singapore, we were able to build a close relationship with all nine religions in Singapore. Together we had organized large-scale charity dinners for the young and old. Traveling as a group, we visited China. In June 2004, I accompanied Indonesia religious delegation to visit Egypt and Vatican. In the same year, I joined the Indonesian religious delegation led by Mr. Wahid and visited the five major religions in China. We received stately and ardent reception in China. From these experiences, I profoundly felt that if each religion could organize such groups and travel together to visit others overseas, not only would we gain new knowledge, we would also grow to appreciate each member as a whole, caring and befriending each other. All would become a family. Religious harmony was something that was certainly achievable. Six hundred years ago, on Zheng He’s “Boat



▲President S. V. Vigneswaran of Singapore and Ven. Master Chin Kung.

of Treasure”, Buddhist Reverend Sheng Hui, and Hinduism and Islamic elders went on many journeys. Zheng He brought an air of peaceful multiculturalism and prosperity to the world. Today, our remembrance of Zheng He would be to learn from him, having a mindset that encompasses all diverse religions and cultures, and begin our friendly exchange in experiences and learning. We should visit and study with each other. Together with the entire human race, we should practice the compassionate and loving teachings of saints and sages, thus building a harmonious world that is full of sincerity, respect, humility, peace, and prosperity.

VI. Letting Go of Selfishness and Dedicating Every Thought to the Benefit of All Beings

Peace workers must let go of selfish desire and greed. When they give up these desires, they obtain a peaceful mind and naturally develop an attitude of equality. If there still lingers thoughts to differentiate and form attachments, then there will always be conflicts of interest with others. We need to let go all thoughts of differentiation and attachment, let our mind be like the vast space that was “all encompassing and immeasurable in boundary”. In this way, we will be able to live in harmony and equality with the highest form of beings from the spiritual

realm, with beings from the realm of animals and even beings from hell. What liberation and freedom that would be! This is a very important lesson taught by the saints and sages. We must diligently learn them by heart and begin from within ourselves to love all beings.

Peace workers must acknowledge that all obstacles they face come from human being’s own selfishness, delusion, and attachment. Only by letting go of selfishness, delusion, and attachment can our innate wisdom be revealed. This is the most important realization for any peace worker and it is also the most difficult one to break through. Ordinary people see selfish gain as the most important task in life. Saints and sages see the needs of all beings as their top priority. Peace work is indeed the job of saints and sages. Without their mindset, their great vow of compassion, their unconditional love, and their virtues, how could this great vision be achieved? Armed only with ordinary people’s mindset and selfish thoughts, it is definitely impossible to undertake the work of the saints and sages.

Today, every religion faces the same problem. Most of the followers within each religion do not learn and understand their own religious teaching in greater depths and do not truly practice these teachings in their life. Take Buddhism for example. There were many sutras available, but all sutras point toward

“Compassion and mercy must be the basis; show leniency and accord with others”. Have we achieved compassion and mercy today? If we have, there would be no more confrontation between different school and sects. Taking a few steps further, the cooperation between religions will not be far.

Take Judaism, Catholicism and Christianity for example. All three religions rely on the New and Old Testament. They are one family. The New and Old Testament’s central idea that “God loves all people” must be realized. If everyone could love all people in the society, there would be no more problems. I told my Christian friend that: “God loves me. He does not love you.” He surprisingly asked why. I said: “I am part of “all people”. The New and Old Testament never said that God loves only his followers. However, it did say: “God loves all people”. Since I am part of “all people” and I love all people just as God loves equally all people, so He certainly loves me. You love God but you do not share His love for all people. So God does not love you.” He agreed and accepted my words.

God loves all people. But how does God love all people? He requires His followers to exercise and enhance that love through themselves to love and care for all people. The compassion and mercy of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas need all Buddhists to practice such compassion and mercy through their actions and deeds. Islam is no exception. The first sentence of all paragraphs of the Koran state: “Allah truly is merciful”. The essence of religions can be summed up as “Compassion, mercy, and universal love”. The goal of all religions is to help all beings to alleviate pain and suffering to attain happiness. Today, we should promote and encourage all the followers of each religion to earnestly study their own scriptures, put the spirit of their religion into real practice daily, and realize that all religions are but one family.

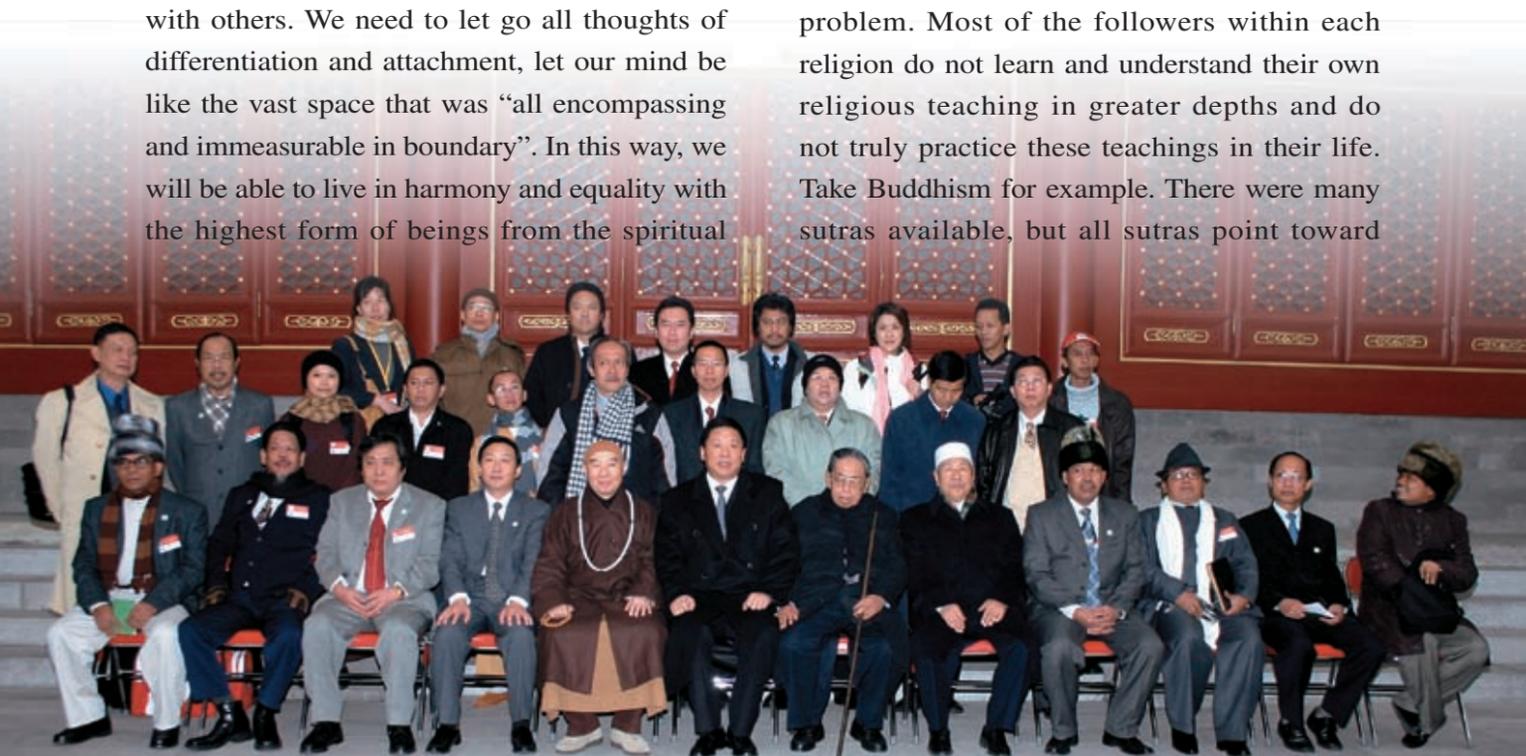
VII. Learning of the Holy Teachings Must Begin from the Basics

The aim of the education of saints and sages centers on compassion and universal love. Compassion and universal love must start from “love thy parents and respect thy teachers”. If we cannot be dutiful and loving to our own parents and fail to respect our teachers who have given us wisdom and knowledge, then we will never be able to have true compassion and universal love for all other beings. There were numerous Buddhist scriptures available for study. To sum up, the Buddha teaches us to emphasize on the “Three Fortunes” to gain solid foundation in learning. The first rule of the “Three Fortune” is to “Love thy parents; respect thy teachers; show mercy and kill not; cultivate the Ten Virtuous Deeds”. Those who truly practice the ten virtuous deeds will be able to be dutiful and loving to their parents.

Confucianism is very similar in this regard. It teaches children to be filial to their parents and respectful to their teachers. “*The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*” is a little booklet that instructs us how to actualize the spirit of being “filial to parents and respectful to teachers”. Parents need to act as models for the young children to learn from. Using “*The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*” to guide and conduct our own speech, deeds, and thoughts, proper education becomes truly influential.

VIII. Suggestions and Recommendations

On December 2005, I had attended the Perdana Peace Forum held in Kuala Lumpur by former Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dr. Mahathir. The retired Dr. Mahathir, in view of the current turmoil and unrest facing global communities, initiated the forum to seek resolution. Many people around the world, including organizations such as the



▲Photograph taken with Mr. Ye Xiao Wen, Director of State Administration for Religious Affairs.

UN, dedicated time and resources in search of conflict resolution and peace promotion. Starting in the 1970s, more than thirty-five years had passed, countless human efforts, funds and resources had been devoted in this area. However, the occurrence of conflicts rises each year and disasters become more severe. Many experts and scholars in the field of peace work have lost their confidence and faith in peace. Representing the university from Australia, as an Australian, I attended five separate peace conferences organized by UNECSO. I made many friends on each occasion. At the end of these conferences, we would get together and talk about the final resolution of these conferences. Most people agreed that while the recommendations and suggestions were excellent, it seemed unlikely that governments would truly accept these proposals and implement them in practice.

I visited the USA last year and I conversed with many friends on this topic. It was without doubt that people from all walks of life were concerned about peace and stability in our world. Most people did care about conflict resolution and peace promotion. I told my friends that conflict resolution must be achieved through peaceful means. There were people who believed that “vengeance” would stop acts of terrorism. The reality indicated otherwise. Chinese saints and sages taught that: “Enter into the cycle of vengeance, and the retribution will last for generations and will never end.” Military retaliation and suppression will only amplify hatred and hostility. It is often very difficult to resolve such animosity.

By using military strength and retaliation against the terrorists, the weaker groups retaliate with terrorism. I mentioned in the conference that this is another form of warfare. Such warfare would render the powerful countries, which possess nuclear weapons and other

advanced weaponry, without clear and specific targets to exercise their military strength. When terror strikes three or four times a year, citizens of the targeted nation live in fear and anxiety. When such atmosphere is created, the terrorists win their war. Defense against such enemy is extremely difficult. When a whole society of people lives in constant fear and anxiety over a period of three to five years, I believe mental illness and health problems will greatly increase. The consequences will be severe.

It is a rare occasion to gather here with so many colleagues and friends to exchange our experiences and thoughts. It is our hope that, unlike many past international conferences that either discussed much without any decisions, or reached decisions without any actions followed, this forum will bring true unity for religions and bring forward concrete actions for world peace. I hope that a permanent institution can be established to continually promote religious unity. This institution can be named “East Asia Religious Leaders Forum” or set up others like “Asian Religions Associations”, “Asian Religious Education Research Center”, “University of Religious Education of the World” or model after the “Peace and Loving-Kindness Lecture Hall” currently being set up in Indonesia.

Religious Education University is a place for long-term training of teachers for each religion and training of future administrator for each religious center. This facility will not only be a cradle to train future talents, it will also be an institution that provides long distance education. Each religion would select four outstanding teachers who excel both morally and academically. For twenty-four hours a day, these teachers would guide followers across the world in further learning through advanced technology such as satellite television and the internet. Department of education and religion

can act as monitoring agents. This will help all followers of each religion to study in greater depth their chosen area of study and immerse in that learning process. It is hopeful that followers would finally be able to practice the teachings of their religion in the real world and reach a “complete understanding that is without any hindrance”, and at the same time each can share their learning and teaching with other religions. All religions would then truly be one family. Praising each other and seeking commonality among diversity is the best way to unite all religions. If each region uses news media such as Internet websites and broadcasting facilities to transmit the teachings of each of the religious teacher to the world, such widespread teaching, once implemented, would reach numerous people daily without interruption. In three year’s time, there would be a significant effect on the world.

IX. Conclusion

From studying the teachings of saints and sages for fifty-five years, I have deeply felt that only by studying in depths into the scriptures and understanding their principles can we hope to resolve our confrontations and conflicts towards all people, affairs and objects. From thousands of years of history, we realize the reason that Mohammed, Jesus Christ, Buddha and even Confucians and Mencius were able to generated so much influence was because they were able to truly practice what they taught, putting into practice religious compassion and love for all people on the basis of morality, virtue, and causality. Their deeds reflected their teachings. This was why they were able to affect and transform so many people. Today, those who have dedicated their lives to promoting religious education must emphasize true practice in life. The phrase: “Learn to be a teacher for all; act as role model for the world” provides the most fitting description. In so

doing, we can inherit this timeless task passed down from saints and sages and bring true peace and harmony to the world. Thus, we will truly become messengers of peace.

I would like to end my session with the following words inspired by Zheng He that will lead us to a bright path towards world peace and prosperity:

Love is true heart, the true nature, the true being and the Buddha nature.

Love is the original nature, the inherent goodness. It is pure goodness.

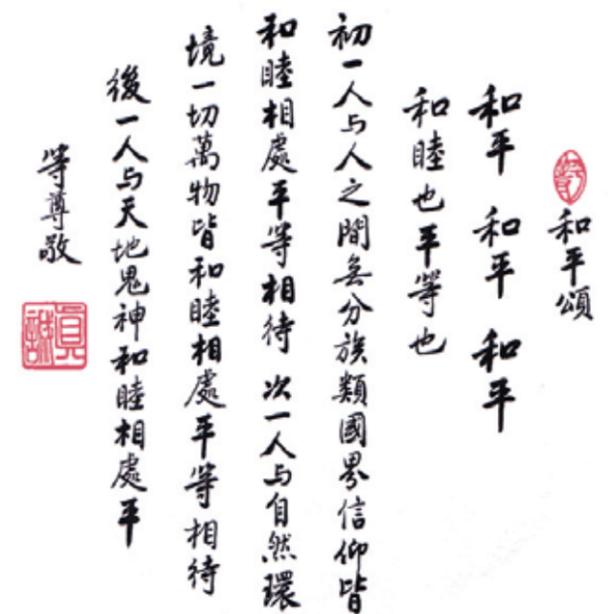
Love is the truth, the reality. It is life. It is eternity.

Love is divine, God, Allah, the Holy Spirit.

Love gives rise to all phenomena.

Everything in the universe is born out of love and nurtured by love.

Love is the source of all that is all-virtuous, all capable, and all encompassing.



A Harmonious World Begins With the Mind

When the mind is pure, the land will be pure
When the mind is at peace, all beings will be at peace
When the mind is impartial, the world will enjoy equality

Talk given by Venerable Master Chin Kung

January 4, 2006

Hong Kong Buddha's Education Association

Dear fellow practitioners,

Happy New Year to all of you!

All these years, we have been spreading love to the whole world. We agree that human nature is innately good and that everyone has Buddha-nature. We hope that everyone will learn to love him or herself, love others, love his or her family, love the country, love the world, and love all beings. Love starts from the heart and is received by heart. To feel love with the true mind is justice. The feeling of a sincere heart is love. To achieve this, non-Buddhists should practice the teachings in *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child (Dizigui)*, and Buddhists should practice the Ten Virtuous Deeds.

The teaching of all sages is the teaching of sincerity, love, and the standards of behavior in life as articulated in *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* and in the Ten Virtuous Deeds. This teaching flows from our true nature. May all fellow practitioners pay special attention to the understanding and learning of the Ten Virtuous Deeds and *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*, and make sure to perfectly practice them to the full. These basic but significant teachings can help us avert disasters and reconcile all conflicts, oppositions, and confrontations.

A few months ago, the World Health Organization made an announcement to remind the public to watch out for an outbreak of an epidemic. As everybody knows, that epidemic is bird flu. If this epidemic spreads throughout the world, the consequences could be devastating. Therefore, I would like to remind practitioners at our center and at all Pure Land centers in the world, and all of you who are watching this via satellite broadcast or the Internet to diligently study the Buddha's teachings and chant "Amitufo."

Why do we have to study the Buddha's teachings in addition to chanting Amitufo? Because if we do not understand the Buddha's teachings, our chanting Amitufo will be based on blind belief. But if we thoroughly understand the teachings, chanting Amitufo will be more effective.

Only sincerity can evoke the interconnectivity among people, between people and other things, and between people and spiritual beings. If one's heart is not sincere, the power of touching the hearts of others will be weak.

Our chanting Amitufo ten thousand times cannot compare with an accomplished, virtuous practitioner chanting Amitufo once. An ancient sage often said that in chanting Amitufo, one's every thought should be

in consonance with the Buddha's mind. It takes only one chanting of Amitufo for an accomplished practitioner to be in consonance with Amitabha Buddha. We, on the other hand, will not be able to be in consonance with Amitabha Buddha even if we chant Amitufo ten thousand times! Even though we chant Amitufo, as does this accomplished practitioner, the effectiveness of the chanting is different.

Buddhism came to China in 67 C.E. By the year 2067, it will have been in China for 2000 years. Passed down from generation to generation, Buddhism has declined to a low point today. I believe that there are more people chanting Amitufo today than ever, but the effectiveness of our chanting cannot compare with that of ancient practitioners. Why? Because their mindset of learning Buddhism was different from ours.

The True Mind Pervades the Whole Universe Throughout All Time

The Buddhist Association of China and the National Religious Department of China will hold the World Buddhist Forum for the first time in Zhejiang, in April this year. The theme is "A Harmonious World Starts With the Mind" with a sub-theme of "When the mind is pure, the land will be pure. When the mind is at peace, all beings will be at peace. When the mind is impartial, the world will enjoy equality." Very good points! I heard that representatives from many countries are invited to participate in this forum. So this is a large-scale event. I am very happy because Chinese Buddhism, or Chinese religion, is stepping onto the international stage. This is a positive step.

The topics of the forum are also extremely good. People all over the world are concerned about global disharmony. How do we resolve conflict and promote social stability and world

peace? If the three statements in the sub-theme of this forum can come to fruition, conflict will not arise, and social stability and world peace will be achieved.

But how do we achieve a pure mind? How do we achieve a peaceful mind? How do we achieve an impartial mind? These three are core issues. In Buddhism, these are important issues. When they are resolved, all beings will attain Buddhahood. Nonetheless, these three issues are actually three in one and one in three. When one is resolved, the other two are also resolved. If the mind is pure, how can it not be at peace? How can it not be impartial? When the mind is at peace, it is naturally pure and impartial. Therefore, when we resolve one issue, we resolve the other two.



When I saw these three statements, I was reminded of the Zen master Huike. During King Liangwu's reign, Bodhidharma brought the teachings of Zen to China. King Liangwu was a great patron of Buddhism but he had no affinity with Bodhidharma and thus did not support him. Bodhidharma went to the Shaolin Temple in the Song Mountain and isolated himself in meditation for nine years before someone came to learn from him. This person was Huike. He was sincere in becoming a student of Bodhidharma.

It was wintertime when Huike visited Bodhidharma. Seeing that Bodhidharma was sitting in meditation in a cave and not wanting to disturb the master, he waited outside the cave for the master to come out of meditation. He waited for a long time, and the snow was up to his knees, but Bodhidharma still had not come out of meditation. Huike was very determined. He took out a small knife, cut off his left arm, and presented it to Bodhidharma as an offering. Therefore, Huike, the second patriarch of the Zen school, only had his right arm.

When Bodhidharma opened his eyes and saw Huike's left arm, he asked Huike, "Why did you do this? There is no need! Why cut off your arm and offer it to me? Why stand in the snow for so long?" Huike answered, "My mind is disturbed. I beg Master to ease it for me."

Bodhidharma told Huike: "Give me your mind. I will ease it for you." These words reminded Huike to search inside himself. After a long while, he replied, "Nowhere is my mind to be found." And Bodhidharma said, "I've eased your mind for you!" Huike was immediately awakened. Then Bodhidharma passed the teachings of Zen to Huike and made him the second patriarch of the Chinese Zen school.

When the mind is at peace, the mind is

naturally pure and impartial. The theme "When the mind is pure, the land will be pure. When the mind is at peace, all beings will be at peace. When the mind is impartial, the world will enjoy equality" provides great inspiration for us. People must be awakened before happiness, a pure land, social stability, and world peace can be achieved. All these must start with cultivating ourselves and teaching.

Master Huineng is the sixth patriarch of the Zen school. His yulu, or records of lectures, is called the Platform Sutra of the Six Patriarch. In other words, his teaching is accorded the same respect and importance as the teaching of Sakyamuni Buddha. The writings of all other



▲ Master Bodhidharma was the first patriarch of the Zen school in China.

patriarchs of the Zen school are called yulu; none are called sutra. Only Master Huineng's yulu was given the status of a sutra because of the respect that people accorded him. He was indeed a remarkable person. He spent most of his life teaching. Under his tutelage and guidance, forty-three of his students saw their own true nature and attained great awakening. No one else in Chinese history has had this achievement.

In the Avatamsaka Sutra, one who sees one's true nature is a Dharmakaya Bodhisattva, a being who transcends not only the Six Paths but also the Ten Dharma Realms.¹ They are free of attachments, discrimination, and wandering thoughts. Wandering thoughts are ignorance. When one is free of ignorance, one is also free of discrimination and attachments. When the mind cannot be found, how can a thought arise? The mind that gives rise to a thought is the deluded mind. The mind that stays quiescent is the true mind. Where is the true mind? It pervades the whole universe throughout all time.

It is stated in the Avatamsaka Sutra that the whole universe, all phenomena, and all beings are "manifested by the mind"—they are manifested by the true mind. But then why are there so many differences in form? Because all phenomena are "altered by the consciousness." Consciousness is the deluded mind. The true mind manifests phenomena, and the deluded mind alters these phenomena into the Six Paths and the Ten Dharma Realms. The deluded mind is not real. Only when we realize this, can problems be truly solved.

Purity, Equality, and Enlightenment Constitute the Highest Guideline for Cultivation

What is the goal of the 84,000 Dharma Doors? It is to eradicate attachments,

discrimination, and wandering thoughts. The term "Dharma Door" denotes method. Every one of the cultivation methods helps us achieve this goal. If any cultivation method does not have this as a goal, this method is not the teaching of the Buddha. Cultivation must lead to eradication of afflictions. Attachment is an affliction arising from erroneous views and thoughts, discrimination is an affliction arising from numerous delusions, and wandering thoughts are an affliction arising from ignorance.

It is well put in the Avatamsaka Sutra: all beings have the wisdom and virtues of a Buddha but cannot attain them because of their wandering thoughts and attachments. This explains that Buddhas and we are equal by nature. How did we become different from Buddhas? Because wandering thoughts, discrimination, and attachments arose in us and turned the One True Realm into the Ten Dharma Realms, the Six Paths, or the Three Evil Paths.²

When you understand this, you should help all beings. One must help oneself before one can help others.

The Buddha explained the truth of life and the universe in simple, plain, and clear language. It may seem that we have awakened to the truth, but our awakening lasted only for a brief moment, as short as a flash of lightning, and then we were mired in delusion again. Why? Because our afflictions, which have accumulated over numerous kalpas, obstruct us from realizing the truth instantly! Very few people, like some patriarchs and accomplished virtuous practitioners, realized the truth instantly. For example, Master Huike attained realization after listening to only a few words of teaching. This realization is reflected in their letting go.

When we listen to the lectures on a sutra, do we understand the teachings in the sutra? We may think that we do, but if we still cannot let go, then we do not have true comprehension. If we have true comprehension, we will be able to let go. Then how long will it take for us to attain true comprehension?

We know that forty-three of Master Huineng's students attained great awakening. Among them, some reached this stage in a very short time. They did so in a few months or in two to three years. But it took some students twenty to thirty years. They followed Master Huineng, listened to his lectures on the Dharma, and practiced according to his guidance. They attained awakening in twenty to thirty years. To attain Buddhahood after twenty to thirty years of cultivation is still a remarkable achievement. They deserve our respect.

Today, even if I explain the teachings very clearly, can any of the listeners attain awakening? No! None of them can attain awakening. This is what Mr. Huang Nianzu, an eminent lay practitioner, told me when I visited him in Beijing. He said that, in this day and age, the only cultivation method that one can succeed in practicing was chanting Amitufo and seeking rebirth in the Western Pure Land, where we can take our remaining karma with us. Although Mr. Huang devoted himself to learning the Zen and the Esoteric teachings most of his life, he chanted Amitufo and sought rebirth in the Western Pure Land in the latter years of his life. When he was ill, he chanted Amitufo 140,000 times every day!

Mr. Huang was a student of Mr. Xia Lianju, who spent ten years working on the compilation version of the Infinite Life Sutra. I lectured on this version outside China while Mr. Huang lectured on it in China. We were the only two lecturing on this version in those days.

Therefore, there was a bond between us when we met.

There are three words in the title of the compilation version of the Infinite Life Sutra: purity, equality, and enlightenment (The title of a sutra is the guiding principle of the entire sutra, just like the topic of a piece of writing). These three words accord with the theme of the forum: a pure mind, a peaceful mind, and an impartial mind. Impartiality is the same as equality, and a pure mind is the same as purity. When one is enlightened, one's mind will be at peace, and when one is deluded, one's mind will be disturbed. You see, the theme of the forum is the guiding principle of the Infinite Life Sutra. Purity, equality, and enlightenment are the same as a pure mind, a peaceful mind, and an impartial mind. Those who aspire to truly achieve a pure, peaceful, and impartial mind must therefore learn the Infinite Life Sutra.

The Difference Between an Ordinary Person and a Sage Is That the Former Is Deluded While the Latter Is Enlightened

Practitioners of the Pure Land school base their practice on the Five Guidelines. The first is the Three Conditions. This guideline is the general guiding principle of learning Buddhism. The first condition includes “be filial to and provide for parents, be respectful to and serve teachers, be compassionate and do not kill, and cultivate the Ten Virtuous Conducts.” Have we fulfilled this condition? If we have not, we do not even have the foundation. This is a basic condition and a condition for people of this world, not just Buddhist practitioners.

The second condition includes “take the Three Refuges, abide by all precepts, and behave in a dignified and appropriate manner.” Only after taking the Three Refuges does one become a Buddhist practitioner. Therefore, those who meet the first condition are considered

good people in this world, and are called “good man and good woman” by the Buddha in the sutras. If we cannot even be considered good people by worldly standards, how can we learn Buddhism? The virtuousness taught in Buddhism is founded on the virtuousness of worldly teaching.

It is well put in the Fozang Jing [Taisho Tripitaka Vol. 15, No. 653] that if a Buddhist practitioner does not learn Theravada teachings first and then learn Mahayana teachings, this person is not a Buddhist practitioner. In other words, the Buddha does not recognize this person as his student. What does Theravada Buddhism teach? It teaches the standards for “good” in both the human and heavenly realms. Learning Buddhism has to be grounded on the First Condition.

Since the middle period of the Tang dynasty, Chinese Buddhist practitioners have stopped learning the Theravada teachings. In lieu of it, they learned Confucianism and Taoism. In the past, both monastics and lay practitioners studied Confucian texts. In other words, they all studied *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* or other texts with the same teaching purpose, such as Five Bequeathed Rules (Wuzhong Yigui) compiled by Mr. Chen Hongmou.

In my time, we did not learn *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*. Instead, we learned Bequeathed Rules on Cultivation of Uprightness (Yangzheng Yigui)³ and the chapters of “Summary of the Rules of Propriety” (Quli) and of “Pattern of the Family” (Neize) of the Book of Rites. We learn the teachings and the rules in these texts to lay the foundation for cultivation so that we know how to “be filial to and provide for parents, and be respectful to and serve teachers.” Therefore, we fulfill these two principles by practicing *The*

Standards for Being a Good Student and Child. If we cannot practice Standards to the full, we do not fulfill the first condition.

Recently, some fellow practitioners from China came to visit me and told me that the learning of *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* is popular in China. Some practitioners of the younger generation, a good number of whom are primary and secondary school teachers, considered themselves very filial. But after learning Standards, they felt ashamed because they had not fulfilled the duties of a child and of a sibling. They were far from meeting the standards in the teaching. This shows the teaching of *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* has produced positive results. This is quite encouraging.

“Be compassionate and do not kill, and cultivate the Ten Virtuous Conducts” refers to the Ten Virtuous Deeds. If we cannot apply the Ten Virtuous Deeds and the teachings in *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* in daily life, then we will not be able to fulfill the Three Refuges and Five Precepts. The Three



Refuges are awakening, correct understanding, and purity, which are the same as the forum's theme of a pure mind, a peaceful mind, and an impartial mind.

In the Platform Sutra, when Master Huineng taught people, he did not use the phrase "taking refuge in the Buddha." Instead, he said to take refuge in awakening. Taking refuge in awakening is the same as taking refuge in the Buddha. And when one is awakened, one's mind is at peace. Taking refuge in correct understanding is the same as taking refuge in the Dharma. The mind will be impartial. Taking refuge in purity is the same as taking refuge in the Sangha. The mind will be pure. Therefore, awakening, correct understanding, and purity are the Three Jewels, and Master Huineng explained the term very well.

Today, when we speak of taking refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha, many people misunderstand. Upon hearing the phrase taking refuge in the Buddha, they think of taking refuge in images of the Buddha. When they hear the phrase taking refuge in the Dharma, they think of taking refuge in the sutras. When they hear the phrase taking refuge in the Sangha, they think of taking refuge in monastics. This is not what the Buddha meant when he spoke of taking the Three Refuges. The Buddha taught us to take refuge in the Three Jewels of the True Nature: awakening, correct understanding, and purity of our true nature.

How do we take refuge in the awakening, correct understanding, and purity of our true nature? First, we must be awakened. What should we awaken to? Sages always begin their teaching with the instruction of the general guiding principles. It is stated in the beginning of the Three Character Classic, "People are innately good at birth." This is what we should awaken to. It teaches us to believe in the innate

virtuousness of humankind. This statement conveys the same teaching as "All beings have Buddha-nature" in Buddhism.

We should believe that everyone has Buddha-nature and thus can attain Buddhahood. A person is a Buddha by nature. Therefore, a person is innately good. Why then does a person turn bad? Because he or she follows bad examples. Everyone has Buddha-nature. Why did we turn into ordinary people? Because we learned the wrong things! From here we can see how important education is.

The teaching of the Zen school is indeed brilliant. It starts by saying "Enlighten the mind, see one's true nature, and attain Buddhahood." The true nature or the true mind is the true Buddha. So attaining Buddhahood is nothing but uncovering one's own true nature. Therefore, an awakened person is called a Buddha, and a deluded person is called a sentient being. The difference between an ordinary person and a sage is that the former is deluded while the latter is enlightened.

For too long, we have been deeply mired in delusion. We have developed innumerable bad habits. We must first awaken. Only when we are awakened will we gain confidence. Without confidence, nothing can be achieved. In all undertakings, whether worldly or supramundane, how much one achieves depends on how much confidence one has. When we understand this, we naturally have confidence. Killing and stealing are not innate in the true nature. Why then do people have this behavior? Killing and stealing originates in wandering thoughts, discrimination, and attachments, and are not innate in the true nature.

Where should we start in correcting our faults? We start with the cultivation of the Ten Virtuous Deeds.

There are too many evils. They can be summed up into the Ten Evil Deeds: killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, divisive speech, harsh speech, enticing speech, greed, anger, and ignorance. We must rid ourselves of these bad deeds. In other words, we must fulfill the Ten Virtuous Deeds. When we fulfill the Ten Virtuous Deeds, our minds will be pure. From a pure mind, wisdom will arise. Why don't we have wisdom now? Because our minds are not pure.

The mind is like water. When water is calm, it reflects everything with perfect clarity, like a mirror. When we have a bad thought, the thought is like a wave, and when all ten evil deeds are committed, tidal waves will occur! How can one maintain a pure mind under these circumstances? Therefore, if one wants to attain a pure mind, one must practice the Ten Virtuous Deeds.

Cultivation Is Correcting Wrong Behavior

We now know that we should practice the Ten Virtuous Deeds, but we simply cannot accomplish them. Why? Because we did not receive the teaching of *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* in childhood. Cultivation means correcting our wrong actions. Although wrong actions are innumerable, they can be grouped into three categories: physical activity, oral activity, and mental activity.

These three categories of activity cover all actions. Killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct come under the physical category. Lying, divisive speech, harsh speech, and enticing speech come under the oral category. Greed, anger, and ignorance come under the mental category. None of these actions is innate in the true nature. Can we break away from these actions that are not innate in us? Of course



▲One can be inspired to be a better person.

we can! And we can uncover what is innate in the true nature. All Buddhas and bodhisattvas have done so, so can we. From here, we can establish a firm faith. When the faith is pure, the truth will arise. Then wisdom innate in our true nature will arise.

Only when wisdom arises can we take the next step of eliminating erroneous views. Master Huineng talked about the Eight Improper Practices: wrong view, wrong thought, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong expediency (i.e., the best methods are used on wrong causes or movements. There are many such cases. If we do not have wisdom, we can easily make this mistake.), wrong mindfulness, and wrong meditative concentration. Together they are known as the Eight Improper Practices.

When we abandon the Ten Evil Deeds, our minds will become pure. When we abandon the Eight Improper Practices, our minds will be at peace. When we abandon residual habits [from these deeds and practices], our minds will settle down and thus will be impartial.

Master Huineng also talked about eleven afflictions. The first is an evil mind. We should not have any evil thought. The second is a deluded mind. A person who has this mind is inquisitive and likes supernatural powers and contact. When this person hears someone talk about supernatural powers or supernatural contacts, he or she gets tempted by the talk. Why do we have this residual habit? Because we have not abandoned the Ten Evil Deeds and the Eight Improper Practices. If we have, this residual habit cannot affect us even though it is still there. Why can't it affect us? Because we will be alert to it the moment it arises, and once we are alert to it, it will disappear. Therefore, the Ten Evil Deeds are the most difficult to abandon.

We cannot abandon the Ten Evil Deeds because we do not apply the teachings in *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* in our lives. This is the root cause. Thus, we must start by conscientiously practicing the teachings in *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* and then progress step by step to the next level. Only in this way will it be easy for us to start our cultivation and achieve success.

The third is a malicious mind. A person who has this mind has the habit of hurting others, whether intentionally or unintentionally. The fourth is a vicious mind. The fifth is a jealous mind. A person who has this mind feels unhappy, and even angry, about others' achievements. When this feeling arises, how can one maintain a calm mind? We should emulate Buddhas and bodhisattvas and feel joyful and admire others instead of feeling jealous. We should know that feeling jealous would hurt ourselves the most.

The sixth is a fawning mind. A person who has this mind fawns on the rich and the powerful in the hope of receiving some benefits. This is wrong. We should maintain a pure mind and perform good deeds as best as we can. This way, the merit from performing good deeds is perfect. It does not matter how much or how little we do. When we have an opportunity, we do it as best as we can, and the merit will be perfect regardless of how much or how little we do. When we do anything, we should not overexert ourselves.

The seventh is a self-centered mind. A person who has this mind always puts him or herself before others. He or she only thinks of his or her own benefits. This is not a virtuous mind. Why? Because the cause of our transmigrating in the Six Paths, life after life, is ego-attachment. The Buddha explained this clearly in the sutras.

The first thing we do after we learn Buddhism is to eliminate ego-attachment. If we no longer cling to the idea that this body is "I," we can transcend the Six Paths.

Because sentient beings in the Six Paths committed different karmic causes in their past lifetimes, they have different retributions. In this lifetime, some are rich, some are poor, some are healthy, and some are unwell. Why are there so many different retributions? Because the causes planted are different.

When the Buddha explained karmic retributions, he pointed out two kinds of karmic retribution in the Six Paths. One is directive karma, or generic retribution. It determines which path one will be reborn into. For instance, we human beings all have the same directive karma that led us to be reborn in this path. The other kind of karmic retribution is particularizing karma, or specific retribution. Even though we are all in the human path, it is different for every one of us.

Every person's wealth, social status, good fortune, and misfortune are different. What caused this specific retribution? Our physical, oral, and mental activities in our past lifetimes! When these activities were virtuous, we would enjoy good fortune in this lifetime. If they were not virtuous, we would suffer bad retributions in this lifetime. When we truly understand this, we will not blame others for our suffering. Why? Because we bring about our own suffering. How can we blame others? If we blame others, we commit yet another grave transgression. We planted causes, so we have to take the retributions in this lifetime. [Whether we enjoy good fortune or we suffer] has nothing to do with others.

Islam teaches cause and effect spanning two time periods. But after reading the Qur'an, I discovered

that it does teach cause and effect spanning three time periods. Islam has six articles of belief, and one of them is believing in predestination. It is stated in the Qur'an, "Allah creates all things according to predestination." According to predestination, this person was created to enjoy good fortune, and that person was created to suffer. This does not mean that Allah has discrimination, liking this person and disliking that person. Allah was merely following predestination.

What is predestination? It is similar to cause and effect spanning three time periods. If one planted good causes in the past lifetimes, one would enjoy good retributions in this lifetime. If one planted bad causes in the past lifetimes, one would suffer bad retributions in this lifetime. Therefore, wealth, social status, good fortune, and misfortune are all predetermined.

Hence, from the perspective of predestination, Islam does teach cause and effect, but spanning three time periods, not two. If we observe carefully, we will be able to truly understand the teaching of sages. The Buddha's teaching of cause and effect spanning three time periods is perfect and thorough.

If One Knows the Principles and Uses the Right Methods, Every Wish Can Be Fulfilled

Almost all sentient beings wish to be wealthy, clever, wise, and healthy, and live a long life. During the Chinese New Year holidays, one can hear Chinese greeting one another with Gong Xi Fa Cai (May you strike a good fortune). Is this possible? Can one have wisdom, health, and longevity by wishing for them? Regardless of his or her religion and ethnic group, everyone wishes to have these things. In Buddhism, there is a saying, "Every wish can be fulfilled." If you get something you are not destined to have, your wish is truly fulfilled. However, if you get something you

are destined to have, your getting it has nothing to do with your wishing. One can still get what one is not destined to have.

When I first studied Buddhism, Zhangjia Living Buddha taught me that if I knew the principles and used the right methods, all my wishes could be fulfilled, and if I did not use the right method, I could not get what I wished for.

What do we do in order for our wishes to be fulfilled? In Liaofan's Four Lessons, Master Yungu taught Mr. Yuan Liaofan the principles and methods for getting what one wanted. If you learn these principles and methods, and conscientiously practice accordingly, you will surely be able to get what you want in this lifetime.

The Buddha taught us in the sutras to end wrongdoings and to practice virtuous conduct in order to accumulate merits. This is a general principal. To apply this in daily life, we practice giving. The giving of wealth is a karmic cause that will result in one having wealth. The giving of teachings will result in one being intelligent and wise. The giving of fearlessness will result in one enjoying good health and longevity. Buddhist practitioners usually practice all three kinds of giving. But why are the results not obvious?

I think that this is because the practitioners still have not thoroughly understood the principles. If they truly understand the principles, the results will be particularly obvious. If they do not understand the principles and are still dubious about the Buddha's teaching, they may ask, "Was the Buddha telling the truth? If I give away all my money, what do I live on tomorrow?" We should know that doubting the teachings of Buddhas and bodhisattvas is similar to doubting our innate virtues. Doubt is a grave obstacle and

will reduce the merits we gain from giving, so much so that the effect of giving will not appear.

What is the giving of fearlessness? Being a vegetarian is a form of the giving of fearlessness. Vegetarians do not eat meat and thus will not incur the enmity of other beings or arouse fear in them.

Therefore, we should learn to love all beings and to protect life. Some people think that freeing life is a good deed and will bring about merit. But how do we do this properly? If we go



▲The giving of fearlessness will not incur the enmity of other beings or arouse fear in them.

to the market to order [animals] in advance, the sellers will catch what we want to buy. This is harming life, not freeing life.

Many cultivation centers fix a day for freeing life and would order birds and fish in advance. This practice encourages the sellers to catch that many birds or fish. Why? Because they do not sell that many on a normal day and would not go and catch that many. This so-called freeing of life is actually harming life. This is wrong!

These details have never occurred to us. Moreover, there is a ritual for freeing life, but it is very long. Many creatures die during the ritual. Therefore, the ritual should be as short as possible, and the animals will be grateful if they are released as soon as possible.

The eighth is an arrogant mind. Everyone has this fault—feeling that he or she is better than others.

The ninth is a mind that belittles others. The tenth is a haughty mind, one that puts oneself above others.

These ten are residual habits coming from our having committed the Ten Evil Deeds and Eight Improper Practices. We may have stopped committing the Ten Evil Deeds and Eight Improper Practices, but we still have the habits. Only when we eradicate these habits will our minds be peaceful, and then purity, equality, and enlightenment will manifest themselves. Therefore, Master Huineng urged us to rid ourselves of all bad behavior.

Furthermore, we should see our own faults often. Not those of others. Our learning should reach this level. Often seeing one's own faults is "Enlightenment for Self," or awakening. What is awakening? It is knowing one's faults. After we have awakened to our faults, we correct them. This is cultivation. Therefore, we must

see our own faults first.

Those who see their own faults are sages. An ordinary person only sees the faults of others when he or she looks at them, but he or she never sees his or her own faults. Herein lies a difference between sages and ordinary people. How do we detect our own faults? It is not easy to do so.

If we cannot see our own faults, we can look at others since it is easier to detect the faults of others. But having detected the faults of others, we should not criticize them. Instead, we should reflect on ourselves to see if we have the same faults. If we do, we should correct them. If we do not, we should guard against them.

The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child teaches "If a person has a shortcoming, I will not expose it. If a person has a secret, I will not tell others. Spreading rumors about the wrongdoings of others is a wrongdoing by itself. When the harm done has reached the extreme, misfortunes will surely follow." Others serve as a mirror for us. We should learn to use this mirror to see if we have the same faults. All sages of this world and beyond teach us to do so. A beginning practitioner should put effort into this. If we find that we have a fault, we correct it immediately. If we do not have this fault, we guard against it. This is true cultivation, and [by cultivating in this way] we are a true student of the sages.

Another cultivation method is reading the sutras. The sutras are also a mirror. For example, when we read Liaofan's Four Lessons, we should not read it too fast because we will not be able to appreciate the teachings. We use the teachings in the book as standards and examine our behavior to see what we have done right and what we have done wrong. We should continue with our correct behavior as well as

correct our wrong behavior according to the teaching of the sages. This way, we will be able to cultivate virtues and eliminate faults.

When we get together with fellow practitioners, we can have one person read the book out loud or have a few persons take turn reading it. After the reading, we can compare our actions to Liaofan's Four Lessons to see if we have acted properly as indicated in the book. We should not ask others. It is wrong to ask others. We should ask ourselves. Everyone should ask him- or herself whether he or she has followed the teachings and encourage one another to do so.

I will end my talk here. This is the first day of the New Year. We talked about a pure, peaceful, and impartial mind, and I hope that every one of us can attain this mind. This is the highest enjoyment in life. This is my New Year gift to all of you.



▲Another cultivation method is reading the sutras.

May you do nothing that is bad, and be safe and well year after year.

May you do all that is good, and all your wishes be fulfilled year after year.

Thank you everyone!

- ¹ The Six Paths comprise the paths of the hells, hungry ghosts, animals, heavens, humans, and demi-gods. The Ten Dharma Realms comprise the realms of Buddhas, bodhisattvas, pratyeka buddhas, and sound-hearers, and the Six Paths.
- ² The Three Evil Paths are animals, hungry ghosts, and the hells of the Six Paths.
- ³ This is the first of Five Kinds of Bequeathed Rules.

A Harmonious World Begins With The Mind

When the mind is pure, the land will be pure.
 When the mind is at peace, all beings will be at peace.
 When the mind is impartial, the world will enjoy equality.

STARTING FROM MYSELF

From the depth of my mind I must resolve all

STARTING FROM MY FAMILY

STARTING FROM MY COMMUNITY

STARTING FROM MY CITY

STARTING FROM MY PROVINCE

Oppositions
to achieve impartiality of mind

Doubts
to achieve purity of the mind

Conflicts
Confrontations
to achieve peace of mind

People
Matters
Objects
and will not be subject to

Greed
so that I will be pure and will thus achieve great kindness. } Doing so, the benefits will be numerous.

Anger
so that I will not harm others and will thus achieve great compassion.

Ignorance
so that I will have better understanding and will thus achieve great wisdom and be sincere in all my actions.

Arrogance
so that I will not lose sincerity, respect, humility, and amiability, and will be wise in everything I do.

Doubts
so that I will not retrogress, but will always cultivate and be able to pass down the teachings.

Deviated Views
so that I will not destroy my affinity with the Dharma and will perfectly accomplish my bodhisattva practice.

Cooperation
Buddhist Social Responsibilities
Peaceful Mission

Awakening
(peace of mind)
Correct Understanding
(impartiality of mind)
Purity(purity of mind)

Mahayana Infinite Life Sutra adorns
(Larger Sukhavati Sutra)
the purity of all lands
the peacefulness of all people
the equality of the world

Turn foes into friends
Speak fairly whether in anger or in joy.
Help those who have severed ties with me.
Look after those who are ungrateful to me.
Forgive those who have mistreated me.
(Islamic teachings)

Let go of
selfishness. Think of benefiting all beings.
the pursuit of prestige and wealth, not being misled by illusions.
the five desires and six dusts, not being encumbered by these burdens.
greed, anger, ignorance, and arrogance so that afflictions and bad habits will not arise.

When one excels in using one's mind, nothing is impossible. All these wondrous deeds will adhere to the practice of the teachings of Dizigui and the Ten Virtuous Deeds.

Uniting Religions and Propagating Moral Education Reconciling Conflict and Promoting World Harmony and Stability

By Ven. Prof. Chin Kung AM

“Forum on World Religions and the Search for Peaceful Coexistence”

National University of Singapore, January 2, 2007

Guest of Honour, Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Wong Kan Seng
Respected Deputy Director, University Scholars Programme, Associate Professor Kang Hway Chuan,
Honourable Syed Hassan,
Distinguished religious representatives and guests,

Good day!

It is my honour and pleasure to participate in the “Forum on World Religions and the Search for Peaceful Coexistence.” Thank you for the kind invitation. Religious cooperation, conflict reconciliation, and world peace promotion are the shared wish of all people, and particularly meaningful to Singapore. The

harmonious relationship among religions in Singapore has been recognised as a good role model for the entire world over the past years. Singapore’s accomplishments received respect and admiration from ambassadors and friends of various countries at UNESCO Headquarters in October, 2006.

Over the years, I have visited President Bush of the United States, former Indonesian Presidents Honourable Wahid and Ms. Megawatti, former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir, and other country leaders. I have also attended nine international peace conferences. All my talks recommended reconciling conflict and promoting world harmony and stability to country leaders, experts, and scholars. In my



▲The religions can be united.

view, reconciling all conflicts and contradictions in today’s world should start with uniting religions, which in turn will enhance the harmony and cooperation among countries, political parties, and ethnic groups, and thus reconcile conflict. These country leaders and scholars all agreed to my humble view. A particular case was Honourable Mahathir. On the very next day after our meeting, he invited me to participate in and give a keynote speech to the Perdana Global Peace Forum. This was held in Kuala Lumpur in October, 2005.

In previous world peace conferences, participants agreed to my proposed idea of promoting moral education, reconciling conflict, and promoting world harmony and stability through teaching but they believed this was an impractical ideal. In order to build the confidence of these international friends, we must show proof through experiments. Therefore, in November, 2005, we started a Cultural Education Centre in the township of Tangchi in Lujiang, Anhui Province, China, to train teachers and to promote moral education to local residents. We had hoped to see positive results in three years. However, within half a year of teaching, the centre achieved the result of awakening people’s conscience and innate goodness. The results were beyond our expectations as good social values were restored significantly. This experiment was so

surprisingly successful that it exceeded our hopes and strengthened our confidence.

In July, 2006, I had the privilege of being invited by Dr. Preeyanuch Jariyavidyanont, Vice Ambassador of Thailand to UNESCO, to attend the grand celebration of the 2550th birth anniversary of the Buddha under the co-sponsorship of UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. I had two goals in mind when attending this activity. The first goal was to report to UNESCO that religions could work together and help each other. The best example of inter-religious harmony and mutual cooperation for world religions are the ten religions in Singapore. The second goal was to propose that to reconcile conflict and restore stability and peace, we must use the method used by Sakyamuni Buddha and Confucius and many other saints and sages—teaching.

Thus, in preparing for Paris conference, we overcame various difficulties and managed to invite the representatives from the ten religions in Singapore to conduct a joint prayer for world peace on stage during the opening ceremony. At the same time, we introduced the achievement of the people in Tangchi, China, in their learning of Chinese traditional moral teaching—*The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*. All religious representatives and participants listened carefully and responded well. We sincerely demonstrated to our international



▲In 2006, praying for world peace at “The Celebration of the 2550th Birth Anniversary of the Buddha” held at UNESCO’s Paris headquarters.

friends that religions can be united, and that people can be taught to be good! If we can begin with these two goals and strive to promote and practise them widely, I believe that they will be of great help to reconciling all conflicts and promoting social stability and world peace.

I had a dinner with the Vice Ambassador of Thailand after the conference. She and her peers were very pleased with this conference and praised the excellent program, saying that the orderly and harmonious atmosphere of the conference was unprecedented. It is worth noting that the harmonious relationship, mutual respect, and cooperation of the ten religions from Singapore gave all participants a fresh, new impression of multi-faith cooperation.

I was invited to visit the University of London and Cambridge University (both of which I had visited last year) after the Paris conference. I was very glad to give a one-hour talk at the Institute of Chinese Studies at each university and to have a discussion with professors and postgraduate students.

I deeply felt that, that although European scholars are enthusiastic about Chinese



▲Picture on the left is the Prime Minister of Singapore, Mr. Lee Hsien Loong at the Interfaith New Year Dinner 2007.

studies today, they only get as far as academic discussion and have not received true benefit. Thus, I emphasized in my lecture that the concept of “studies of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism” and the concept of “learning from Confucius, the Buddha, and Tao” are completely different. Only when we learn from Confucius, the Buddha, and Tao in daily life are we able to alleviate afflictions, gain wisdom, and attain the ultimate happiness of life—Dharma bliss.

In other words, the benevolence and compassion of the sages must be manifested and carried forward by the learners through their own speech, behaviour, and thoughts when they interact with others and engage in tasks. The sages’ teachings teach us to begin with changing ourselves. (For example, Confucius taught the four abandonments: abandoning wandering thoughts, abandoning discriminations, abandoning attachments, and abandoning selfishness.) If one aspires to become a sage, one must begin with resolving the confrontation and conflict with others and the external environment from one’s heart. This way, one will be able to understand the true meaning of the Confucian saying “To learn, and to practise what is learned is nothing but a pleasure.”

A Chinese proverb says, “Education is essential in building a country and in guiding its people.” In order for religious cooperation to last for a long time, it must be based on learning each other’s teachings. The objective of the teachings of all sages, in every country throughout time, is “compassion, loving-kindness, sincerity, respectfulness, humility, and harmony.” Looking around the world today, we see that many religious followers are not truly studying and practising their religious tenets. Instead, they are used by people with evil purposes and instigated to cause conflicts and

confrontations as well as social turmoil. This is quite sad. People generally not only have misunderstandings about religions, but they also disdain ethics and morality. As a consequence, the whole world is in disorder, with accelerating rates of crimes and suicides committed by younger and younger people. These phenomena have caused deep concerns and distress.

Therefore, if we wish to unite religions, we must first pay special attention to the study of religious texts, in order to deeply understand their meanings and to propagate them widely. Religious followers should pay attention to practising the sacred teachings in daily life and not just go through formalities. Moreover, each religion should learn from and understand other religions, while seeking common ground and putting aside differences. By doing this, religions can get along harmoniously, and exist and flourish side by side.

I have been learning the sages’ teachings for fifty-six years. I deeply feel that if one wishes to look for a place to live peacefully in this era, one must study the sages’ texts everyday without slacking off. From my learning, I have come to understand that the core of the teaching of all sages, in this world and beyond, is sincere loving-kindness. Through the teaching of ethics, morality, the law of cause and effect, wisdom, and science, the sages aim to uncover the virtues of purity and pure virtuousness innate in all sentient beings. This way, these virtues will manifest in these beings’ interacting with others and engaging in daily tasks.

Hinduism states “Resolve anger with compassion, and counter evil with virtuousness.” The Qu’ran emphasises “Allah is indeed loving.” The Bible proclaims “God loves all people.” Confucius promotes loving-kindness, and Mencius advocates righteousness. Judaism says “The most wonderful thing one

can do is to forgive others’ faults.” Buddhism teaches “Compassion is the essence, and expediency is the means.” All of the sages teach us to maintain a good heart, do good deeds, say good words, and be a good person.

Going a step further, we expand our sincere loving-kindness to encompass everything in the universe so that we can get along in harmony, and with mutual respect and love, with all sentient beings in different dimensional spaces. In doing this, we can truly achieve the ideal of human happiness and a harmonious society.

In the 1970s, the English historian philosopher Professor Arnold Toynbee once said that to solve the social problems of the 21st century, one must rely on the thoughts of Confucius and Mencius, and on Mahayana Buddhism.” As a matter of fact, the morality that the sages taught is the eternal truth, which surpasses time and space. It is not worthless and old-fashioned as considered by some shallow-minded people. When we look at the leaders in every country throughout time, we discover that if a leader skilfully uses religious teaching and the teaching of morality to purify people’s minds and improve social moral standards, then the country will enjoy an honest government, a harmonious society, and everlasting peace and stability.

An ancient Chinese said, “In a village of one hundred families, if ten people abide by the Five Precepts, we will have ten kind, honest, and cautious people. In a city of one thousand families, if one hundred people abide by the Ten Virtuous Conducts, we will have one hundred people who can get along harmoniously with others. If we can promote this teaching to the entire country of one hundred million households, we will have a million virtuous people. When a person practises one good act, that person is not committing a bad act. One bad act not committed means one less

punishment to be administered. If a punishment does not need to be administered to a family, then ten thousand punishments do not need to be administered nationwide. Yes, indeed, you can just sit and enjoy a peaceful country.” Therefore, uniting religions, realising religious teaching, and promoting moral education to all people are unignorable, important forces for conflict reconciliation and world harmony.

Take China, a country with five thousand years of history, as an example. The three teachings of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism have melded together and are deeply ingrained in people. At a very young age, children learned to do housework and interact with people, which is education in life. This laid the foundation for their moral integrity. The classics they studied in school and the art performances they attended after they entered society all taught the intrinsic values of filial piety, fraternal love, loyalty, trustworthiness, courtesy, justice, honesty, honour, kindness, love, harmony, and fairness. This way, people would be pure in mind and honourable. This is the reason why China has enjoyed ever-lasting peace and stability for five thousand years.

Fundamental to the traditional culture are Confucianism’s *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*, Buddhism’s *Ten Virtuous Deeds Sutra*, and Taoism’s *Accounts of Request and Response*. These were required courses in the past and are still very practical today. They explain profound principles in simple language, making them easy to practise. These books deserve diligent learning and wide propagation.

Essential to education are teachers. In teacher training, teaching by setting a good example with behaviour is more effective than teaching by words. Educators should know that only through diligent practice of

the sages’ teachings and of ethical and moral standards can they truly influence others. From the experiment to significantly restore good social values in Tangchi, Lujiang, within one year, we thoroughly understand that one of the reasons for such remarkable improvement is that teachers at the centre truly practised the teachings in *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* and set good examples with their own behaviours.

Today, chaos occurs globally. Only education can save the world. We strongly believe that the sages’ teaching of morality can, both for the time being and permanently, effectively and efficiently reconcile all conflicts and contradictions, and restore world stability and peace. The ancient Chinese said, “We should pass on the teachings of ancient sages and achieve peace for future generations.” They also said “Continue the wisdom-life of the Buddha and propagate the Dharma to benefits all



▲Harmony in the universe begins with sincere loving-kindness.

sentient beings.” Now is the time for every one of us sitting in this hall! It is imperative to train high-levelled propagators of various religions and master teachers of ethics and morality. We hope that the sages’ teachings will spread widely and will be passed on forever. This is the very root of human happiness and world stability!

As to implementation, I suggested at UNESCO Headquarters conference in Paris last October that, as religious cooperation has been realised in Singapore, the next step was to establish a religious university. First, we should start by setting up an institute of religions to train teachers, and then we should establish a university of religions or a multicultural university. Courses in ethics, morality, religious texts, the law of cause and effect, science, and so on, should be run to train high-level propagators. Each religion should establish its college. Each college should have both common courses and specialist courses. In addition to specialising in the texts of his or her religion, a student can also study the teachings of other religions.



◀This diagram symbolizes that peace and harmony are the central teachings of all nine religions in Singapore. They are Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Zoroastrian, Taoism, Judaism, Baha’ I and Buddhism.

After being assessed and endorsed by the government as being truly beneficial to social harmony and stability, lectures can be broadcast to religious followers throughout the entire country and even around the world through the Internet and satellite television. I sincerely hope that the Singapore government and leaders of various religious groups will work together to promote the sages’ teachings and moral education to all people. In this way, the good teachings will prevail, and evil teachings will naturally disappear. People all over the world will be led towards happiness, and social stability and world harmony will be achieved! I present my humble view to Your Excellency Mr. Deputy Prime Minister and the religious representatives. Any comments will be greatly appreciated.

I wish you all good health and happiness!
Thank you.

Ven. Prof. Shi Chin Kung AM, Hon. PhD
President of Pure Land Learning College, Australia
Honorary Professor of University of Queensland, Australia
Honorary Professor of Griffith University, Australia

Making the Media Angels of Peace

By Ven. Prof. Chin Kung

“Power of Peace: Building Peace Through Communication and Information” UNESCO Global Forum
Bali, Indonesia, January 21-23, 2007

Mr. Abdul Waheed Khan, UNESCO Assistant Director-General,
H.E. Queen Rania Al-Abdullah of Jordan,
H.E. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of Indonesia,
Distinguished guests,

Good day! It is my great pleasure and privilege to present some thoughts here at the UNESCO Global Forum “Power of Peace: Building Peace Through Communication and Information”.

I. Critical to the world’s destiny is the media

An old Chinese proverb says: “water can either float the boat or sink it.” The media is like water. It can either save the world or destroy the world. The media itself is neutral, neither kind nor evil. When media directors broadcast positive content to the masses, the world would be saved. On the other hand, when the negative content is broadcasted to the masses, the world would be destroyed. I used to talk with Mr. Liu Chang Le, the CEO and founder of Phoenix TV, that there were two kinds of people who had the power of either saving or destroying the world. The first are the national leaders. The second are the media directors. Many country leaders and peace builders already feel this keenly. The content of violence and eroticism in the media would seriously affect the social order and people’s mentality, especially that of the youth. The influence could be so deep and wide that it would destroy a people or a nation, and ultimately destroy the world.

It is sad to see that media around the world broadcasts a great deal of negative content such as violence, eroticism, stealing and lying. The positive content is very little. Many people are often exposed to and used to stimulations and become wild and cruel. To transform people’s mentality would definitely take time and effort in the education for them.

As the media is so critical, we established a Hwazan Video and Audio Library 20 years ago, and started to use the Internet education 10 years ago. Since 2003, one of my followers set up the Hwazan Satellite TV Station. All the educational channels (i.e., the Internet, the Satellite TV, DVDs, television programs, etc) broadcast the saint education content such as ethics, morality, cause-and-effect, wisdom, and science.



Relying only on the support from individuals, our human and financial resources for the distance-education is very limited. We are pleased, however, that in the past few decades, this effort has proven to be effective, which confirms the important role of the media in promoting social harmony and world peace.

II. Implementations of the Media Education for Peace

This conference aims at identifying practical methods to harness the mass media and information and communication tools for the education and culture of peace. This is a good start. It signifies that the negative impact of the media has now received attention. Thus, I am happy to provide my wholehearted support to the conference albeit my limited resources.

The set-up of the hardware facility is the first step in the media education for peace. With the

kind invitation from the conference organizing committee, despite my old age of 80 and my heavy teaching duties, I ask my representative to present my humble views from my study of almost 50 years.

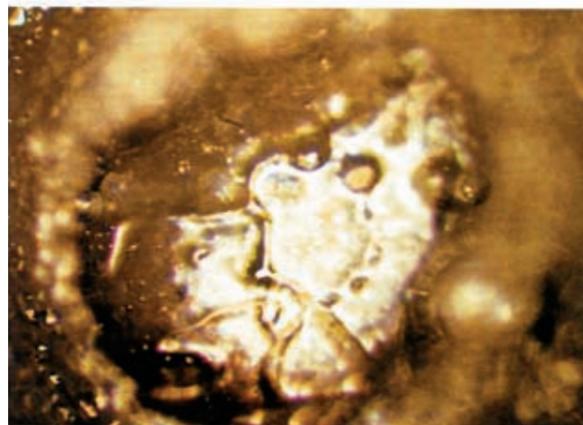
I often say: the advanced information and communication techniques are hardware only. To build software, the most important thing is to form expert teams to collect and compile materials of saint education and train saint educators. To those national leaders and people with noble ideals to genuinely save the world, I recommend that an organization be formed to continuously design the content of media education surrounding the topics of ethics, morality, cause-and-effect, wisdom, and science.

Then each member-country sends a representative to participate in an evaluation team to evaluate whether the educators’



▲In the embrace of the nature, man and women of all ages can learn freely about the teaching of saints and sages.

teaching materials are oriented to mind purification, social harmony, national security and world peace. These evaluators need to listen to lectures given by the educators every day to avoid bias. The content of the teachings, once endorsed by the team, will then be broadcasted globally. There should not be copyright restriction imposed on the teaching materials so that they can be circulated freely and widely. The wisdom and knowledge of ancient saints and sages belong to the whole humanity and do not belong to certain individuals.



▲A frozen water sample from the lake before the prayer.



▲The frozen water sample from the lake became a beautiful crystal after the prayer.

A critical issue for such pure and kind saint education is: who is eligible to teach? What are the purposes, contents, methods and consequences of the education? Thus, the organization urgently needs to design and lead the training of qualified educators and the compilation of the teaching materials. Otherwise, even if the TV station were established, there would not be real effect of the media education. A supporting centre should be established to train educators and look after educators' daily life so that they would be able to concentrate on their studies and lectures.

III. Revelation from an Experiment in a Small Town

In November 2005, we established a Lujiang Centre of Cultural Education, Lujiang County, Anhui Province in China as an experiment of Chinese traditional saint education. The majority of the teachers in the Centre have teaching experience. They do not want to pursue for fame and money. They determined to carry forward the saint education in order to contribute to long-lasting harmony and peace. These teachers set good role models for the residents in the small town. Within less than half of a year, good results can be seen. I heard that the United Nations was interested in building a harmonious sample city in Rugao, Jiangsu Province, China. Perhaps the experience of the Lujiang Centre of Cultural Education might be a useful source of reference.

I cordially invite the national leaders, experts, scholars and those who share the common goal of building peace to visit Tangchi Town in Lujiang County. I, together with our teachers in the Centre, will provide you with our teaching experience and materials for reference of conflict resolution and peace building.

A Buddhism Sutra says: "the environment is transformed by mind;" "all matters are created

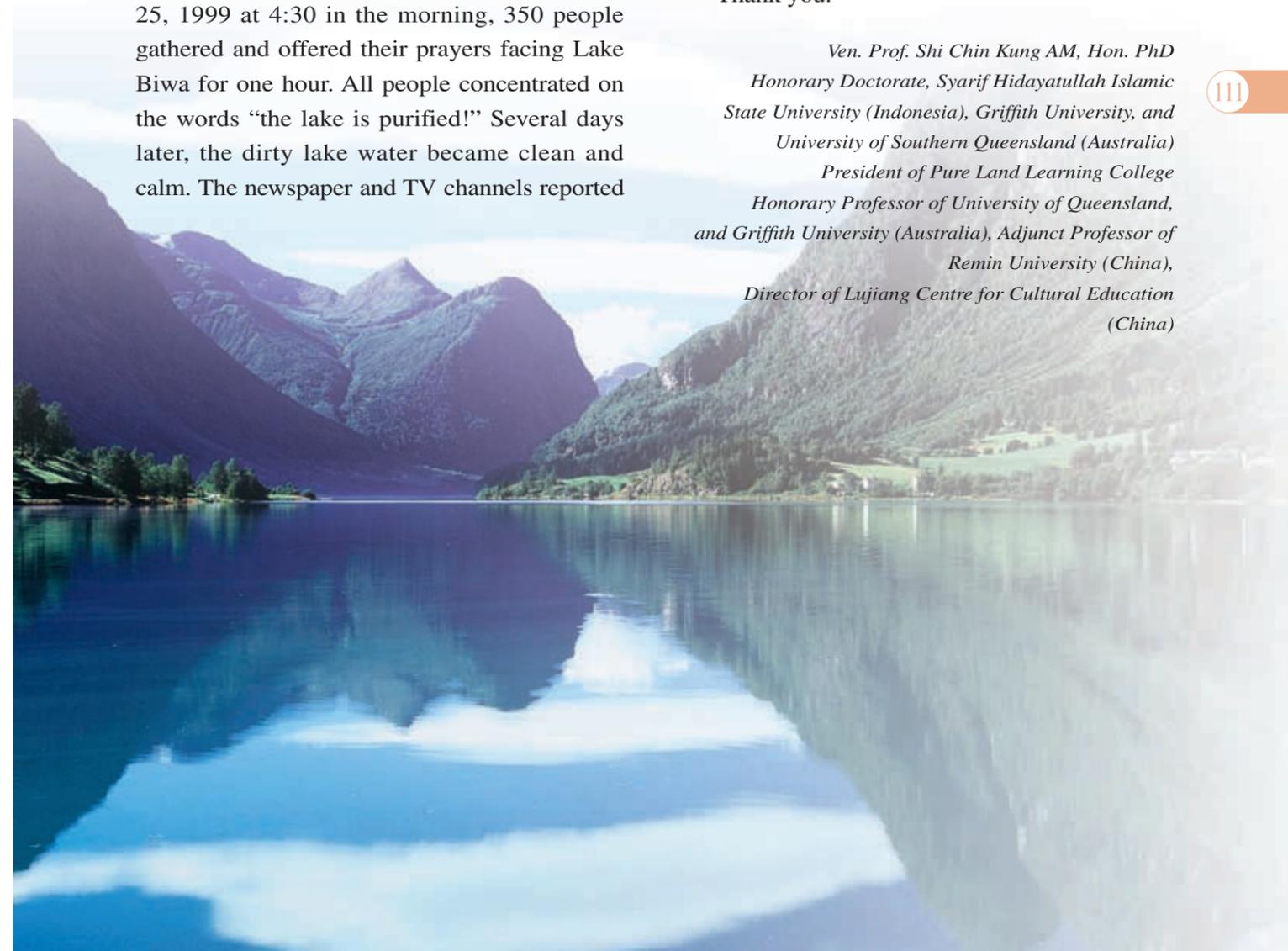
by mind". This theory has been verified by the water experiments of a Japanese scientist Dr Emoto Masaru. Dr Masaru has done over a hundred thousand experiments on water and proved that water is able to 'understand' human mind, to 'see' human language, and to 'listen to' human voice. The water crystal is formed according to what is attached to the water. Under the kind mind or words, water crystals would turn out to be beautiful, while under bad thoughts or words, water crystals would appear ugly. Dr. Masaru found that the thoughts of 'gratitude' and 'love' would make water crystals most beautiful. He concludes that 'gratitude' and 'love' are the essence of the universe. I absolutely agree to this point. Dr. Masaru also did an experiment at Lake Biwa. Lake Biwa had been polluted for 20 years and was disseminating unpleasant smell. On July 25, 1999 at 4:30 in the morning, 350 people gathered and offered their prayers facing Lake Biwa for one hour. All people concentrated on the words "the lake is purified!" Several days later, the dirty lake water became clean and calm. The newspaper and TV channels reported

this amazing event. The lake water polluted for years had clearly become purified. Although this purification only lasted for half a year, we are greatly inspired by the result of this experiment. We deeply believe that the entire universe is one unified entity. If we use the media to propagate saint education globally, then more people will cultivate kind mind, cherish gratitude and love, do good deeds and pray for our Earth and global peace. As a result, the natural disasters would vanish, environment balance would be restored, societies would be harmonious, and the world would be peaceful!

Above is my humble view to Your Excellencies and all of you. Any comments will be greatly appreciated.

I wish you all good health and happiness!
Thank you.

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The Revival of Traditional Chinese Culture and Education

World Conference on Sinology 2007

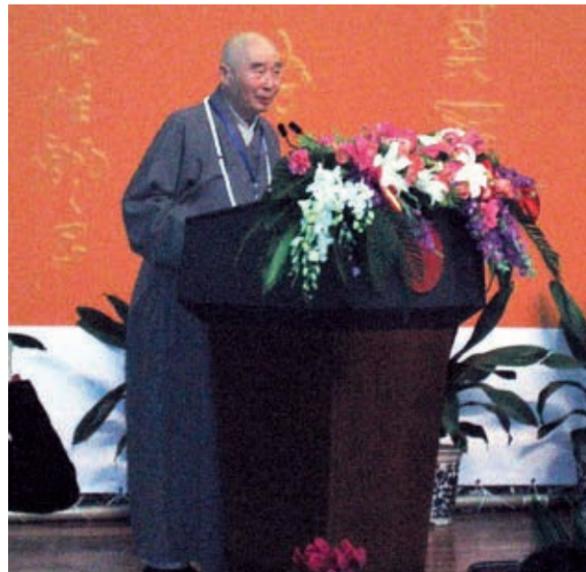
Renmin University of China

26 March 2007

Respected Chancellor, Secretary, Dean of the School of Liberal Arts, leaders and representatives,

Greetings to everyone!

Many thanks to the School of Liberal Arts of Renmin University of China, the Centre for Sinology Studies Abroad of Beijing Foreign Studies University, the *World Sinology Journal* of the Chinese Academy of Art, and the Beijing Centre for Chinese Studies. Without your strong support for this World Conference on Sinology 2007, it would not be possible for us to have the platform to conduct this advanced research on Sinology. It is with great gratitude that I come today. I hope to use this opportunity to learn from everyone. Thank you. We sincerely hope that today's conference will bring positive results facilitating the development of Chinese culture and peace in society.



▲ World Conference on Sinology 2007.

I. The Objectives of Traditional Chinese Culture and Education

In the 1970s, the well-known English historian, Professor Arnold Toynbee said that in order to resolve the social problems of the twenty-first century, we must rely on the teachings of Confucius, Mencius, and Mahayana Buddhism. The five thousand year-old Chinese culture is very broad and profound. It encompasses the teachings of Confucianism and Buddhism as well as Taoism. They are not just perfectly compatible; they bring out the best in each other. What is so valuable about the teachings of Confucius, Mencius, and Mahayana Buddhism?

Having studied and learned the sacred teachings for the past fifty-six years and having taught for forty-nine years, from personal experience, I realise that the Way of Confucius and Mencius, and the essence of Mahayana Buddhism are centred on the fact that our intrinsic self-nature is good, kind, and all-knowing. The teachings of Confucius, Mencius, and Mahayana Buddhism are based on the principle of “loving-kindness.” Confucius, Mencius, and Mahayana Buddhism teach us that we should respect one another. We need to love and care for, and cooperate with one another. Loving and caring are the intrinsic qualities of our self-nature and are thus able to transform evil to good, foes to friends, delusion to awakening, and ordinary people into saints and sages. These objectives are the nuclei of

traditional Chinese culture and education. They are also the common objectives of all the sacred teachings in this world. Today, they are what we call the “teaching of love.”

In reality, since ancient times, Chinese people have always been nourished with this kind of education based on true, sincere love. Therefore, throughout the five thousand years of Chinese history, as long as the sovereign rights were in the hands of the Han people, China has never invaded other countries or taken an inch of other's territory. The Han people are peace-loving because from the time they were very young they have been given an education based on peace and love. They willingly sacrifice themselves for others and would never invade others' territory or take from others by force.

II. The Origin of True and Sincere Love

Five thousand years ago in China, great scholars taught people the following five principles in relationships:

1. Parents and children are naturally loving towards each other
2. Leaders and their followers are mutually obligated
3. The responsibilities of husbands and wives are distinct
4. A natural order exists between the old and the young
5. There is trust between friends

Of the five relationships, the relationship between parents and children takes precedence as it is from the intrinsic self-nature that is good and all-knowing. This true and sincere loving relationship is then expanded to our family, our country, humanity, and to all beings. We need to put these relationships into practice in our daily lives.

The ancient saints taught us the Eight Virtues. The Eight Virtues can be explained in two ways. One way includes filial piety, fraternal love, loyalty, trustworthiness, courtesy, duty, integrity, and honour. Another way includes loyalty, filial piety, kind-heartedness, love, trustworthiness, duty, harmony, and equality. In essence, we need to treat people with filial piety, fraternal love, loyalty, trustworthiness, kind-heartedness, and love. We coexist with people with courtesy, integrity, honour, harmony, equality, and by fulfilling our duties.

These are the objectives of moral and virtuous teachings of the ancient Chinese emperors who were saints and sages. They used these virtues to guide their own thoughts and actions, pave the way for a harmonious relationship among clans, stabilize society, and offer the underlying basis of education for all people. Those objectives and standards were derived from the intrinsic perfect self-nature that is good and all-knowing.

When we stray from our intrinsic self-nature, we become unkind and deluded, and filled with selfishness, greed, hatred, ignorance, and arrogance. We act merely out of habits and not according to our true self-nature. Even though our self-nature can never be altered, our habits can. Our habits are conditioned by the change of our environment. Only through education can people return to their intrinsic self-nature. According to Mencius, the path to knowledge is to find one's intrinsic self-nature.

III. The Practice of Sacred Teachings Can Restore Peace and Stability

Loving-kindness, sincerity, respect, modesty, and harmony are the essence of Chinese traditional education. They are also the virtues of our intrinsic self-nature that is pure and good. Therefore, many scholars in both the East and

the West such as Professor Toynbee realised that traditional Chinese culture based on loving-kindness is indeed the root of universal harmony, a treasure full of wisdom shared by all civilisations.

When we put these virtues into practice, problems as small as those of an individual to problems as big as those of our world and even the universe can be resolved completely. Books such as *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* based on the Confucian teachings, the *Ten Virtuous Conducts Sutra* based on the Buddhist teachings, and the *Accounts of Request and Response* based on the Taoist teachings are truly the paragon of Chinese traditional culture. Even today we still find them very useful. They reveal truths that transcend time and space. They not only fulfil President Hu Jintao's noble ambition to create a society and a world of harmony; they help resolve all the social conflicts of the twenty-first century thus bringing harmony, stability, prosperity, and happiness to humanity. Therefore, all the past Chinese emperors who were also saints and sages put great emphasis on education as their number one priority in building their nation and leading their people. This type of education comprised of moral and virtuous principles, the principle of cause and effect, and philosophies complemented by scientific studies and other means were able to maintain permanent stability, which facilitated a harmonious world based on universal loving-kindness.

Consequently we know that the Sinology we talk about today is entirely different from the knowledge and skills currently taught in universities. The traditional education in Sinology included teachings on moral and virtuous principles, the principle of cause and effect, philosophy, and science. This education can be divided into four parts: first, family education based on the loving relationship

between parents and children; second, teaching of children in traditional private schools (the extension of a family education); third, social education (the expansion of a family education); and fourth, religious education. These four made Sinology perfect. The objectives had always been to restore the intrinsic self-nature that is all-knowing, good and kind, and filled with true and sincere love; and to facilitate these teachings until they permeate throughout all space and realms.

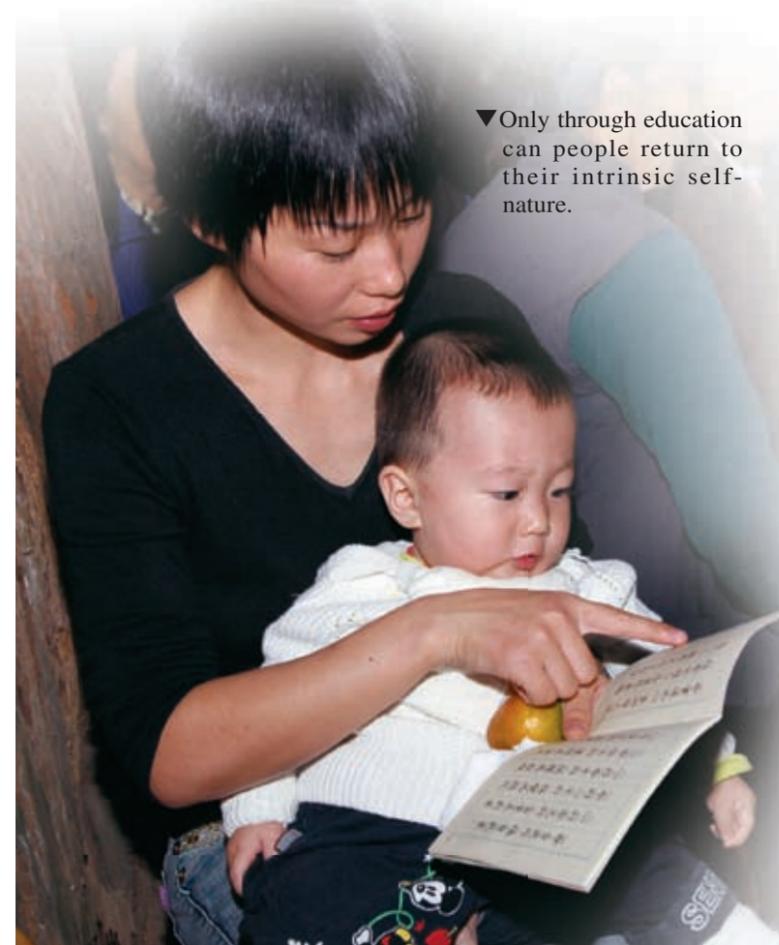
In September 2005 in Australia, I met with the Vice Chancellor of the University of Southern Queensland and several of the universities' professors. One topic in our conversation was a study that was conducted before World War II. Several European scholars searched for the reasons why Chinese civilization still flourished while the other three ancient civilizations had virtually disappeared. The research concluded that the most likely explanation was the strong emphasis the Chinese placed on family education.

I could not agree more with this conclusion. Chinese traditional education has always focused on family education, especially prenatal education. When the infant was born, the parents lived as role models for the child, firmly believing that their every gesture and word would leave an imprint on their infant's mind and later affect his or her life. Chinese education began no later than three or four days after the infant was born. This gave rise to the Chinese saying that "At the age of three, one sees how the person will be at eighty years of age. At the age of seven, one foresees the rest of the person's life."

Recent studies in modern psychology have given us positive findings on the importance of in utero education. Brian Weiss MD, the well-known American psychiatrist, wrote in his book

Messages from the Masters that he found out from his many patients, while treating them with "regression therapy," that even before the baby is born, its senses are already alert and that it has the ability to comprehend. The baby in its in utero stage already has the ability to learn!

Dr. Weiss said the memories attained by the baby at this stage prove that not only is the baby conscious, it can also be quite active. What the baby senses and knows before and after birth is more than what we sense or know. Through their senses and their ability to understand, they are gathering a large quantity of information from us. Thus, we must adjust our way of thinking as to how to interact with the young. Their senses are very keen. They respond to the love that we express through our speech, thoughts, and feelings. What Dr. Weiss learned from his patients proves that the ancient Chinese were absolutely correct in putting great emphasis on in utero education. Thus, we need to raise the public awareness of this fact so more saints and sages can be born.



▼ Only through education can people return to their intrinsic self-nature.

IV. To Practice or to Study Confucian Teachings

Last year I was invited by the ambassador of Thailand and UNESCO Headquarters to hold a conference at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris to celebrate the 2550th anniversary of Buddha Shakyamuni's Birthday. I joined this conference for two reasons. First, I wanted to report to UNESCO that different religions can unite and cooperate with one another; and that second, the way to resolve conflict and to restore stability and peace is through education. This was the method used by both Confucius and Buddha Shakyamuni as people can be taught.

I have attended ten international conferences, seven of which were hosted by UNESCO. I was the keynote speaker in eight of the conferences. After each conference, all the participants praised the concept that moral education can resolve conflict and facilitate social stability and world peace. They said it is a good concept but cannot be fulfilled. After serious consideration, I decided to select a place to do an experiment that would prove that resolving conflict and facilitating social stability and world peace was possible because I wanted the conference members to have faith in this concept.

It happened that a very kind fellow practitioner from Malaysia was willing to finance this project. In addition, I received support from people back home. So I picked a very small town in China called Tangchi as the place for my experiment. First, I established a cultural education centre for the purpose of nurturing quality teachers while putting this public education into motion. I was hoping to see some results after three years. Surprisingly, we were able to see some very good results after only six months! We were able to raise people's consciousness and change their behaviours on how to be a good person. Their improvements were evident. The results were much better than we had expected.

Having proved this, I invited the teachers and my colleagues from the Lujiang Cultural Educational Centre to attend the UNESCO conference in Paris. They reported what they had accomplished by simply introducing the practice of *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* to the residents of Tangchi. All the religious representatives and participants at the conference listened attentively. They reacted positively to the reports. We have honestly proved to our international friends that different religions can be united and that people can be taught. We also sincerely and respectfully invited all the international peace workers to come and visit Tangchi and to give us their feedback.

After the Paris conference, we were invited by the deputy ambassador of Thailand to a luncheon. She told us that she was very pleased with the outcome of this conference. She thought

the conference materials were well presented and the conference was conducted in a very orderly manner. She commented that it was the most peaceful and harmonious conference that UNESCO Headquarter had ever had.

In December 2006, a well-respected elder in the Buddhist community in Australia, Mr Graeme Lyall AM, past president of the New South Wales Buddhist Council, visited the Lujiang Cultural Educational Centre. After the visit, he kept telling people that his visit to Lujiang was the most valuable study tour he had ever undertaken. He said that if we can use traditional values education, with a modified version of *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* for Western culture, our society will definitely benefit. We have succeeded with our experiment! This proves that ancient traditional education can still benefit people today.

After the Paris conference, we were invited to visit the University of London and Cambridge University. I gave an hour lecture at the East Asia Institute of Cambridge University. I was very happy to have this opportunity to converse with the institute's professors and their graduate students. But I could not help but feel that even though European scholars today express great interest in Sinology, their enthusiasm is still limited to scholarly discussions. They do not benefit personally from their study. Thus, during my lecture, I emphasised the difference between studying Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism and learning to be a Confucianist, a Taoist, or a Buddhist.

Only when we—body and mind—truly want to learn the sacred teachings, model ourselves after saints like Confucius and Mencius, make fewer errors, and acknowledge our mistakes with a sound mind and true sincerity will we be able to reduce the amount of our afflictions and increase our wisdom. Only then will we be as happy as if we have “friends visiting us from afar.” But if our scope is only limited to scholarly discussions, we will never be able to experience this true happiness, which only comes when we put the teachings into practice. It would not be possible for us to attain the perfect wisdom we need to resolve conflict and restore peace and stability in our world.

After the lecture, Professor David McMullen of the East Asia Institute invited us to lunch. He hopes that one day I will be able to lecture for two to three weeks at the institute. From this visit, I felt strongly that our world's destiny is indeed very closely related to traditional culture. Therefore, it is most urgent that we nurture more qualified teachers to teach traditional culture.

V. Recommendations

Today we have this rare opportunity to

gather together to exchange ideas. We hope this conference will be able to put “peace in our society and world” into motion. People with lofty ideals must recognise that the most important agenda for our world today is to nurture more qualified teachers who, now in seriously diminishing numbers, are talented and capable of carrying on the sacred teachings pave the way to peace for generations to come.

In the past, the Chinese emperors who were also saints and sages selected talented and capable people based on their filial piety and integrity. They felt that a person who was dutiful and loving at home would certainly be loyal to his country. A person with integrity would not be easily corrupted. People with those two qualities would certainly dedicate themselves completely to the services of their country and its people.

Today we sincerely hope that the Chinese government will take the initiative to establish a research institute of Sinology or a centre of traditional culture for the purpose of training and nurturing qualified teachers to facilitate this traditional sacred, moral education. The terms and conditions for selecting qualified teachers should be based on sincerity, respect, loving-kindness, filial piety, integrity, and their diligence in studying. The centre should provide the teachers with all their daily necessities so they have no worries. They will then be able to concentrate on their study.

Those selected should first put moral teachings based on *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*, the *Ten Virtuous Conducts Sutra*, and *Accounts of Request and Response* into practice. Then they should concentrate on just one subject, study it for ten years, and practice lecturing on their subject daily. They will then certainly be able to gain insight into its teachings.



▲ With the first rays of the morning sun, children are reading *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* aloud.

The contents of their lectures should be examined under the supervision of the Department of Education. Anyone who can help stabilise society and the country, and bring peace to the world should be introduced to all. Different programs through distance education by using satellite television and the Internet can be broadcasted around the clock so the teachings can reach all corners of the world. In such a way, the practitioners will not only be able to continue conducting him or herself in a virtuous way, he or she will be able to spread the virtuous teachings to other people as well. At the same time, the country will be able to put this “moral education for all” into motion.

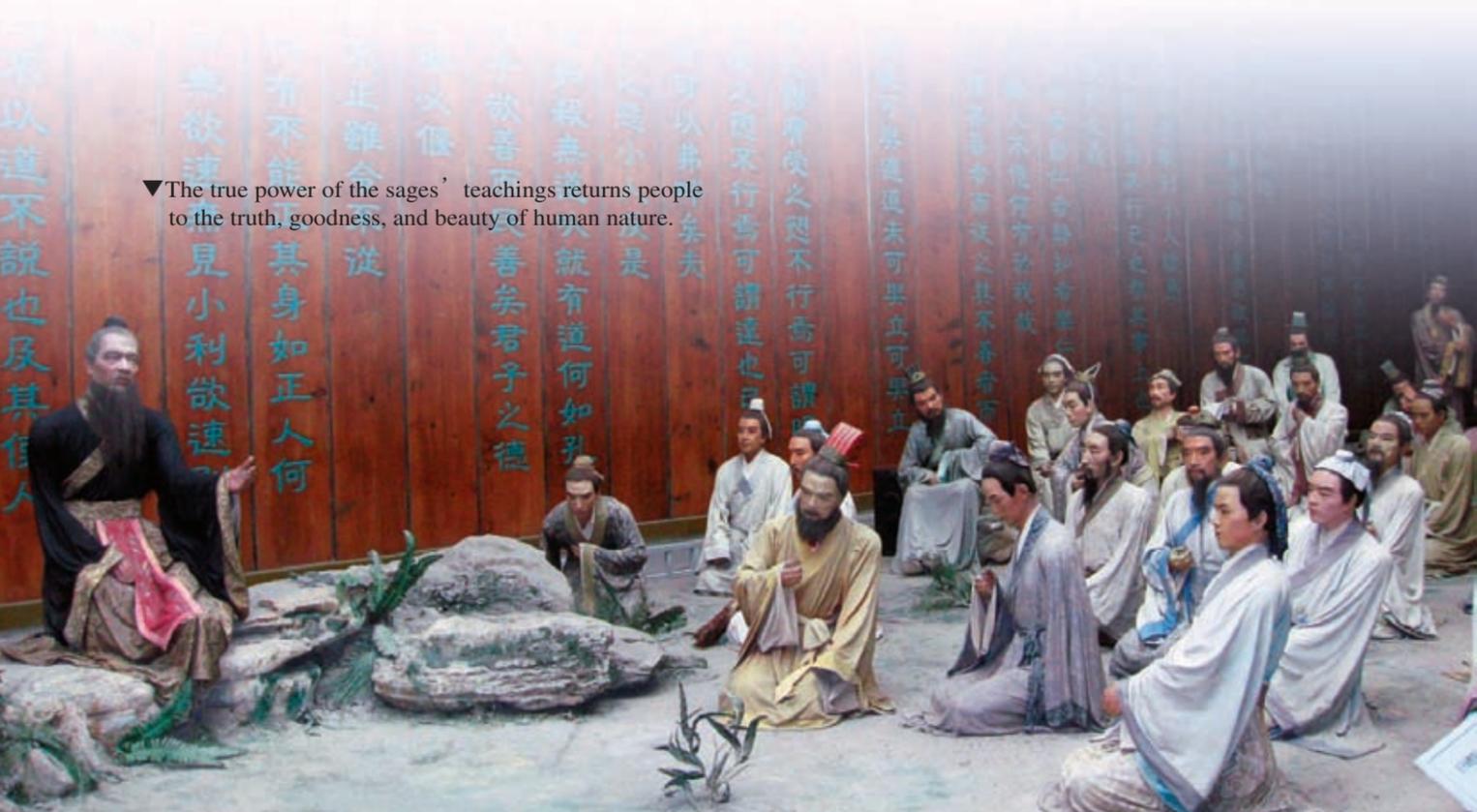
I truly believe that the results would be most impressive after three years. There would be peace and stability in our society. People would be happy and content with their lives. Therefore, we know that only when we practice what we teach can our teachings influence those far and wide. If each of us learns to be a teacher for all, acts as role model for the world, and makes this

our responsibility; we will inherit this timeless task passed down from saints and sages. It is certain that the revival of traditional Chinese culture will bring true peace and harmony to humanity.

What I have just said are only some of my humble opinions derived from years of learning and practice. Your feedback would be greatly appreciated. Here I wish everyone a healthy body and mind, happiness, wisdom, and good luck always. Thank you!

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▼ The true power of the sages’ teachings returns people to the truth, goodness, and beauty of human nature.



▲ Children learn from their parents.

Traditional Chinese Culture and a Harmonious Society

Education on Raising the Quality of Spirituality

by Shi Chin Kung
Zhengzhou University
16 April 2007



▲Zhengzhou University.

Respected leaders of various universities, honoured guests and fellow students, Greetings to all!

It is indeed a great honour for me to be invited by the leaders of Henan province to participate in this grand ceremony in memory of Huang-Di, the Yellow Emperor, to have this wonderful opportunity to visit and to learn from your university, and to report to you what I have practiced and learned on traditional culture.

The Source of Harmony, Peace and Happiness

Descendents of the Chinese people call themselves children of the Yellow Emperor. Recently my clan showed me the treasured family archive containing thirty-three volumes of my family history, the “Hsu” clan, which can be traced back 4500 years. This last name has been passed on from generations to generations and I am the 136th generation of the Hsu clan.

The Yellow Emperor had twenty-five sons. The last name “Hsu” was passed on by his second son Chang-Yi. This information can also be found in the archives and the historical records on China. As I start to trace back my roots and their sources, I begin to understand clearly what it means when people say that we are all children of the Yellow Emperor and that we are of the same family especially when I am being invited to participate in this grand ceremony in memory of the Yellow Emperor. I feel a very warm and close kinship to this event.

In the past, in China, most of the families kept a detailed record of their family history. Knowing about the family history people naturally feel more affectionate towards their clan. Only those who love their families also love their country. Gradually people learn to expand their love towards their race, towards all people including heaven, earth and all things to finally realise that people of this world are really of one big family. Therefore, the concept of universal harmony is entirely possible. Our family archive helps us to understand its deep underlying meaning.

Even more important, family’s traditional injunctions can be found in the family archives. They contain records passed down from generations to generations. This is how the elders passed down the essence of their life-long experiences to the next generations.

Those records were usually comprehensive and thorough, recorded in words and served as the paragon for the descendents. Their descendents then learned from them and their thousands of years of wisdom and experience to keep themselves from making the same mistakes. They are the cultural treasure of humanity. They are also the source of our material and spiritual civilisation. Today the human race has neglected the tradition and the accumulated wisdom of their forefathers, has opted for new innovations, and erroneously thinks that the human race is making great progress. Not until they are at the end of their road will they begin to value the traditional culture and the wisdom of our forefathers.

Even though today our technology is advanced, society is facing more extreme poverty than ever before. There are two kinds of poverty. One is lack of needed necessities. The other is lack of spiritual culture. Recently a fellow student from Beijing invited me to talk about “How to Assist Those Who Are impoverished by the Lack of Spirituality and

Culture”. Apparently it has become a serious problem in our society. Let us think about this carefully. What is more important, materialism or spirituality? Let us take a look at all the sages of this world. Should we live a life in poverty?

In China we all know Confucius and Mencius lived in poverty. Yan-Hui was Confucius’s best student. Confucius often praised him. However, among all his classmates, he was the poorest. He ate out of roughly woven bamboo ware and only had a ladle made from of gourd. He did not even own a rice bowl or a cup. This was his living condition but he was very happy. His happiness came from being able to practice what he had learned. Therefore, we know happiness does not come from owning material things. This is also how we should look at our current problems.

All the saints, sages, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas have already demonstrated for us that the enjoyment of owning material things cannot make us happy. Shakyamuni Buddha was born a prince in India. When he



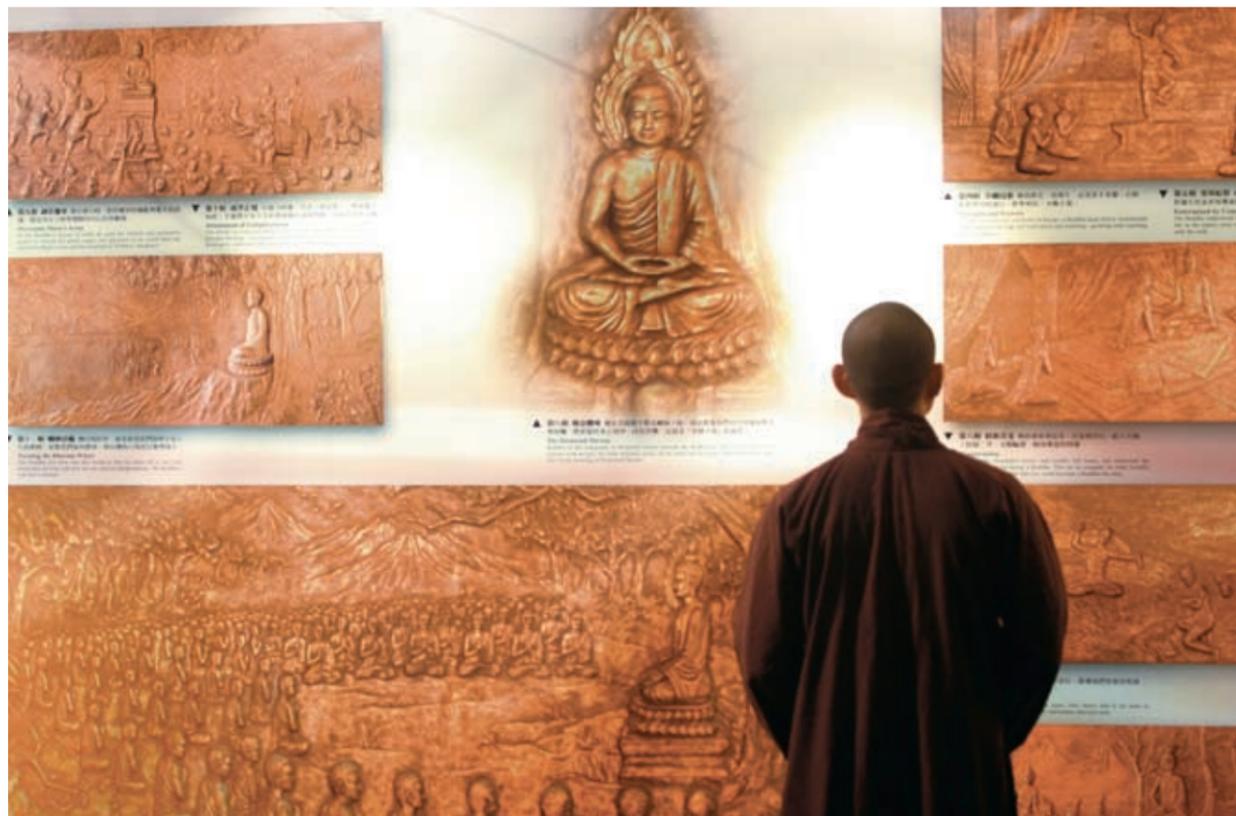
▲The statue of Yanhuang located at Zhengzhou.

was nineteen, he gave up his throne and its attendant life of luxury. Instead he went in search of knowledge. For the remainder of his life he only owned three pieces of clothing and one bowl. He only ate one meal a day and slept underneath a tree. He did not think this was suffering. He was actually very happy. At that time countless numbers of kings, ministers, and rich elders became his students and wanted to learn from him. The Buddha did not accept their offerings. He never owned or built a temple in his life. Occasionally he accepted invitations to give lectures and lessons in homes. He always left soon afterwards. He entered nirvana not under a roof but in the woods. He demonstrated for us that true happiness comes from spiritual realisation. It has nothing to do with wealth or fame. Only when we truly understand what this means will we “let go”.

The Self-Nature Embodies All

Shakyamuni Buddha was extremely

intelligent. We can just imagine the excellent opportunities he had. At the age of nineteen, he went in search of the truth. He had the chance to meet all the great religious gurus and teachers in the academic field. After he studied with them for twelve years, at age thirty, he knew they were not able to help him find satisfactory answers to the three questions that he had. First, why do we have to suffer birth, old age, sickness, death, unquenchable desires, unavoidable departure of the loved ones and having to live with those we hate, as well as others. Second, what causes the transmigration of souls in the six realms? Third, are there worlds other than the six realms? When he finally realised that none of his teachers could help him find the right answer, he sat down underneath a Bodhi tree in deep meditation. He stopped thinking and let go of all his knowledge. The minute he let go, he became fully enlightened. All his doubts and questions disappeared.



▲Return to Simplicity, the Truth and Our Self-Nature.

Shakyamuni Buddha put on an act for us to help us understand what keeps us in between the worldly and the spiritual existence. The key is to “let go”. The “worldly” kind of deep meditation and concentration can break through space and dimensions; however, without truly letting go of wandering and discriminating thoughts and attachments, our minds are still in the worldly realm not in the spiritual realm. In other words, worldly knowledge cannot help us attain enlightenment. Shakyamuni Buddha studied for twelve years and finally he had to let go.

In China, we also have a Buddha. He is the sixth patriarch of Zen Buddhism, the Great Master Huineng. He demonstrated for us that he was able to reach full enlightenment even when he was illiterate, had never read a book or gone to school. He became fully awakened when the fifth patriarch explained to him the meaning of the *Diamond Sutra*. When the fifth patriarch read the passage that “our mindfulness is freed of attachments”, the Great Master Huineng immediately understood the meaning and became fully enlightened. He understood the importance of letting go of his wandering and discriminating thoughts and attachments. The key to enlightenment is “letting go”.

The moment Great Master Huineng let go, he reached the same state of awakening as Shakyamuni Buddha had reached while sitting underneath the Bodhi tree. According to the Platform Sutra, Great Master Huineng spoke of the state of his penetrating understanding. He made the following statements: “How marvellous, our self-nature was originally pure!” Our self-nature is our original nature, our true nature. The ancient Chinese also said that “human nature was originally good and kind”, meaning that the original mind was pure and not contaminated. “How marvellous, our self-nature cannot be created nor can it be

extinguished!” It means that there is actually no birth or death. “How marvellous, our self-nature is able to embody all!” The Buddha states in the Avatamsaka Sutra that “all beings have the same perfect wisdom and virtue as Buddha”. Our self-nature embodies the same immeasurable perfect wisdom, virtues, abilities and good fortune as Buddha. Not until Great Master Huineng became fully awakened did he realise this truth.

Today we are merely confused. Our state of full awakening is not lost. It is just inactive. “How marvellous, our self-nature remains unmoved!” He meant that our minds are without fluctuating thoughts. Ordinary people’s minds are constantly swaying and fluctuating but those wandering thoughts are not real. They are merely thoughts wandering. Our true minds do not wander. Last, he commented: “How marvellous, all stems from self-nature!” This passage is very important. Where does our universe come from? Where do our ten realms come from? Where does the transmigration in the six realms come from? They all stem from our self-nature. Thus the Buddha said in the Avatamsaka Sutra that “all phenomena derive from the mind and change only when there is a change in the mind’s consciousness”.

The fifth patriarch was really pleased after Master Huineng made those five statements. It proved to him that Huineng had reached the state of true awakening. The fifth patriarch then handed to Huineng his cloak and alms bowl and made him his successor. At that time Huineng was only twenty-four years old.

Great Master Huineng demonstrated the importance of “letting go”. If we do not let go of our wandering and discriminating thoughts and attachments, we will always just be ordinary. Only when we let go, will we be a Buddha. We must realise that “all beings originally were

Buddhas”. It is when our self-nature is at its purest. Today, when we talk about helping those who are spiritually and culturally impoverished, according to Buddhism, all we need to do is close the gap between the spiritually rich and the spiritually poor. In a perfect state, there are no wandering or discriminating thoughts or attachments.

If we truly understand those two acts put on by Shakyamuni Buddha and Great Master Huineng, we will also be at ease, and gain great wisdom and the richness that enable us to attain great virtues and capabilities. The fact that originally we are all Buddhas makes it easy for us to learn the sacred teachings to regain the virtues of our self-nature. Thus, we build our confidence from knowing that our self-nature was originally pure and good. Then we know how to proceed.

Return to Simplicity, the Truth and Our Self-Nature

Among all people, the Chinese truly understand about education. They understand its intent and its importance. Five thousand years ago our ancestors already said that human nature was originally good and kind. Confucius’ Analects also states this fact. Was this an original statement made by Confucius? No, Confucius merely narrated what he learned from his ancestors. He never made an original statement. Shakyamuni Buddha said the same thing. He said that what he taught us was taught by ancient Buddhas. This “ancient Buddha” is our original self-nature not something outside of us.

Therefore, education is very important to the Chinese people. The first eight passages in the *Three Words Scripture* were handed down from our ancestors. It says, “At the very beginning, the self-nature of humankind was good. Even though their self-nature was very

similar, their habits are very different. If people are not taught, they can easily lose their original self-nature. The key to teaching is single-mindedness”. These passages were the guiding principle of spiritual and culture education that transcends time and space. It does so because it is the universal truth. When we act contrary to the truth, we will encounter many problems and catastrophes. After realising the fact that this is just the way it is, we will naturally choose the right path to follow, one that is healthy and sublime, to surpass this state of being just ordinary so we too can be a sage.

When the *Three Words Scripture* states “at the very beginning”, it is not talking about the time when we are born. It means “originally”. Our self-nature was originally good and kind. It still is, forever unchanged at its purest state. Why have we become bad? The following passage, “even though our self-nature was very similar, our habits are very different” gives us the reason. The key to this passage centres on



▲The Self-Nature Embodies All.

the word “habits”. As for our self-nature, we have exactly the same natural capacity, virtue, looks and utilisation as a sage. However, when we are confused, we only follow our habits.

Most people are influenced by their immediate environments. Thus education plays an important role. If children are not taught when still young, they will change according to the change of their environments. When they are in a bad environment, they will become bad because children learn from their environment. What children learn from the outside are not qualities of their original self-nature. Thus we need education.

How do we teach the children? We teach them by using the method of “single-mindedness”. In Buddhism we have the Three Learnings. “Concentration” is the key to our learning. “Single-mindedness” is the key to deep concentration. Deep concentration comes from practicing discipline. From deep concentration we gain wisdom. Only when we have wisdom can we truly help solve our problems.

Current education teaches students many different subjects. What are the effects? Even though the students gain knowledge, they have become impatient and impetuous. Those qualities are the exact opposite of their self-nature. It becomes difficult for them to achieve spirituality. Academically, they also need this concentration to be successful. If they become impatient and impetuous, they can never succeed in anything they do.

Education Begins With a Loving Relationship between Parents and Children

Today the whole world is trying to find a solution to resolve conflict and a way to restore stability and peace. To thoroughly solve

this problem, we need to rely on the culture education passed down from our ancestor, the Yellow Emperor.

There are basically five moral relationships. There is a natural loving relationship between parents and children. Both leaders and those being led have mutual obligations and duties. Within a family, a husband and a wife have their distinct functions. There is a proper order between the older and the younger. Friends should be trustworthy. These five basic moral relationships are not invented or created by anyone. They are the inborn virtues of all beings. In other words, it is the way it is. It is in accord with the law and order of Nature. “Dao” is the order of Nature. It is a “virtue” when we act according to Nature. It is “moral conduct” when we act in accordance with the law of Nature. If we go against it, we will encounter many man-made and natural catastrophes and problems.

The traditional cultural education begins with the loving relationship between parents and children. Presently there is very little love between most parents and children. If we watch children who are three or four months old, the love they have towards their parents is unconditional. This loving relationship deteriorates as children grow older. That is because both parents and children act out of habits. This confusion arises many social problems.

The main purpose of Chinese education is to keep this inborn loving relationship between parents and children intact over their lifetime. From childhood on, children learn to expand their love to include the whole family, the whole clan, the whole neighbourhood, the whole village, their political party, the society, the country and all of humanity. In the book, *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*,

it says that “we should love all people”. We need to expand our love to include beings of all the realms without any thought of hurting them through our words or deeds.

The Intended Purpose of the Traditional and Cultural Education in China

True and sincere love must be practiced in our daily lives in the way we treat people and the way we handle our business. Otherwise, what we learn is merely academic. We will not be able to solve problems. Only when we put the teachings of Confucius, Shakyamuni Buddha and Laozi into practice will we be able to gain the ultimate wisdom and be benefited. Just as Confucius said: “We are the happiest when we can practice what we have learned.” Buddha also said that “our hearts are filled with happiness when we truly understand the Dharma.”

When we put this concept of love into practice we will naturally respect other people. We respect people because we love them. If we do not understand this concept then we really do not understand the meaning of love. Even when other people do not respect me, I will still respect them. If they do not love me, I will still love them. This is how we practice according to the teachings of Confucius, the Buddha and Laozi. If people do not practice what they learn, they have only touched the surface of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism.

According to Confucianism, there are five steps to learning. They are erudition, examination, careful consideration, clear identification, and the actual practice. The first four steps are the methods of learning. They do not include the actual practice. The actual practice has to do with respecting and loving others, especially those who have made mistakes. If we belittle those who have made mistakes we are wrong. We must know that

they were merely acting out of habits. They did not act according to their self-nature of pure goodness. If we were all originally Buddhas; they, too, are all-knowing, good and pure. Therefore, we must not look down on them. The actual practice helps us truly understand and embody what we have truly learned.

The second moral relationship is the relationship between leaders and those being led. For example, the owners of a business are usually leaders. Their employees work for them. Both have their obligations and duties to each other. The love existing in their relationships is now called “obligations and duties”.

There are also distinct functions between husbands and wives. Their functions are their duties to their family. Families are formed by husbands and wives. Families are the core of society. They act like cells in our body. Each family has two major functions. It has to financially support the family and to properly raise the children. Usually the husband supports the family and the wife raises the children. The wife’s duties are actually more important than the husband’s duties. In traditional Chinese culture, children are heirs to carry on the family name and tradition. It is really not important how many children we have but whether we actually have an heir to carry on the family tradition and business. This depends entirely on how well the children are raised.

Therefore, traditionally whether or not we have a sage in a family depends entirely on the mother. Confucius was taught and raised by his mother. So was Mencius. All the ancient wise emperors were raised by their mothers. Therefore, Chinese call their wives “Tai-Tai” which means a holy person. This title was created in the Zhou dynasty. The three founding emperors of the Zhou dynasty were all saintly men. Emperor Wen’s grandmother was Tai-

Jiang. His mother was Tai-Ren. His own wife was Tai-Si. She gave birth to Emperor Wu and Duke of Zhou. According to Chinese history, all three—Emperor Wen, Emperor Wu and Duke of Zhou—were sages. Thus the three first ladies of Zhou dynasty were called the “Three Tais”. Henceforth the name “Tai-Tai” was created.

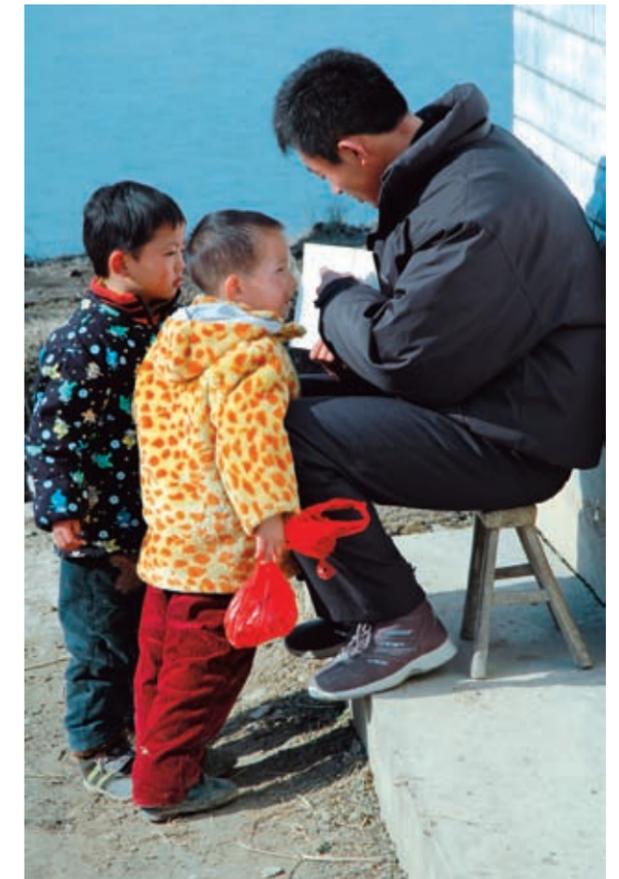
All families hope that they will have a sage. Thus the title “Tai-Tai” signifies the importance of being the wife! When Tai-Ren was pregnant with Emperor Wen, she put great emphasis on in utero education. She knew her thoughts and actions during pregnancy would greatly influence her child while in the in utero stage. Therefore, she let go all her unkind thoughts, words and actions during her pregnancy. The baby born was Emperor Wen.

The Zhou dynasty lasted eight hundred years. It is the longest dynasty in the Chinese history. Thus the name “Tai-Tai” implies the heavy responsibility and duty carried by wives. Otherwise, no matter how brilliant a career the husbands may have, without an heir to carry on the business and the family tradition, their achievements equal to zero.

Another relationship exists between brothers and sisters. There is a natural order among them. Between friends, their relationship should be trustworthy. Thus the word “love”, when applied to different relationships, is called by different names. Therefore, the true intent of education for the past five thousand years in China, from the time of birth to adulthood and old age, all centres on how to carry on a true, sincere and loving relationship (the five moral relationships) with the people around us.

Therefore, we know among the five steps to learning: erudition, examination, careful consideration, clear identification and the actual practice, that actual practice is most important.

Actual practice involves personal cultivation of letting go the five desires, the six sensations and the desire for fame and wealth. Buddhism puts great emphasis on self-cultivation to abstain from doing all that is evil and to do all that is good. The traditional Chinese teachings talk about being trustworthy and loyal in words, being sincere and respectful in actions, curbing anger, eliminating our desires, changing to be better and mending our mistakes. Buddhism teaches us the same, to diligently cultivate our self-discipline, deep concentration and wisdom; to extinguish our greed, anger and ignorance; to abstain from evil deeds and to do all that is good. It is important that we cultivate ourselves. Therefore, we need to put our loving-kindness and duties to our fellow humankind over our own desires for material gain. Only then can we truly correct our behaviours and be able to help others.



▲ Education begins with a loving relationship between parents and children.

Only when we are at peace and in harmony with ourselves will we be able to help others. We will then be able to treat each other equally, to live together in harmony, and to gain permanent peace and happiness. When we are easily influenced by external elements such as fame and profits, the temptation of wealth, sex, fame and just being lazy, it would be very difficult for us to be successful. Therefore, we need to be alert, not be tempted by our desires or afflicted by our bad habits that keep us from our self-nature. Otherwise, our actions will lead us astray and we will suffer many bad consequences as the result.

Our Natural Environment Changes according to the Changes of Our Minds

This year we have experienced unpredictable weather changes. Our winter has become warmer while the weather in spring still feels like winter. Ancient people called this “signs of

heaven”. Nature is giving us warning signals which means that it is time for us to reflect on what we have been doing that is wrong. Buddhism is thorough in its explanation of this phenomenon. It says that “our environment changes according to the changes of our minds” and that “all derives from the mind”.

Our physical, personal and natural environments all change according to the changes of our minds. When we are kind-hearted, our environments will be kind to us. The sun and the moon will shine clearly and brightly. The weather is in accord. But when our hearts are filled with the unnatural elements such as unkindness, selfishness, greed, anger, ignorance and arrogance, our environments also become abnormal. We will encounter many problems and catastrophes.

The Shurangama Sutra states clearly that when we become excessively greedy we will

incur flooding; when we are filled with anger, we will have eruptions of volcanoes and a rise in climatic temperature. Strong winds are caused by people’s ignorance while earthquakes are caused by their arrogance. There is arrogance when people are being unfair. Greed, anger, ignorance and arrogance are the causes of the previously mentioned four types of catastrophes.

Therefore, the Buddha taught us that the only way we can resolve those catastrophes is when we diligently cultivate our discipline, deep concentration and wisdom and when we extinguish our greed, anger and ignorance. This is proven by the lab experiments done by the Japanese scientist Dr Emoto.

Indeed, our environment changes according to the change of our minds. If our minds are at their purest and kindest, all the external disasters will resolve by themselves. When we truly understand this principle, we understand the meaning “see through”. As we finally understand the truth, we must diligently put such understandings into practice. It is necessary that we let go of our greed, anger, ignorance and arrogance. We need to abstain completely from doing any evil and in cultivating our goodness. As a result, we will be able to accumulate many merits and virtues.

Reflecting on the Thought: “Humans can Triumph over Nature”

Today we have advanced technology. Most people are addicted to its convenience. However, there are people who think that advanced technology has brought no real benefits to humanity. At its worst, advanced technology can annihilate the whole human specie. There are already telltale signs. Those who are pro-technology feel that humans can triumph over nature by changing the law of nature. The fact is humans did change nature, but not its laws. The abnormalities we are experiencing now are nature’s response. For

example, changes in the earth’s crust formation, rising sea levels and global warming are all nature’s warning signals. We must wake up soon before our planet earth is no longer fit for human living. So, have we triumphed over nature or is it the other way around?

Many would argue that the ancient Chinese said that “humans can triumph over nature”. Its meaning has been misinterpreted by many. What this really means is that in deep concentration, we will be able to master nature. We have the ability to restore our natural environments to normality because our environment will change according to the change in our minds. When we are in deep concentration we naturally let go our wandering and discriminating thoughts and attachments. When our minds are back to normal, our physical environment will also return naturally to normal.

The State of Being Truly Sincere, Pure and Good

I have been learning and practicing the teachings of saints and sages for fifty-six years. My experience can be summed up as follows: be true and sincere, be pure at heart, treat people equally, have right thinking, have loving-kindness; see through, let go, be at ease, accord with conditions and be respectful. These are my guidelines and the results of what I have learned and practiced. If other people are not being true or sincere, if they cheat me, insult me, or even bear false witness against me, my response to them is still true love and sincerity. They do not cultivate themselves but I do. I learn from the sages; therefore, I must act like one.

Shakyamuni Buddha was a true and sincere person. So was Confucius. I must not learn from those who are not. I must always be true, sincere, pure and good. In time I will benefit. I will then be able to gain perfect peace of mind. I purify my mind so it will not be contaminated. I cultivate



▲ Return to purity and simplicity, and rediscover oneself.

equality so I am no longer confused. I cultivate compassion so I understand the needs of others.

The word “mind” is an abstract word. We practice purity of mind through “see through”, as we truly understanding its meaning. Then, we are able to “let go”. We let go of all our evil and confused thoughts, all our unkindness in words and deeds. Then we will be at ease with ourselves. In our daily lives, we accord with the external environment and conditions without any complaint. We will then truly realise that all people are good people, and so are all matters. Others are here to help us end all our karmas so we will learn and be wiser in the end. Therefore, it is important that we must act in accord with our true nature that is sincere, respectful, humble, and at peace.

I do not really have any virtue I can speak of. To be honest, those are the only qualities that I have been cultivating for the past thirty years. I practice them in my daily life, in the work I do, in the way I treat people and in the way I handle all matters. I realise that we must first learn to love ourselves before we can love anyone else. If we are not awakened ourselves, we cannot help anyone else.



▲ True goodness has similar characteristic as water.

What does it mean to love ourselves? It means that we need to understand that our self-nature was originally pure and good and that we love our original self-nature. If we truly love ourselves, we will let go of all our unkindness and delusions. This is how we should love ourselves. Then we will be benefited. After we learn to love ourselves, we will know how to love others because we are of the same entity and because all things derive from self-nature.

The sixth patriarch of Zen Buddhism, Great Master Huineng said: “How marvellous! All things derive from self-nature!” All things and I are one. We are of the same entity. Therefore, we must love all people, including all animals, beings of different dimensions, trees, flowers, grass, mountains, rivers and land. We should love them all. When love permeates throughout the universe there is no reason why anyone would be unhappy. When I love all beings, all beings love me back! When I love the trees and flowers, they love me as well. They grow strong. They give out fragrances and they give me their fruit. The birds and animals can live freely among us. They will also be polite and we can learn together. We can have such a happy life! This is the perfect happiness experienced by Shakyamuni Buddha.

Presently, we are confused; therefore, we need to learn from the sages such as Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Buddhas and Bodhisattvas respect all beings. They would never hurt others for their own gain. They treat all beings and things with sincerity, respect, humility and kind-heartedness. They humble themselves in respect for others. In their daily lives, they encounter people both kind and unkind. They only remember their kindness and not their unkindness.

People who are truly intelligent always try to protect the purity and goodness of their minds by not allowing anyone else’s filth into their

minds. If we allow other people’s unkindness into our hearts, we will also become unkind. This is wrong. True cultivators always purify their minds. They would never think of or talk about other people’s mistakes. If we talk about other people’s mistakes, our minds are already contaminated with their mistakes. By listening to other people’s conversations and watching their actions we know who is good and who is not. Therefore, we only praise the goodness in people and we do not harbour people’s wrongdoings. This is how we keep our minds pure.

If we are able, we must do what Shakyamuni Buddha and Confucius did, hold classes and teach others what we have learned; especially if we want to save our world. We have come to understand that our current problems stem from neglecting to teach people the teachings of saints and sages. Education today only teaches students about competition. When the competition becomes too keen, competition turns into fighting. When further elevated, fighting will turn into a war. Ultimately, education today can only lead people to their own extinction.

The ancient Chinese sacred teachings teach us moral principles and virtues. They teach us the meaning of filial piety, fraternal love, loyalty, trustworthiness, etiquette, duties and obligations, honesty, a sense of shame, loving-kindness, and peace and equality. These qualities will return us to normality in our self-nature. It is an education of simplicity and the truth.

All in the Universe is One and of the Same Substance

Today, society is filled with selfishness and competition. Our only way to resolve these is by embodying what we teach. Otherwise, no one would believe us. We must practice at all times. Only then can we help transform others. Today we have advanced technology. We utilise distance education, television and the internet

to expand the effect of our teachings to enable it to spread globally. We must truly believe what President Hu advocates “a peaceful society and a peaceful world” because it can someday become a reality.

Last year, we implemented an experiment in the town of Tangchi in Anhui province. It was a success! What it has proven to us is that “people as a whole can be educated for the better.” Once we have expanded on this idea, we realise that a harmonious world can be a reality when there are harmony and equality between nations, factions, ethnic groups and religions. Out of the four, unity of religions should be engaged first to receive the best result. There is a more detailed report that was presented at UNESCO Headquarters Paris in October 2006 that you may find useful.

Ancient Chinese said that “when learned, one realises one’s inadequacy.” The process of learning is never ending. When will we reach perfection in our journey of learning? According to the Buddha, we must let go of our wandering and discriminating thoughts and attachments, and restore our intrinsic purity of mind to lead a life that is full of compassion, sincerity and true regards for others without opposition or doubt. Multiculturalism is an important issue to the world today. Under its umbrella, we must realise that different religions, schools (factions), ethnic groups and nations are all part of the same living entity. We must be mutually respectful to one another. The act of “being mutually respectful to one another” must be initiated by ourselves. When we are being respectful to others, it should not matter to us whether they are being respectful or not.

It is a wrong approach if we ask others to respect us first. We must be the one who initiates the process of respecting, loving, caring for and helping others. Once we are truly

awakened to the truth of our existence, that we are of the same entity, it becomes natural for others to respond in kind. If others are not reciprocating in kind, it only shows that they are still deluded. Perhaps I am more awakened than they are at this stage in time. When they are awakened later on, they will feel and behave the same way I feel and behave. This is the true reality of our existence. This is what the Buddha said about the “true form of all phenomena.”

The idea of multiculturalism is clearly explained by the Buddha as well as by the ancient sage emperors of China. In one of the edicts of Emperor Yongzhen of the Qing dynasty of China, he said that “the three teachings (Confucianism, Buddhism and Taosim) are of the same family.” I was fortunate enough to examine a stone carving from the time of Emperor Shu of the Tang dynasty that said “the United Diagram of the Three Teachings and the Nine Schools of Thought”. It says that all schools, including the three teachings and the nine classes, are of the same family. It then states that “everything in our universe is but one living entity.” When we expand on this idea, we see that all schools of religions are but one family in this world. We must understand this and help to unite all schools and factions of religions in our world. This is also the path that will help resolve all the conflicts and promote social stability and harmony in our world.



▲All in the Universe is One and of the Same Substance.

Conclusion

We need to make serious vows and have true visions, especially those that benefit all beings. We need to treat friends and foes alike. We need to stop wrongdoings, cultivate kind deeds, and act as role models for others. All the pain and suffering we have experienced should benefit others by warning them not to make the same mistakes. Our actions should help others to become awakened. Once we understand this reasoning, we would want to help even more people to reach awakening.

People’s awakening may not be instantaneous. It may take time and continuous effort. Shakyamuni Buddha had been teaching for sixty-one years (twelve years of self-cultivation and forty-nine years of teaching). The fact is, starting from the day he entered his mother’s womb to his final stage of nirvana, it was all part of a performance as his way of teaching the people. If we look around us, everyone in this world, including all beings, is performing in front of us for our benefit. It is true that everyone is a Buddha and every being is a bodhisattva. All are my teachers who perform in front of me their positive and negative roles to help me awaken. All acts are to help us alleviate our afflictions and gain wisdom. Indeed, all beings are originally Buddhas, and so are you.

What I have reported are only my humble observations with regards to traditional culture education. I respectfully seek your guidance and advice. Here I sincerely wish you all a very good fortune and happiness and wish this event the greatest success.

Shi Chin Kung AM
Adjunct Professor, Renmin University
Honour Professor, Griffith University
Honour Professor, University of Queensland
Director, Lujiang Cultural Education Centre
President, Pure Land Learning College
Honourary Doctor, Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University

生活在感恩的世界 *Living On a Grateful World*

感激斥責你的人 因為他助長了你的定慧
Be grateful to those who have denounced you,
for they have increased your wisdom and concentration.

感激絆倒你的人 因為他強化了你的能力
Be grateful to those who have made you stumble,
for they have strengthened your ability.

感激遺棄你的人 因為他教導了你應自立
Be grateful to those who have abandoned you,
for they have taught you to be independent.

感激鞭打你的人 因為他消除了你的業障
Be grateful to those who have hit you,
for they have reduced your karmic obstacles.

感激欺騙你的人 因為他增進了你的見識
Be grateful to those who have deceived you,
for they have deepened your insight.

感激傷害你的人 因為他磨練了你的心志
Be grateful to those who have hurt or harmed you,
for they have reinforced your determination.

感激所有使你堅定成就的人
Be grateful to all who have made you
firm & resolute and helped in your achievement.



The Past, Present, and Future of Buddhism

A speech given at the Headquarters of the World Fellowship of Buddhists
on May 18, 2007, Bangkok, Thailand

Your Excellency Prime Minister Mr. Surayud Chulanont ,
Distinguished WFB Chairman H.E. Phan Wannametthee,
Respected Venerables, guests, ladies and gentlemen:

Good morning!

Many thanks to the World Fellowship of Buddhists for inviting me to participate in this great event. You were kind enough to ask me to share my thoughts on the topic of “The Past, Present, and Future of Buddhism” today. It is indeed a great honour for me. Unfortunately, when your invitation reached me, I already had another commitment and was unable to come to Bangkok myself. Please accept my apology. I have prepared a short report and asked a student of mine to read it on my behalf. Your comments are most respectfully welcome.

I would like to share my humble opinions on the following three topics:



▲The celebration of Vesak was held at Buddhamonthon in Thailand.

**I. The original essence of Buddhism:
Teaching the truth of the universe and life**

**II. The present mission of Buddhism:
Promoting world harmony through education**

**III. The future revival of Buddhism:
Nurturing excellent teachers**

I. The original nature of Buddhism: Teaching the truth of the universe and life

In the 1930s, a Buddhist master made what has become a famous statement: “Buddhadharma is Neither a Religion nor a Philosophy. It is a Modern-day Essential.” If Buddhism is neither a religion nor a philosophy, then what is it? In my view, it is an education.

Shakyamuni Buddha renounced his throne to seek answers for the meaning of life at the age of nineteen and attained enlightenment at the age of thirty. He then dedicated the rest of his life to teaching all beings how to eliminate delusion and attain enlightenment, and to end suffering and attain happiness. He did this by lecturing on the Dharma at more than 300 assemblies for forty-nine years. In a very real sense, given the social condition of his time, he was actually a multicultural social educator. One of the ten titles for a Buddha is “Teacher of the Heavenly and Human Beings.” The teacher-student relationship between the Buddha and all beings indicates that Buddhism is an education.

The Buddha affirmed in his teaching that all beings originally have the Buddha’s wondrous wisdom, ability, and appearance. That is to say,

all beings and the Buddha are originally equal in nature and abilities. Through practice and cultivation, every being can regain this perfect Buddha wisdom, ability, and appearance hidden in their innate nature. In various religions, God and his people have a father-child relationship. Thus, they cannot be equal. From this, we see that Buddhism is not a religion.

The Buddha told us in the *Flower Adornment Sutra* that the universe is created by our mind. The creator and the created are not “two,” but one unified entity. This point of view does not exist in philosophy. The natures of the creator and the created are defined as opposite to one another in philosophical discussions. Thus, Buddhism is not a philosophy either.

Therefore, we conclude that Buddhism is an education directed by the Buddha towards all beings about the truth of the universe and life. The Buddha’s teaching is based on the notion that our true nature is innately good and enlightened. The Buddha taught us the principle of “compassion and loving-kindness.” That is, we are to be humble and to respect, love, care for, and cooperate with one another. These virtues flow naturally from innate goodness and innate enlightenment and are thus able to perfectly achieve the objectives of transforming evil to goodness, foes to friends, delusion to awakening, and ordinary people to sages. These are also the common objectives of all the sages’ teachings in the world. Today, they are what we call the “teaching of love.”

II. The present mission of Buddhism: Promoting world harmony through education

Today’s world is full of turmoil and conflict. Conflict resolution, peace, and harmony are our most critical issues. Where is the root cause of conflict? The root cause lies in us. The Buddha said “Delusion is the root cause of suffering,

while enlightenment is the source of happiness.” When one’s thoughts, speech, and behaviour do not accord with the innate goodness and enlightenment of one’s nature, conflict will arise. The Buddha said that greed, anger, and ignorance are considered the root causes of conflict and called them the Three Poisons. The aim of the sage’s education is to transform one’s mind. When one is able to remove the Three Poisons and resolve conflicts within one’s mind, the external world will be harmonious. The harmony of the world begins in the mind. Through receiving the sage’s education, we restore the goodness, enlightenment, sincerity, respect, humility, and harmony in our intrinsic nature and spread them until they permeate all space and Dharma realms. Thus, we should learn from the Buddha and promote the teaching for the masses. I am now eighty-one years old. Learning from Shakyamuni Buddha, I have taught Buddhism for forty-nine years and continue to give lectures every day to the world via the Internet, satellite television, and DVD distribution.



▲Vesak, also known as festival of “Buddha bathing” , is a ceremony to commemorate the birth, enlightenment, and the nirvana of the Buddha.

During the education process, we must pay attention to its foundation. Theravada Buddhism is the foundation of Mahayana Buddhism. However, when we look at the history of Buddhism in China, only Mahayana Buddhism prevailed, Theravada Buddhism did not. Why was it so? In the past, Chinese people received the Confucian and Taoist teachings since a young age and these teachings supplemented the Theravada teachings and also became the foundation for learning Mahayana Buddhism.

The Confucian textbook *Dizigui* (*The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*), the Buddhist *Sutra of the Ten Virtuous Conducts*, and the Taoist textbook *Accounts of Request and Response* are the paragon of traditional Chinese culture. Even today, we still find these books very useful. They can bring about true and ever-lasting harmony, stability, prosperity, and happiness to humanity.

III. The future revival of Buddhism: Nurturing excellent teachers

The revival and future propagation of Buddhism needs excellent teachers. We sincerely hope that the Thai government will take the initiative to establish a centre for the purpose of training and nurturing qualified teachers to facilitate traditional revered education. These teachers should not only be knowledgeable scholars of Buddhism, but more importantly, they should be the role models of morality and virtue for society as well.

The terms and conditions for selecting qualified teachers should be based on sincerity, respect, loving-kindness, filial piety, integrity, and diligence in learning and studying. The centre should provide the teachers with all their living necessities so they will have no worries. They will then be able to concentrate on their studies. They should first learn to practice the moral and virtue teachings based on basic

Theravada teachings or basic teachings such as *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*, *Accounts of Request and Response*, and the *Sutra of Ten Virtuous Conducts*. Then they should concentrate on and specialise in just one subject or one sutra, study this sutra for ten years, and facilitate further learning by lecturing on this subject daily. They will then be able to truly gain insight into the sutra they are studying.

Their lectures can be recorded and televised using satellite television and the Internet so their teachings can reach all corners of the country and the world. In such a way, these teachers will be able to not only continue to conduct themselves in a virtuous way, but also teach what they have learned to other people as well. With such an establishment, I truly believe that it would take no more than three years to witness a significant improvement of stability and harmony in society, so that people would lead happy and contented lives. Buddhism will also continue to have ever-lasting influence and reach.

I wish Mr. Prime Minister and all of you good health and happiness!

Thank you!

Ven. Prof. Shi Chin Kung AM
President of Pure Land Learning College, Australia
Honorary Professor of University of Queensland and Griffith University, Australia
Honorary Doctorate, Syarif Hidayatullah Islamic State University (Indonesia)
Honorary Doctorate, Griffith University and University of Southern Queensland (Australia)



▲ Online education is flexible and has no constraint of time and distance.



▲ One of the modern propagation of the Buddha's teachings is through the distribution of DVDs.

How to Live and Flourish Side by Side in a Multicultural Society

Many people consider modern society a multicultural one. Australia, in particular, has been stressing the importance of harmony among different cultures in recent years.

This is because in recent decades, the Australian government adopted an open door policy that welcomes immigration. New immigrants hail from different countries and thus are of different races. They have different religious beliefs and different cultural backgrounds, as well as different living styles. Now they live in the same society. It becomes important to meld all these differences so that society can coexist harmoniously.

Only when there is harmony can a society be prosperous. We hope that Australians and new immigrants can respect, love, care for, and cooperate with one another so as to live a happy life and establish a wonderful society.

In this modern age, every country has some people born elsewhere. With this diversity, every society is a multicultural society. To achieve the goal of harmony, Australians officially raised this issue for public discussion. In fact, all wise government leaders have noticed and paid attention to this matter.

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▲ In the West Zen Temple of Da Chong Mountain, Master met with the Buddhist Association delegation from China. Second from left is Director Ms. Wei Kuo, to the right of Master Chin Kung is Ven. Sun Hui, on the left side of Master is the head of Da Chong Mountain Ven. Hui Shiong.

What is Multiculturalism?

Everyone is exploring how to achieve harmony and what method is effective in achieving it.

We see a few very wise and capable leaders throughout time and the world who were able to reconcile differences and unite their groups so that these groups were able to be successful. A group as small as a family was able to become prosperous; and a group as large as a country was able to become wealthy and powerful. Therefore, those who have the ability to bring harmony among their people play a very important role in the achievements of their groups. Why were these leaders able to reconcile differences and unite their groups or countries? Because they treated others with sincerity and compassion. One who is truly sincere can move others. If one cannot do so, it is because one is not sincere enough. One who has utmost sincerity can move all beings. One can even move a person who has numerous afflictions and bad habits so that this person would at the least somewhat restrain his or her behavior. This contributes to social stability, world peace, and the wellbeing of all people. This action is very positive and constructive.

Because of the difficulties of traveling long distances in the past, people used to live within a small area. Indeed, there were people who, in the entire lifetime, never went to another village, even one that was only a few miles away. It is no longer the case now. With the development of technology, an incident occurring anywhere on earth will be broadcasted all over the world within a very short time. It was very difficult to travel from China to Australia in the past. Given an opportunity, one would have been afraid of taking this trip for it would take several months by sea. Now traveling is easy, and it takes only a few hours. The world has become smaller. It is like a village.

Going on tours has become a part of our lives. Therefore, our contact with the world becomes more frequent. We will have many opportunities to interact with people who are of different race and nationality, and who have different religious beliefs, cultural backgrounds, and living styles. This is multiculturalism. Thus, we must break down all barriers and have the mindset of benefiting all beings.

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▲ Chairman Jia Qinglin of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) held a welcome banquet at the West Hall of The Great Hall, Mr. Jia was having a close and cordial conversation with Master Chin Kung.



▲ The gathering of Master Chin Kung and the president of the International Confucian Association, Mr. Ye XuanPing, both share the same consensus about the importance of traditional moral and ethics education in attaining world peace and harmony.



▲ In 2004, Venerable Master Chin Kung was invited as honorary consultant of the Indonesian religious leaders delegation formed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Indonesia for their visit to Egypt, Italy, and the Vatican to further facilitate communication and understanding.

Tolerance, Respect, Love, Concern, and Care

I have met people who are of different religion, race, and nationality. They all sincerely wish for a stable society and a peaceful life. In Singapore and Australia, we have been diligently engaged in multicultural undertakings, which bring different religious groups and different ethnic groups together to resolve misunderstanding and conflict. We hope that everyone will do his or her best to contribute to social stability and world peace. We reached a consensus there. The goal and guidelines that I proposed are simple, so it is easy for us to remember and to apply in our lives. The guideline is to treat others equally and to live in harmony with them. We hope that we can do this regardless of their religion, ethnic group, nationality, cultural background, or social position.

How do we apply this guideline in our lives? The key words are tolerance, respect, love, concern, and care. We must broaden our minds and tolerate one another. Without tolerance, conflict and opposition cannot be resolved. We must respect and love one another. We must also be concerned about and take care of one another. To summarize, we should help and work with one another—we are family. I travel all over the world, and wherever I go, I urge people to practice those key words. We ourselves should practice first, then we urge our families and eventually others to practice. If we and our families cannot practice them, how can we ask others to do so?



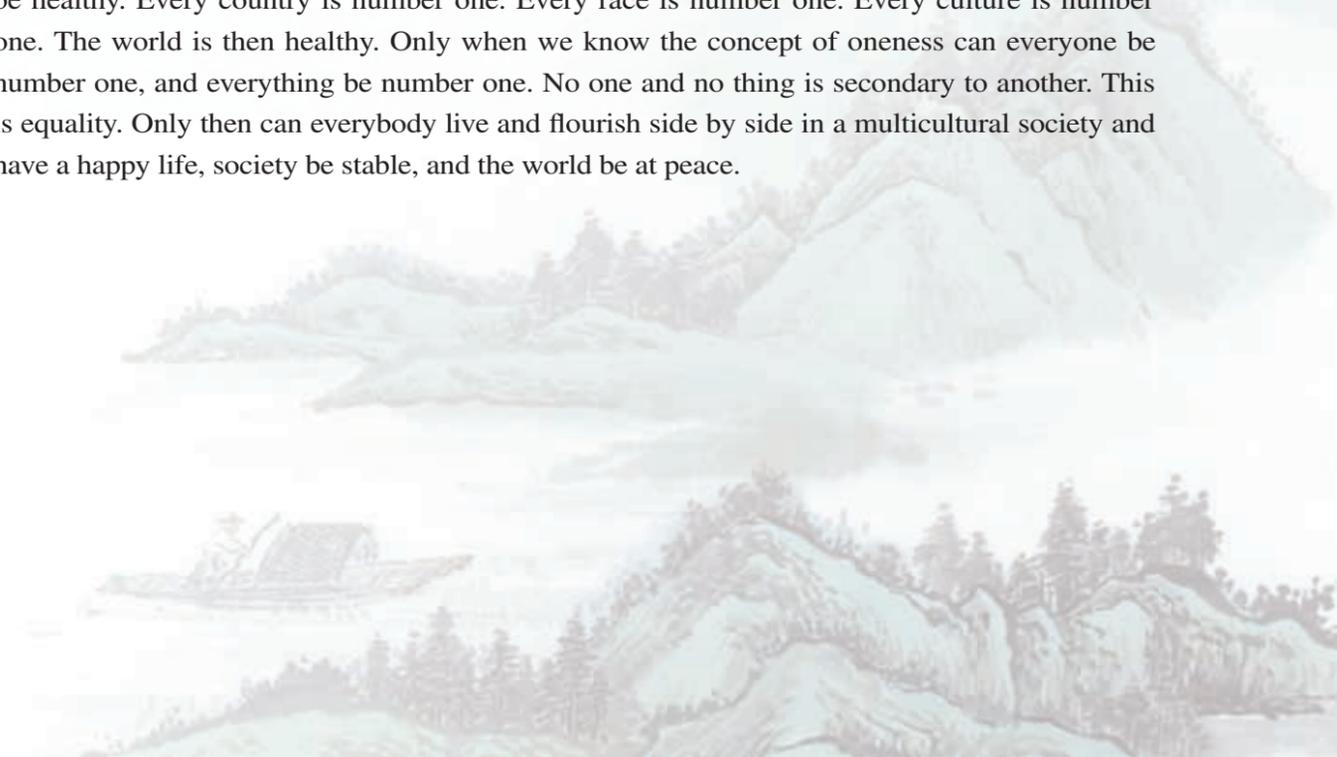
▲ Visiting Cardinal Julius Darmaatmadja at Bishops' Conference of Indonesia (BCI), Jakarta, Indonesia.



▲ In 2004, Master Chin Kung met with the president of Todayji Temple of the Flower Adornment School in Nara, Japan.

What is the problem that people have? They do not know the concept of oneness. They have preference—they discriminate. Take the body as an example. Say Buddhism is the eye, Christianity is the ear, and Islam is the nose. If we say that Buddhism is the most important, Christianity is the second-most important, and Islam is the third-most important, it is equivalent to saying that the eyes are healthiest, the ears are not so healthy, and the nose is the least healthy. In this case, this person is surely ill. If the health problem is serious, then it can be fatal.

What then is a healthy person? All are number one. Buddhism is number one. Christianity is number one. Islam is number one. Every religion is number one. Only in this way can a body be healthy. Every country is number one. Every race is number one. Every culture is number one. The world is then healthy. Only when we know the concept of oneness can everyone be number one, and everything be number one. No one and no thing is secondary to another. This is equality. Only then can everybody live and flourish side by side in a multicultural society and have a happy life, society be stable, and the world be at peace.





▲The Painting of Confucius Teaching the Six Arts is Approximately 550 cm long and 183 cm high. It is painted by Mr. Jiang Yi-zi.

The Painting of Confucius Teaching Six Arts

The Most Sacred Teacher Confucius, realizing that his doctrines made no headway with politicians in the State of Lu, left and traveled to other states. In later life, he returned to Lu, where he re-edited the Six Classics and taught widely. He had three thousand students, and seventy-two of them excelled in the Six Arts. For details, please see Biography of Confucius in *Records of the Grand Historian (Shiji)*.

The Six Arts are six kinds of skills, which are rites, music, archery, charioteering, calligraphy, and mathematics. The Six Classics are the teachings of the Six Arts: *Book of Songs*, *Book of History*, *Book of Changes*, *Book of Rites*, *Book of Music*, and *Spring-Autumn Annals*. They contain the truth and the rules of the universe, and can help people awaken to their true nature. If those who learn the Six Classics have a good understanding, they will abide by the teachings of etiquette and music, cultivate in accordance with the true nature, and use all their skills to benefit all people and help all advancing themselves until becoming sages.

This painting depicts Confucius teaching students poetry, calligraphy, rites, and music. Therefore, it is called the Painting of Confucius Teaching Six Arts.

When all Buddhas teach all beings, the highest guiding principle is “Do nothing that is bad, do everything that is good, and purify one’s mind. This is the teaching of all Buddhas.” Doing nothing bad is a Theravada precept and benefits oneself. Doing everything that is good is a Mahayana precept and benefits others. The foundation for benefiting both oneself and others is filial piety. In China, the core of Confucian teachings is loyalty and filial piety. Both Confucianism and Buddhism are founded on filial piety because filial piety is the manifestation of virtues innate in the true nature.

In today’s chaotic world where society is unstable and people feel disquiet, the practice of filial piety is the only and the fundamental solution. This is why the English historian Dr. Arnold Toynbee said that to solve the social problems in the 21st century, one must rely on the thoughts and teachings of Confucius and Mencius, and on Mahayana Buddhism.



Studying Rites from Laotan

In the third year of King Jiing of Chou Dynasty, i.e. the twenty-fifth year of Duke Chao of Lu (517 B.C.), when Confucius was 35 years of age, he and Nankung Chingshu went to study the ancient rites and ceremonies from Laotan in Chou. Laotan was once the royal library curator of Chou Kingdom. He was in charge of the rites and ceremonies and the storage of archives and literature, so he knew the rites and ceremonies very well. Confucius went to him to study ancient rites from him.



Ruling Chung-tu with Morality

In the twentieth year of King Jiing of Chou Dynasty, i.e. the tenth year of Duke Ting of Lu (500B.C.), when Confucius was 52 years old, he was appointed the magistrate of Chung-tu. He legislated the laws governing the rituals of birth, death, wedding and funeral ceremonies. The meals of adults and children were amounted. People should fulfill their obligations to society according to their individual abilities. Men and women should follow different lanes in the street. After a year, the social order was so good that the walkers in the street would not pick up the thing lost and businessmen did not adulterate their goods. The town became a model city and an object of imitation for all its neighboring states.

Later Confucius was promoted to the position of the Secretary of Public works and further promoted to that of the Grand Secretary of Justice and the acting Chief minister. Within seven days, he executed Shaochengmo who plunged the government into disorder. After three months of his premiership, Lu became an orderly state.

A Society of Harmony and Peace A Homeland of Propriety and Righteousness

A Brief Introduction to the Lujiang Centre of Cultural Education

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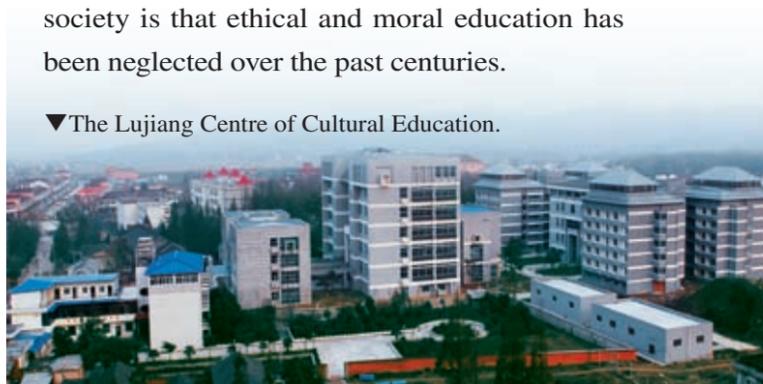
It has been a common aspiration for humans to co-exist peacefully and harmoniously since the very beginning of civilisation. In China, President Hu Jintao put forward to all the people to ‘rebuild a harmonious society’. At the 60th World Summit of the United Nations, President Hu also advocated to ‘build a continuously peaceful and commonly prosperous world of harmony’. What is the best way to realize this ideal, a goal for all the Chinese people and even for all the people in the world? It is said in *Book of Rites*, a more than two-thousand-year old traditional Chinese classic, that ‘Education is the most important element in establishing a nation and guiding the people’. This is recognised as eternal truth in both ancient and contemporary times, and can be demonstrated from an historical perspective of China as well as from rich experiences drawn from all over the world.

If we look back to China’s history, we can see that for most part of her five-thousand year history, the country has largely followed a peaceful and united path, and the Chinese people have enjoyed a stable and harmonious life. In the same way China has also held on to a foreign policy of ‘promoting virtue education and appeasing the barbarians’. It has been accepted that the harmonious situation, both inside and outside China, depends on educational policies based on the ethical guidance provided by Confucius and Mencius. As the former Chancellor of the Republic of Germany, Mr. Helmut Schmidt noted, ‘in

history, no matter how powerful the Han-ruled China was, seldom did it conquer other countries by land expanding.’ It was for this reason that the late famous British philosopher of history, Arnold J. Toynbee claimed in his unique wisdom that: ‘Only China’s doctrines of Confucius and Mencius and Mahayana Buddhism can resolve the social problems of the twenty-first century.’

Yet, if we look around at the world today, we can see many conflicts between different countries and between diverse ethnic groups. Especially since the event of September 11th 2001 in the USA, horror has clouded human society and human hearts. At the same time, the natural ecological balance is under severe strain; worldwide social problems are emerging one after the other, and it is alarming to see the increasingly degeneration of general social and moral atmosphere, prevailing of materialism, seeking profits in violation of moral principles, higher and higher rates of divorce, the horrific types of juvenile crimes, etc. The fundamental reason for all the chaos and disorder in the society is that ethical and moral education has been neglected over the past centuries.

▼The Lujiang Centre of Cultural Education.



▲Mr. Tsai Li Sui, Education Director of the Lujiang Centre of Cultural Education, giving lessons to students attending the class of 2005, the first group of students for the center.

Ven. Master Chin Kung, the General Supervisor of the Centre, has taken an active part in UN conferences on world peace many times. Facing the world full of constant conflicts, Ven. Master Chin Kung understands clearly that to reconcile conflicts and promote world peace is the most desired aspiration for all human beings in the contemporary times. The fundamental way is to regain humanity and loving-kindness that origins in human nature. And this can only be realized by traditional Chinese ethical and moral education, the contents of which are ‘to treat each other with humanity through filial piety, fraternal love, loyalty and trustworthiness, and to live together peacefully by being courtesy, righteousness, honesty and honor’. The essence of traditional Chinese ethical education is an education of love and compassion, and its goal is to build a harmonious world in which everyone treats each other sincerely, honestly, friendly and each has his/her own role to play and each is properly provided.

Nearly eighty years old, Ven. Master Chin Kung still makes great efforts to get human, financial and material resources home and abroad together to establish the Lujiang Centre of Cultural Education at his hometown, Tangchi Town, Lujiang County, Anhui province of P. R. China.

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At the heart of the education in the centre is excellent traditional Chinese culture, especially emphasizing filial piety to one’s parents, respect to one’s teachers and others, the virtues fundamental to be a good person. Ven. Master Shi Chin Kung did not establish the centre for the purpose of fame or gaining a grand reputation, but rather to carry on a cause to benefit the people and society. It is his intention that all the teachers in the centre will go to every household, every village and every town to provide lessons and to talk on ethical and moral principles so that the Lujiang people will become excellent citizens: benevolent fathers, filial sons, compassionate leaders, loyal subordinates, affectionate husbands or wives, fraternal brothers or sisters, and trustworthy friends. They will start with the fundamental education such as how to be filial to parents, respectful to teachers, compassionate to the elders, caring the young, modest to neighbors, and friendly and honest to each other. It is by these gradual and continuous efforts that the ideal goal of a happy life, affectionate family, trustworthy business and harmonious county can be reached, by which Lujiang will become a model county demonstrating traditional Chinese virtues of propriety, righteousness, harmony and peace, where people will not pick up the lost of others (so that the owner could come back and find it), and the villagers do not need to lock the door when they are out (because everyone is properly educated and no one will steal anything from the house). Ven. Master Chin Kung also expects the centre to act as a bridge to communicate with abroad. It is hoped that by learning courses on traditional Chinese culture and by paying visits to Lujiang, the model county of harmony, friends from all over the world will get to understand the essence and meaning of such virtues as ‘humanity, love, modesty, kindness, tolerance, forgiveness, propriety and righteousness’.

In order to train educators who devote to moral education and to improve people's moral cultivation, a variety of short-term series of seminars and teaching courses have been arranged in the centre. Now the Series of lectures on the *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*, Series of lectures on happy life, Series on traditional art, talent and skill have been warmly welcomed by the teachers, public officials, students and fellow-villagers.

In August 2005, Ven. Master Chin Kung attended the International Symposium on 'Cultivating Wisdom and Harvesting Peace' organized by Griffith University in co-ordination with the UNESCO, where he gave a keynote speech entitled 'Enhancing ethical and moral education, promoting world peace', pointing out that ethical and moral education plays an important role in resolving conflicts and attaining perfect harmony in one's body and heart/mind, in the natural environment, and in the world. Thus the centre also provide the whole world with distant moral culture education courses focusing 'humanity, love, harmony and peace', delivered via the internet.

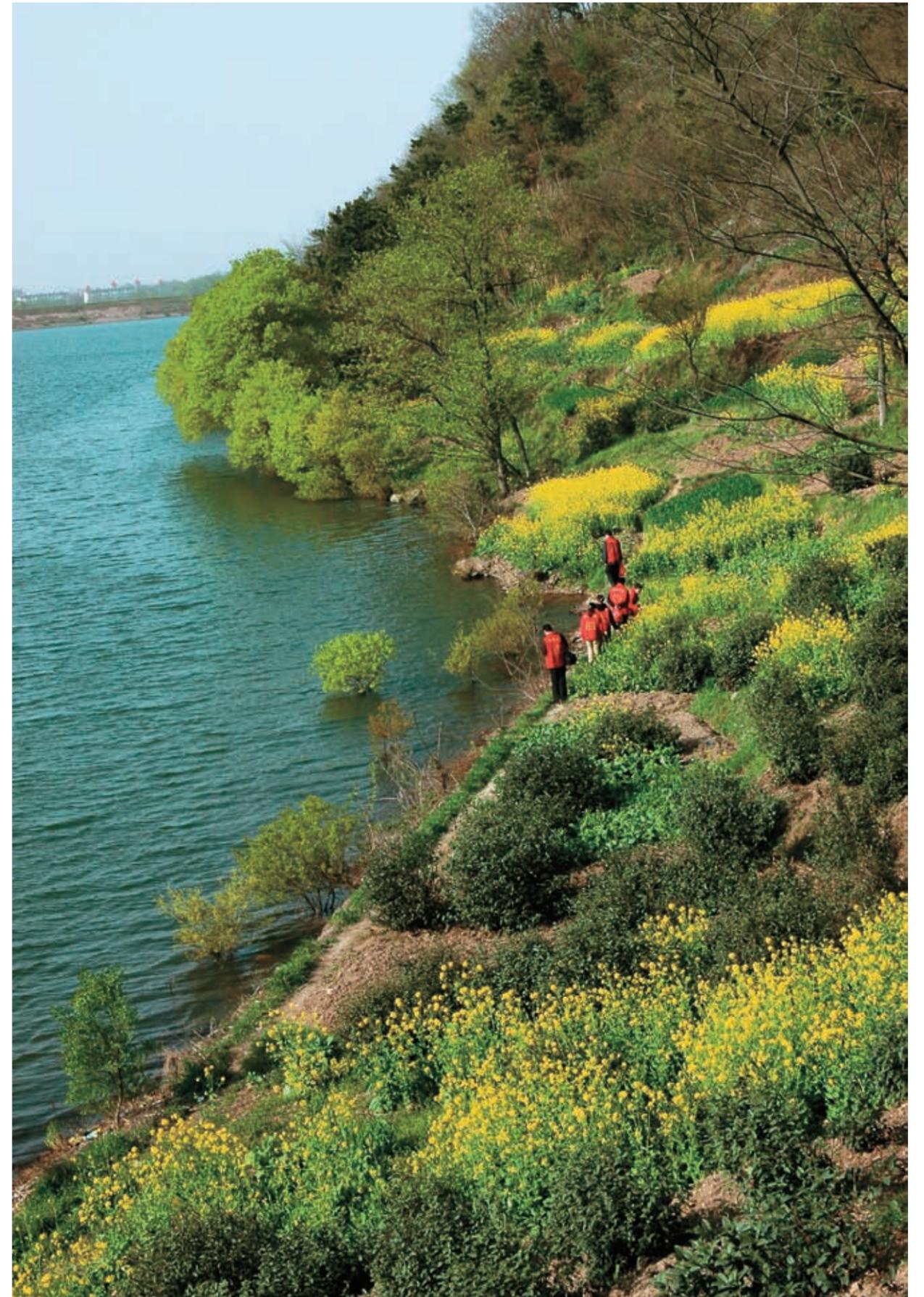


▲Residents can learn knitting here.

The Lujiang Centre of Cultural Education is located in the Dabie Mountain natural scenery area, with beautiful hills, clean waters, flourishing bamboos, and clearly-cut seasons. As a non-profit and non-governmental organization, the centre is dedicated to the purification of the human heart, to building a stable, peaceful and harmonious society, to realising Chinese ethnic revival, and to promoting world peace through sincere, diligent and practical education. 'Those of virtue will never be alone, they always have companions' (*The Analects*). We sincerely welcome all the people from China and the world who share the same intention to join us to study here and to contribute to the cause.



▲The villager's school is a good place for the villagers to learn traditional Chinese culture.



▲ "I am a brick. Take me wherever I am needed." This is the motto of the teachers.

Meeting A True Friend

Mr. Kao Jen Siang

On 11th of June, 2006, the former cultural minister of China, now a permanent member of NCCP, Chinese Cultural Promotion Association president, Mr. Kao Jen Siang led nearly twenty people from the office of Central Civilization, office of Central Associations, and College of National Administration to Lujiang Cultural Education Centre. After a detailed briefing of the centre's central teachings that promote establishing a harmonious society, Mr. Kao expressed firm approval of the centre's teachings. The following is his ten minutes speech:

Your teachings are centered on 12 qualities: Filial piety, sibling love, loyalty, trustworthiness, courtesy, honor, thriftiness, integrity, compassion, love, harmony and equality. Out of these 12 words, filial piety is placed first. I feel that it is very befitting to our traditional moral consensus. An ancient saying states "All good comes from filial piety". I personally feel that our education lack the teaching of filial piety. When a person is unfilial to his or her parents, such a person is unaccountable and does not know compassion and honor. What you have said is very educational. "The four qualities of courtesy, honor, thriftiness, and integrity are the four pillars of a nation. When these four qualities are not present, a nation will fall." This is a historical lesson that our ancestors had taught us. These four qualities unite our society and nation. When these traits are absent, the country will soon cease to exist.

I have always thought how wonderful it would be if we have a group of people who dedicate themselves to propagating Chinese traditional culture. Today, I have witnessed it. You have put these teachings into practice.

Your teachings from *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* are very good for the teenagers. As we know, *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* was taught by Chinese saints and sages of the ancient past. First it teaches you how to be dutiful to your parents and to be respectful and loving to your siblings. Then it teaches you how to be cautious with all people, matters and things in your daily life, and to be a trustworthy person to believe in the teachings of the ancient saints and sages. Furthermore, it teaches you to love all equally, be close to and learn from people of virtue and compassion. When you have accomplished all the above duties, you can further study and learn literature and art to improve the quality of your cultural and spiritual life." Teachings like "When your parents call you, answer them right Away" and "If your ink block is ground tilted to one side, it shows you have poor state of mind. When words are written carelessly, showing no respect, it shows your state of mind has not been well" are important. When we were young, we could memorize not only *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*, our teacher asked us to pay special attention to the "Three Characters Classic". Later on, we had to study "Excerpts on Family Education from Ju Zhi"... etc. Such teachings help us to understand how to manage our own families. "In the early morning, one should keep the garden and house clean and tidy. When night falls, one should rest, one should also ensure that the doors are locked." Next, we studied the four classics: The Great Learning, The Doctrine of the Mean, The Analects, Book of Mencius. At the beginning of The Great Learning, it said: "The way towards the Great Learning starts with understanding

the meaning of true virtues; the meaning of loving all people and the meaning of 'everything ends with pure goodness'". There are so many outstanding examples of Chinese moral teachings that have been overlooked in our time. They have been ignored and even criticized. I feel that it is a great loss for our nation.

What you are doing is very meaningful, especially your dedication. Ten years of study and ten years of cultivation is not an easy task! When you practice in this way, the students will respect and willingly follow the teachings. You have enriched me today. I feel that you are achieving greatness with what you do and it is something that I have always wished. Why is it that such good teachings are not properly propagated? Take for example filial piety. It is rarely mentioned now. Conscience, courtesy, honor, thriftiness, integrity, compassion, intelligence and trustworthiness are not talked about as often. Few people promote the idea of "Be the first to be concerned for the world, be the last to enjoy the happiness of the world." United Nations promotes the essential idea of "Do not do to others what you do not want others to do to you." When we reflect upon ourselves with this phrase, are we able to appreciate its deeper meaning? I was able

to visit Chui Fu (hometown of Confucius) sometimes ago. I wonder if it is not possible for the elementary and junior high students to study and memorizes a few sentences of The Analects. In the past, we have heard saying like: "armed with half the content of The Analects, one is able to rule the world." In fact, it is not far from the truth. How much truth about life are we able to learn from this book? It is truly invaluable.

After visiting you today, I am deeply touched as well as enriched by your teachings. I feel that I have met a true friend here. On behalf of all of us, I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. We have learnt from your dedication. The guiding principle of Chinese Cultural Promotion Association is to fully devote in the promotion and better understanding of the Chinese culture. We take it as our duty to promote traditional culture. With your effort in teaching, you have already done just that. You have grasped the essence of such teachings. Issues such as harmonious interpersonal relationships and social harmony have already been combined with realistic practices in accordance with the central government's guidance and social development. We will come back to learn from you again in the future. That is all for today.

▲ Learning and teaching are boundless and timeless.

The Welfare of the Senior Citizens

A Concept for the Establishment of Garden Villas for the Elderly

by Professor Chin Kung
July 2007

I left Taiwan in the 1970s, and have been traveling to various countries and regions to teach Buddhist principles based on what is taught in the Sutras. Everywhere I went, I wanted to find out two things: Firstly, the welfare of the elderly and secondly, the youth crime rate.

Why do I want to find out the welfare of the elderly? As we know, the ageing population is a world problem. How to take care of the livelihood of the senior citizens is a major concern of most governments. The traditional concept of “Rearing children to provide for the old age” is a wishful thinking and is not practical now. Not that the younger generations are not filial but that they lack the ability to take care of them. Nursing homes for the elderly seems to be the only solution in some countries.

Examining the social structure in different countries, we find that not many countries have facilities for the elderly. However, such facilities are found in countries like the USA and Australia, especially in Australia. The government there does look after their senior citizens. But, be it the state-owned or privately-run, the services provided focuses on the material needs of the elderly and not the spiritual aspirations. The workers involved only provide devices prescribed by the regulations. True love and compassion are not always shown. The elderly would soon feel depressed and lonely. They would live in solitude and

some would simply count their final days.

As a consequence of our recent studies from the *Flower Adornment Sutra* (the *Avatamsaka Sutra*), we are, again, inspired by the concept of “The Four Immeasurable Compassions” that we have a duty to look after the elderly. We hope that all could pull resources together to help the elderly. The elderly, our senior citizens, have made tremendous contribution to the society in the past. Now, they should be entitled to enjoy their lives. We should build a selfless cordial society.

Here are some thoughts of mine.

1. Facilities and services similar to what is found in 5-star hotels should be made available to the elderly. The accommodation provided should be comfortable with scenic views. Daily room services should be made available. Construction cost can be met by pre-selling the rooms. Once construction is finished, these rooms could be for sell or rent. Rooms not in use could be leased out. These could be made available to the guests of the residents, or students who may need to make use of such facilities for study during their vacation.
2. A number of dining facilities should be in place to provide buffets throughout the day. The food served will meet the religious requirements as well as dining habits.

3. We should be careful not to use terms like “nursing home for the elderly” as it will be a constant reminder of the old age of the residents. Instead, we should use names such as villa, country cottage or cabin. For example, Mount Cook Villa can be the name for a villa at the foot of Mount Cook. The villas can serve as a university for the elderly, a multi-cultural education center, an institution for moral education, Art Museum or multi-purpose complex for other usage.

4. Hospitals will be established close by and so will primary schools and kindergartens. Both the elderly and the children of tender age are served by the staff with love and compassion. The very fact that these two groups of residents will live together in harmony will help to reinforce love, and the need to extend our love and affection to the aged.

5. Members of the staff who render service within the complex, whether they work at

the clinic, in primary schools or nursery schools will be well acquainted with prescribed textbooks well referred to in Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism, such as *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*, *Accounts of Request and Response*, *Ten Virtuous Conducts Sutra*. The importance of filial piety and respect for the elders must be upheld. They should show respect to the elderly when serving them and they should have the attitude of truthfulness and loving kindness similar to what their children would have adopted. The pilot program of promoting the *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* at the Lujiang Centre of Cultural Education in Tang Chi County, An Hui Province in China is a very good example. The success of the program has received high compliments at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris in October 2006. It is possible to adopt the teaching model offered at the Lujiang



▲It is never too old to learn. Learning keeps a person young forever.

Centre of Cultural Education and to draw inspiration from it.

6. The senior citizens with different faith or religious affiliation will live with one another in the same areas. The complex will provide facilities for interfaith and cultural activity. For example, there shall be chapels, mosques, as well as temples. Different types of religious gatherings will be organized. Multi-media facilities will be available to show different religious images to suit different gatherings. Multi-cultural activities and programs will be made available at weekends and during the holiday seasons.

We must bear in mind the interests of the senior citizens. Our purpose is to enrich their spiritual lives. The programs we would offer must include topics to reflect humanity, morality, philosophy, wisdom and scientific principles. These will enable the elderly to appreciate the meaning of life and elevate their spirituality.

7. There may be some senior citizens who would want to impart their special skills to the younger generations. They will have the opportunity to do so as volunteers. Members of the younger generation would be invited to these workshops and would benefit from what the elders have to teach. The teachings, as well as the happy life of the senior residents, could be documented and made available to the general public.

8. After the completion of this complex for the elderly, we should invite representatives from different countries and from the UNESCO/United Nations to visit and explore our experiences. We hope this should inspire them to render similar services in their own countries. Multi-

national corporations could be forged to consider setting up similar franchise villas in different parts of the world. It is very likely that they would receive support from many governments, because they will be in a position to help solving a social problem, and they could help to reduce the burden in looking after the elderly.

9. Many traditional heritages of different cultures are being marginalized. In many instances, it is the senior citizens who are preserving them. They are the ones who know how to appreciate the treasures of culture. We should invite senior citizens who possess these kind of skills to come forward and demonstrate these heritages. All will benefit from such a meaningful endeavor.

We all have parents. We will all get old, too.

Mencius said: "We provide for our own parents and we should extend our magnitude and provide for parents of all. We provide for our children and we should extend our magnitude and provide for children of all." Should we be able to do this, we should be able to do anything easily.

The elderly have dedicated the whole of their life in the service of their country and their community. It is about time they enjoy the respect they deserve from the younger generation. If we could truly adopt an attitude of appreciation and extend our filial piety to all the elderly; if we could create a paradise for them, truly provide them with first class accommodation, and fulfill our duty in looking after them; if we could unify different religious groupings and people from different ethnic origins; if we could magnify the significance of traditional culture and promote the education for filial piety and universal love, then everybody around the globe would appreciate and support our effort and a harmonious world is not far away.



▲ Love and care for one another unconditionally.



▲Part of the Painting of the Scenes of the Hells, painted by Mr. Jiang Yizi.

The Painting of the Scenes of the Hells

This grand artwork *The Painting of the Scenes of the Hells*, which is 6,000 cm long and 62.5 cm high, took Mr. Jiang Yizi over a year to complete. This painting includes more than 1,000 figures, in addition to flowers, birds, animals, mountains, and rivers. All the scenes are vividly portrayed in details.

Different from most artistic paintings, this painting contains elements of culture, history, and the teaching of the law of cause and effect. This kind of painting of the scenes of the hells became popular since the Tang and Song dynasties and incorporated the teachings of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism as well as folk beliefs. It was later introduced to Japan and Korea. It systematically introduces the principles of morals, human relations, and the law of cause and effect. As a result, people learn visually, without reading the scriptures, that they should do nothing that is bad and do everything that is good. Furthermore, through arts like this painting, people will understand their mission and responsibility to the world and humanity. In this way, this painting exerts positive influence to us all.

Practices of Ten Evil Deeds Leading to Suffering in Hells

The Ten Evil Deeds are the opposite of the Ten Good Deeds. There are only a few decades in one's life. If we do not realize the need to practice good deeds, or we choose to ignore the law of "cause and effect," or we do not practice doing good deeds and accumulate virtues, when we are taken by the Judge of Impermanence, when we are standing before the gate of Hell, it will be too late to regret.

Too Late to Regret Now, the Judge is Here to Try Us

It is like waking up from a dream. All actions done in one's life will be judged after one's death.

The Kings and Soldiers in the Hells Manifest from Our Karma

People who have no causes to go to these hells do not experience the horrors of hells. These horrors are not there because the kings of hells are cruel or that they willingly inflict pain and suffering to the dead. The scenes of these hells are the manifestations of one's own karma.

Truly Wise Buddhist Practice and Self-Cultivation

What is Buddhism ?

The word Buddha is a Sanskrit word. When translated it means “wisdom and enlightenment.” Buddha includes essential as well as functional meanings. In essence, Buddha means wisdom. In application or function, it means enlightenment.

Buddhism is the Buddha’s teaching. In regards to time, it encompasses the past, present and future. In regards to space, it talks about everything: from our living environment all the way to infinite worlds. Buddhism is a teaching of wisdom—the understanding of life and the universe. It is not a religion.

In Buddhism, it is clearly stated that the Buddha is the original teacher, and we practitioners are the students. Bodhisattvas are our senior fellow students, those who have

progressed further in their studies than we have. These titles [heshang and heshang ni in Chinese] are derived from a Sanskrit word khosha that describes a person who acts as personal mentor to a practitioner. Each Buddhist cultivation center has only one khosha. Teachers who teach on behalf of the khosha are called “acarya.” Their speech and behavior can be models for us to follow. Others who do not directly teach would be called “Dharma Masters” or “Fa-shi.”

The principle of Buddhism is to break through all superstitions and delusions. It is to resolve delusion to attain happiness and enlightenment, to eliminate suffering to gain serenity and purity of mind. Resolving delusion to attain enlightenment is the cause and eliminating suffering to attain happiness and purity is the effect. Only through resolving superstition and delusion, can enlightenment be attained. This is the objective of the Buddha’s teaching. This wisdom will enable all beings to differentiate true from false, proper from improper, right from wrong and good from bad. It can help us to establish a dynamic and caring attitude toward life and our surroundings. So, we can clearly see that Buddhism is neither passive nor obsolete, nor is it retreating from society. It enables us to obtain true and ultimate benefits by creating fulfilling lives, happy families, harmonious societies, prosperous nations, and a peaceful world. These are the objectives of the Buddha’s teachings for our world now. Therefore, we can see that it is an education that will enable us to attain truth, virtue, beauty, wisdom, and genuine eternal happiness.

Filial to our Parents & Respectful to our Teachers

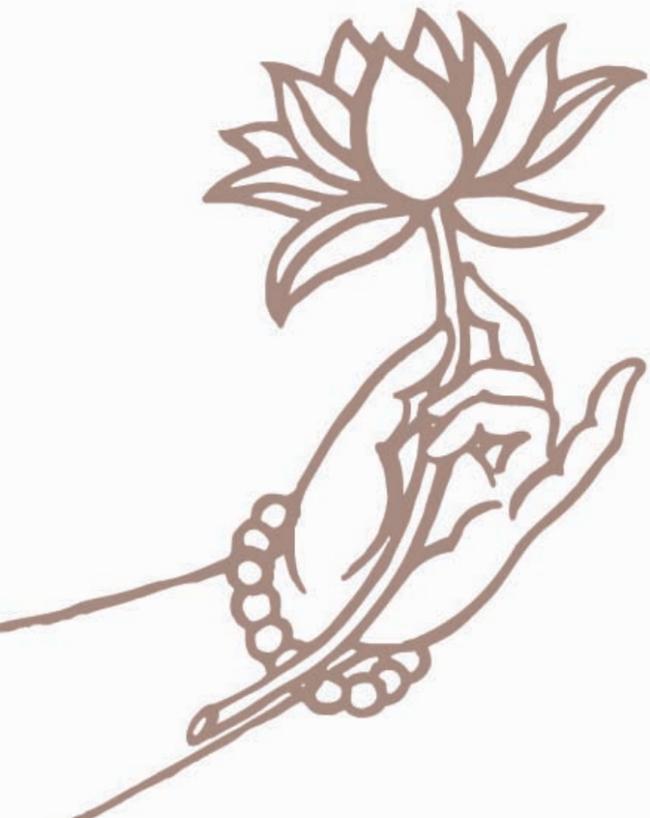
Buddhism is an education of honoring teachers and revering their teachings, which is based on the foundation of filial piety. We begin our learning and practice by being filial to our parents and respectful to our teachers and elders.

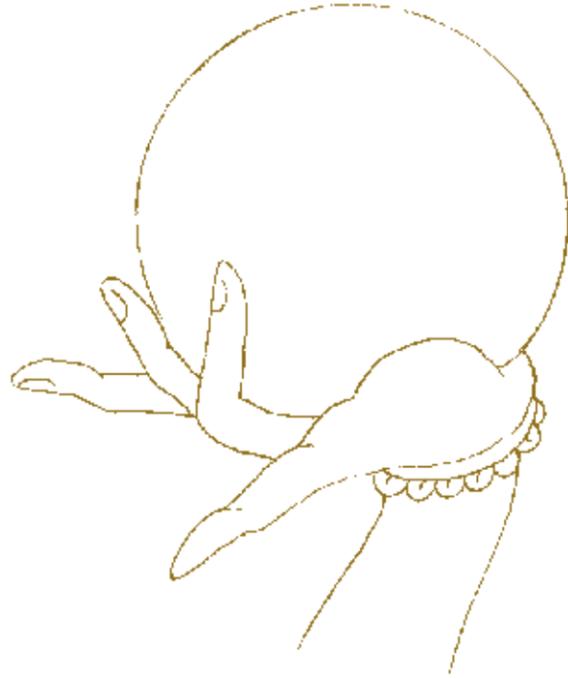
We keep expanding from being filial to our parents and respectful to our teachers until we respect and care for all sentient beings equally without discrimination or attachment. It is said in Brahma Net Sutra that “All men are my father; all women are my mother.” This is the broadening of our mind of filial piety so that it encompasses all beings in the universe, in the past, present and future. Buddhist teachings are based on the principle of filial piety for without it there would be no principle of respecting teachers.

Buddha Shakyamuni taught us to begin our learning from respecting teachers. He is our original teacher from 3000 years ago. If we respect a teacher from this far in the past, how would we not respect our current teachers? When we pay respect to an image of the Buddha, we are not worshipping him. We respect the image as a representation of our “Original Teacher” and therefore we pay our debt of gratitude to him. This is why the followers of the Buddha respect the Buddha’s images as well as memorial tablets of ancestors. This practice has a far-reaching and widespread educational significance, for at the sight of them, we remember our obligation of caring for and respecting our parents, teachers, and elders.

The Threefold Learning – abiding by the precepts, deep concentration, and wisdom

What is the first step in learning Buddhism? Start by reciting one sutra. To do so is to follow the practice the Threefold Learning of abiding by the precepts, deep concentration, and wisdom. Do we need to understand it? No. For when we have not ended afflictions and have not obtained enough wisdom, our understanding will be erroneous. Why do we recite only this sutra? There is no difference between reciting the sutra and practicing deep concentration in Zen. The only difference is the method being used. By reciting the sutra, the Threefold Learning of abiding by precepts, deep concentration, and wisdom are accomplished together. Sutras are words that flow from the Buddha’s true nature. Nothing can surpass these words in virtue. Therefore, reciting a sutra is doing all that is good and results in the perfection of self-discipline so there is no need to practice the precepts one-by-one. When reciting a sutra, we must focus. By





focusing, we cultivate concentration. Clearly enunciating every word correctly without any omission is the practice of wisdom. Therefore reciting the sutra properly is to practice the Threefold Learning at the same time. Any attempt to analyze the sutra while reciting is in fact treating the sutra as a worldly book. This will result in none of the Threefold Learning being accomplished and is not true cultivation. Never belittle the practice of sutra recitation, as it is the foundation of cultivation.

Almsgiving, Abiding the precepts, Patience, Diligence, Deep Concentration and Wisdom

Nowadays, people pursue wealth, knowledge, health and long life. They are known as the good fortune. The Buddha taught us that wealth, wisdom, and long life are all karmic results. If we want to obtain the result, we must first nurture and establish the cause.

Good causes result in good results, while bad causes result in bad results or retribution. Where there is a cause, there will be a result and vice versa. The Buddha taught us that having wealth is the karmic result of a cause planted in former lifetimes. The giving of wealth results in obtaining wealth, the giving of teaching results in obtaining wisdom, the giving of fearlessness results in obtaining health and long life. Therefore, if we wish to have wealth, wisdom and long and healthy lives in our future, we need to nurture and establish these causes in this lifetime.

If we can abide by the precepts and laws, we will have a tranquil body and mind, which will allow us to be free from worries and fear. Deep concentration arises from tranquility. Therefore, the precepts are essential to self-cultivation.

There are three categories of patience. First, tolerate the injuries of physical and verbal abuse. Patience is a virtue. With patience, we will have a quiet and pure mind; thus, it will be easier to attain deep concentration and achievement. When we successfully practice patience, we will gain the greatest good fortune. Second, we would do well to be patient with variations of the natural elements, hot and cold, summer and winter, hunger and thirst, as well as natural disasters. Third, be patient in the arduous course of our practice. Before attaining the joy of cultivation and before our cultivation becomes strong, we will encounter many obstacles. However, once we get through this phase, we will attain happiness.

The Chinese word for diligence is comprised of two characters meaning perseverance in a specialized field and progress. The two need to

work together. Buddhism is neither conservative nor backward, but seeks daily improvement. This is similar to the Confucian saying of “making progresses everyday, day after day.” Progress is good, but it is more important to progress with diligence in a specialized field. We need to specialize in a certain field when learning worldly knowledge. The same applies to our learning Buddhism. We are practicing diligence when we choose one school, or method, and stay focused on our selection, studying until we excel in it, before advancing to another method. If we try to practice many methods before we are enlightened, they will become obstacles. It is not effective to concentrate on different methods at the same time. Once we understand one method, we will understand all other methods as well. Thus the Buddhist saying: “Once we achieve in one, we achieve in all.”

In the Platform Sutra, Master Hui-Neng, the Sixth Patriarch of Zen school, explained that deep concentration was more than just sitting in meditation. Sitting in meditation is only one of

many methods to practicing deep concentration. Except for sitting in meditation, there are infinite methods to achieve deep concentration. Meditation is not being attached to any external phenomena (i.e. to all changing forms). Concentration is inwardly sustaining the mind of tranquility. Do not attach to all changing forms, while maintain the mind of stillness, is to practice Meditative concentration. A higher level of deep concentration or samadhi can exist in all acts of our daily life ex walking, resting, sitting, and sleeping.

All phenomena are illusory, like dreams, bubbles and shadows. They are unattainable. The Buddha saw through everything and urged us not to give rise to any discriminations and attachments. If we can do so, then we will uncover our true nature and attain the Buddha's understanding of all things in the universe. This is the paramita of wisdom. We apply it in our daily lives, as we learn the Bodhisattva way (and we live a Bodhisattva's life). We know everything around us but we do not cling to it as we do our best to help others.



Interfaith Peace Messages

Caligraphies written by Ven. Master Chin Kung

高貴的心靈是把自己奉獻給促進他人平靜快樂
即使這些人曾傷害他 印度教 釋淨空

以仁慈征服暴怒以善對付惡行寬容戰勝卑鄙
正直打敗謊言與欺騙 印度教 釋淨空

不審判別人你就不會被審判要別人怎麼
待你就得怎麼待人 基督教 釋淨空

不要與惡人作對要愛你們的仇敵為那逼迫你
們的人禱告 基督教 釋淨空

人若賺得全世界卻賠上自己的性命有什
麼益處 基督教 釋淨空

上帝以自己的本性塑造人所有被創造的生物都
是上帝的家人所以為祂家庭做最多善行的人最
受上帝寵愛 基督教 釋淨空

上帝是愛遵從愛的人就是遵從上帝而且
上帝就會住進他裡面 基督教 釋淨空

你要盡心盡力愛主上帝要愛人如己這就是我對
你們的要求彼此相愛 基督教 釋淨空

With a noble soul,
one devotes himself
to bringing happiness
and peace to others,
including those who
once hurt him.
Hinduism

Overcome anger with
kindness. Counter evil
with virtuousness.
Defeat despicableness
with tolerance. Conquer
lies and deceit with
righteousness.
Hinduism

Do not judge so that
you will not be judged.
Treat people the same
way you want them to
treat you.
Christianity

Do not resist an evil
person. Love your
enemies and pray for
those who persecute
you.
Christianity

For what does it profit a
man to gain the whole
world, and forfeit his
soul?
Christianity

And God made man in
his image. All creations
are God's family.
Therefore, those who
perform the most good
deeds for His family
are best loved by God.
Christianity

God is love, and the
one who abides in love
abides in God, and God
abides in him.
Christianity

Thou shalt love the
Lord thy God with all
thy heart, and with all
thy soul, and with all
thy strength, and with
all thy mind; A new
commandment I give
unto you, That ye love
one another; as I have
loved you, that ye also
love one another.
Christianity

慷慨的人才 是富有的
人供水者 別人也將供給他水

猶太教 釋淨空



一個人所能做的最美好事情 就是原諒他人
的過錯

猶太教 釋淨空



你不當以不誠實的方式 拿取別人錢財 不可用虛假混淆
真理 也不可故意隱藏真理 安拉是無所不在 全知全
能的

伊斯蘭教 釋淨空



讓彼此敵視的人 重歸和好的行為 比忠誠慈愛禱
告更好

伊斯蘭教 釋淨空



你希望別人怎麼對待你 就要用你希望的方式
對待別人

印度教 釋淨空



行為正直 就是智者 不要傷害別人 無論是用
思想行為 語言 放下憤怒

印度教 釋淨空



唯一普徧之靈 照亮每一個身體 真正領悟大我的人
愚昧就會消失 有如被太陽光照 大智慧開顯

印度教 釋淨空



沒有種植什麼 也收成不了 只要你種樹 樹
才可能長大

印度教 釋淨空



Only when a person is generous is he truly wealthy. The person who gives water will be given water in return.

Judaism

The most wonderful thing that one can do is to forgive others for their faults.

Judaism

You should not take the property of others via dishonest means. And do not mix up the truth with the falsehood, nor hide the truth while you know (it). Allah is omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent.

Islam

Helping the enemies regain friendship for this is better than saying a faithful pray.

Islam

Treat others the way you wish to be treated.

Hinduism

Those who conduct themselves righteously are wise people. Do not harm others, whether with thoughts, behavior, or words. Let go of anger.

Hinduism

The only prevailing spirit illuminates everyone's body. For those who truly comprehend "the greater I," ignorance will disappear as if dissolved by the sun's illumination. Great wisdom will then manifest.

Hinduism

Without sowing there shall be no reaping. Only when trees are planted can trees grow.

Hinduism

釋迦牟尼佛是古代多元文化社會教育家
社教義務工作者 釋淨空

佛教是佛陀對一切眾生至善圓滿的教育

釋淨空

不可論人是非害人者自嚐苦果

佛教 釋淨空

怨不能止怨只有愛才能止怨這是永恆
的道理 佛教 釋淨空

慈愛萬物實踐美德利益眾生他就是最
快樂的人 佛教 釋淨空

真正的寶物藏在人的慈悲戒律裡這樣的寶藏才
是安全不會消失 佛教 釋淨空

誰能登天主高山誰能立在聖地此人必須有乾淨的雙
手純潔的心這個人的心不造假而且不會做假宣誓

猶太教 釋淨空

你應當愛你的鄰人就像愛你自己愛的行動就
像聖訓一樣有價值 猶太教 釋淨空

Sakyamuni Buddha was a voluntary multicultural social educator.

Buddhism

Buddhism is the perfect teaching of utmost virtuousness that the Buddha provided for all beings.

Buddhism

Do not talk about the rights and wrongs of others. Those who harm others will suffer bitter consequences.

Buddhism

Hatred never ends by hatred in this world; by love alone does hatred end. This is an Eternal Law.

Buddhism

A person who loves all beings, practices virtuous conducts, and benefits all beings is the happiest person.

Buddhism

Real treasures lie in compassion and the precepts. This kind of treasure is everlasting.

Buddhism

Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? And who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood and has not sworn deceitfully.

Judaism

Love the people around you the way you love yourself, the action of love is as precious as the teaching of saints.

Judaism

人人皆知因果大治之道也人人不知因果大亂之道也

釋淨空



國安家寧一切以教學為先天子庶民一切以脩身為本

釋淨空



敬宗廟百神受職恭祖舊百福之宗

淨空恭錄管子語



挽災劫以培福果息恐怖而樂天年

釋淨空時年八十



天地以大順成德君子以善恕成仁

釋淨空



老子曰天之道不爭而善勝不言而善應不召而自來

釋淨空



父慈子孝兄良弟悌夫義婦聽長惠幼順君仁臣忠此中國五千年和睦之根也

淨空



建首善自鄉里典禮義為天下先由小及廣以風四方化衝突致太平之原也

釋淨空



When everyone understands the law of cause and effect, the world will achieve great stability. When everyone is ignorant of it, the world will plunge into great chaos.

To achieve peace in a country and harmony in a family, education must be the first priority and take precedence over all other matters. Everyone, from the ruler to the common person, must regard cultivation of oneself as the most essential.

Sincerely and respectfully making offerings at one's ancestral temple will move deities to properly fulfill their duties.

One who works relentlessly to avert disasters for the sake of all beings is cultivating good karmic causes and one's own good fortune.

Heaven and earth accord with everything in the universe and thus achieve perfect virtues.

Lao-tzu said, "The Way of heaven does not strive but it skillfully achieves victory. It does not say anything but yet responds fully. It does not summon or prompt, but all things come of their own accord."

Parents are loving and children are filial. Elder siblings are kind and younger siblings are respectful. Husbands are responsible and wives are attentive. Elders are giving and young ones are dutiful. Superiors are benevolent and subordinates are loyal. These relationships are the root of five thousand years of harmony in China.

Build up virtuousness and promote propriety and justice first in a neighborhood or a village. Then spread these from this small area to broader areas and eventually the whole world. These are the principles to resolve conflict and achieve peace.

不分國界不分種族不分宗教皆應平等
對待和睦相處

釋淨空



中國五千年傳統文化是世界人類共有的智
慧寶藏應知應當學

釋淨空



法落在心外即非究竟法而是邪道沒有愛的人不
知道上帝因為上帝是愛

淨空



晝夜常念善法思惟善法觀察善法能斷
一切世間苦

釋淨空



至樂無如讀書至要莫如教子

釋淨空時年八十



佛陀之教慈悲而已堯舜之道孝弟而已聖賢
之學修身而已

釋淨空



儒之根弟子規佛之根十善業道之根感應
篇善學之萬事成

釋淨空



人以善感天以福應人以惡感天以災應

釋淨空時年八十



When one invokes heaven with virtuous deeds, heaven will reward one with good fortune. When one invokes heaven with bad deeds, heaven will respond with disasters.

The root of Confucianism is *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*. The root of Buddhism is the *Ten Virtuous Deeds*. The root of Daoism is the *Treatise on Response and Retribution*. If one learns them well, one can succeed in anything.

The teaching of the Buddha is nothing but the teaching of compassion. The practice of Kings Yao and Shun is nothing but the practice of filial piety and fraternity. The teaching of sages is nothing but the teaching of the cultivation of oneself.

The most joyous thing is to read books. The most important thing is to teach children.

We should be mindful of, contemplate, and observe good dharmas, night and day. This way, we will be able to end all suffering in this world.

A dharma that teaches one to seek outside of oneself is not a dharma of the ultimate truth, but a deviated teaching. One who has no love does not know God, because God is love.

The five thousand years of Chinese culture is a treasury of wisdom that belongs to humanity. We should appreciate this fact and learn from this treasury of wisdom.

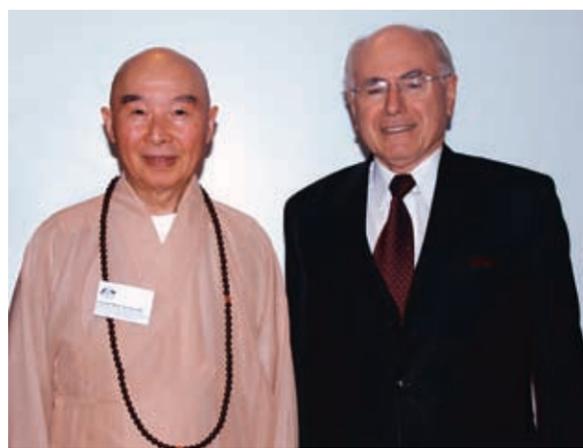
Regardless of nationality, race or religion, everyone should be treated equally and live with other in peace and harmony.

A Life Dedicated to Continual Learning and Teaching

A Brief Introduction of the Education Philosophy of Ven. Master Shi Chin Kung

Venerable Master Shi Chin Kung, whose formal name is Hsu Yae Hong, was born in Lujiang County, Anhui Province, China, in 1927. He went to Taiwan in 1949. He spent thirteen years studying the classics, history, philosophy, and Buddhism under the guidance of Professor Fang Dongmei, a great philosopher of his time; Zhangjia Living Buddha, an eminent monk of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition; and Mr. Li Bingnan, a lay practitioner and master of Buddhism. He spent most of his time and effort in studying Pure Land Buddhism.

172 Master Chin Kung was ordained in 1959 in Linji Temple in Taipei and was given the Dharma name Jue Chin and an alternative name Chin Kung. He has now been teaching Buddhism for forty-eight years. He advocates that Buddhism is not a religion but the “Teaching of the Buddha.” He also encouraged the printing and free distribution of sutras and other books



▲Picture of Master Chin Kung and the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. John Howard.

advocating virtuous conduct. He helped pioneer the use of radio and television broadcasting, satellites, the Internet, and other forms of modern media to propagate the moral education of humanity, great compassion, and love.

Since 1977, Master Chin Kung has been accepting invitations to lecture abroad. He taught in various places overseas, such as Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, the United States, and Canada. He travelled to Singapore in 1997 and put much effort in deepening cohesion among the existing nine religions there. He wanted to show the world that “despite the different religions, the world can unite.” During the past five decades, he has left his footprint on five continents. He was appointed to honorable professorships and awarded honorary doctorate degrees from universities in Australia and Indonesia. He was awarded the Order of Australia (AM) in the Queen’s



▲Master Chin Kung was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University, Indonesia in 2004. (right: Prof. Azyumard Azra, the Rector)

Birthday Honours List in 2005. He is actively involved with the building of the Lujiang Centre of Cultural Education, China, which seeks to nurture teachers for all religions so that they can learn from each other and raise the quality of religious followers.

In 2001, Master Chin Kung migrated to Australia and in the next year, set up the Pure Land Learning College in Toowoomba, Queensland, to train teachers. The college emphasises the foundation teachings of *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*, the Accounts of Request and Response, the *Ten Virtuous Deeds Sutra*, and the Precept Protocols for Sramanera. These texts are the foundation in the study of morality, ethics, cause and effect, wisdom, and science.

The students learn the teaching of the sutras

daily and are invited to universities to practice their learning and to promote multiculturalism. The college provides a free Saturday dinner for the community, and participates in local festivals and celebrations as well as in multicultural forums. These activities have positive affects on building harmonious neighbourhoods. The college is also actively involved with the local education and medical charity programs. The printing and donation of the precious Qian Long Buddhist Canon to major universities and national libraries around the world is another move by the college to encourage those who are and who want to become dedicated to the Buddha’s teachings. Under the guidance of Master Chin Kung and working with the mottos of “A Harmonious World Starts with Me” and “Self Cultivation as Foundation, Education as the Priority,” the college will spare no effort in promoting the teachings of sages and saints.



▲Pure Land Learning College in Toowoomba, Australia.

The Buddha's Teaching on the Internet Reaching Across Boundaries A Brief Introduction to Pure Land Learning College and Its Website links

Established in Toowoomba, Australia in 2001, the Pure Land Learning College Association, Incorporated (PLLC) aims to train people to propagate Buddhism around the world. It also trains people to manage Buddhist cultivation centers. To facilitate the learning of people all over the world, Internet-based teaching is used to provide a learning environment that is convenient and expeditious, accessible at any time and any place.

The website of the PLLC is linked to websites that provide video lectures in English, [Mandarin], Cantonese, Taiwanese, and other languages or dialects to facilitate the learning of a broad audience. This is to propagate Buddhism to every corner of the world and benefit people extensively.

The following is a brief introduction to the website of PLLC, its links and their distinctive features:

The Pure Land Learning College Homepage: www.amtb-us.org

Through this link, viewers can browse the latest news of the college and of Master Chin Kung's latest lectures. They can also view lectures that are broadcast live as well as download lectures on important sutras and MP3 files.

The Pure Land e-Learning College Open All Year Long: www.amtbcollege.org

For long distance teaching, the PLLC has set up the Pure Land e-Learning College. All the lecture materials and video files are integrated. Through the combined use of satellites and the Internet, this school is a virtual Internet

television station. All the courses are formulated by Master Chin Kung, from the beginning level progressing to the advanced, and from general courses moving on to specialized ones. This website also provides a good Dharma propagation center on the Internet for Dharma masters who have correct thoughts and views to propagate the Dharma.

Classes for Children That Focus on the Study of *The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*: study.amtb.tw

The Standards for Being a Good Student and Child and the *Ten Virtuous Deeds Sutra* are the foundation of Confucianism and Buddhism respectively. Therefore, classes for children are set up so that the seeds of the sages' teachings will take root in the young.

Classes for Seniors: www.amtbcollege.org/amtbcollge/talk/sage_list.asp

Seniors have dedicated their lives to their families, society, and countries. It is appropriate for children to show filial piety to their now elderly parents and repay their kindness. When showing filial piety and repaying kindness, in addition to providing for their material needs, children should help them enrich their spiritual life. Therefore, classes for seniors are set up to provide a spiritual refuge and eventually realize a world of great harmony.

The HiTV Station for Collected Talks of Master Chin Kung: hitv.amtb.tw

High-quality and high-speed video files and live-broadcast lectures can be viewed on the Internet through the latest conversion technology. Presently, there are 2,765 hours of high-quality video files available.

Collected Talks of Master Chin Kung: www.amtb.org.tw

This website can be considered a Pure Land library. There is an extensive selection of text and video files for on-line browsing and downloading. The open-shelf style enables users to quickly find the information they need. To serve a broader audience there is also a Simplified Chinese website and an English website.

Homepage of Simplified Chinese website:
www.amtb.cn

Homepage of English website: www.chinkung.org

Master Chin Kung's Video and Full Text Search Center: ft.amtb.tw

This website is a database of the text and video files of the lectures of Master Chin Kung and other Dharma masters. It is also a database of Master Chin Kung's calligraphy and seal carving. In addition to abundant and complete data, the website also provides search

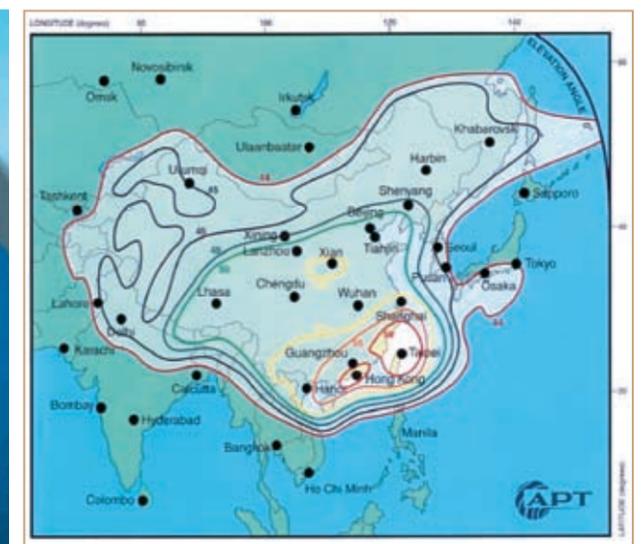
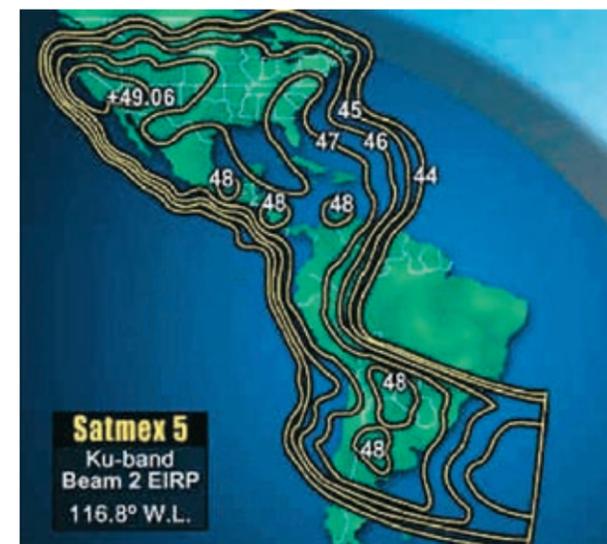
capabilities. Users can quickly find the files they need for on-line browsing or downloading.

The full text searching system also runs on handheld electronic instruments, such as mobile phones, PDAs, and PlayStation Portable.

With simple commands, all websites linked to the server of this database can access this database to facilitate synchronization of databases worldwide.

Hwazan Satellite Television: <http://www.hzvtv.org>

In 2003, Hwazan Satellite Television officially launched its broadcast. Via satellites and high technology, it broadcasts Buddhist teachings twenty-four hours a day continuously around the world. Presently, its broadcasts reach the Americas (Canada, the USA, Central America, and South America), Asia (Taiwan, China, Japan, Northeast Asia, and Southeast Asia), Oceania (Australia and New Zealand), Europe (Germany, France, and the UK), and Africa.



▲Hwazan Satellite TV, with 5 satellites broadcasting live TV signals, has achieved worldwide coverage.



▲Hwazan Satellite Television



▲The website for Pure Land full text searching

- ◎Full text searching and downloading of lecture text files
- ◎Searching and downloading of Master Chin Kung's calligraphy and seal carving



▲The database with an extensive selection of video and text files

- ◎The website of the Collected Talks of Master Chin Kung



▲The learning website for Chinese and non-Chinese, Old and Young

- ◎The English Website of the Collected Talks of Master Chin Kung
- ◎Standards for Being a Good Student and Child Classes for Children
- ◎Classes for Seniors



▲Year-round Internet-based teaching

- ◎Pure Land Learning College website
- ◎Pure Land e-Learning College

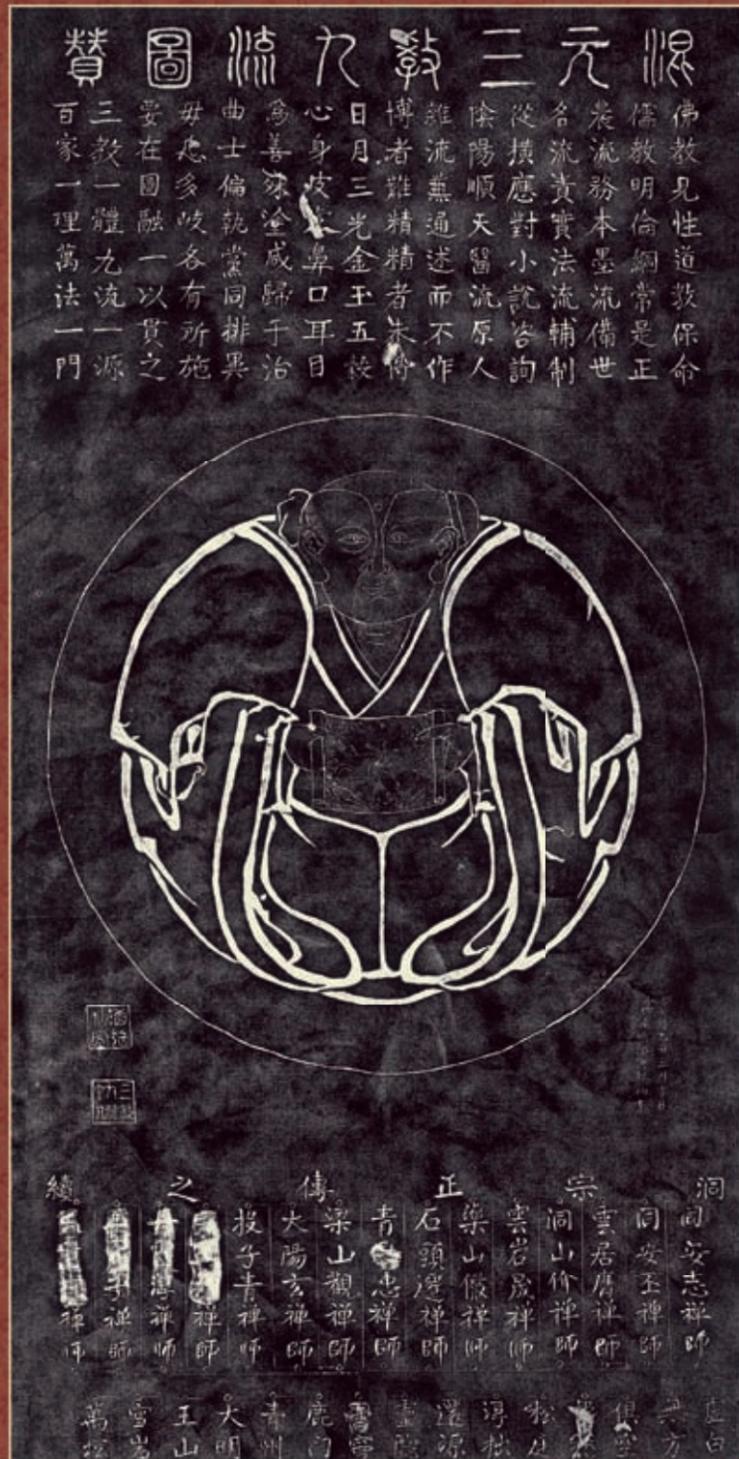


▲Live broadcast on the Internet

- ◎The HiTV Station for the Collected Talks of Master Chin Kung
- ◎Live broadcast from the Pure Land Learning College

Through the Internet and latest technology, the website of the Pure Land Learning College and other related websites are all linked to the database of the text and video files of the lectures of Master Chin Kung and other Dharma masters. Viewers of all these websites can use the same database according to their needs. This is as stated in Buddhism, "One is all, and all is one."

The Multiformity of Oneness: The Three Teachings and the Nine Schools of Thought



An explanation of a rubbing which illustrates that the Three Teachings and the Nine Schools of Thought are originally one entity

The Three Teachings are Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism. The Nine Schools of Thought are the School of Agriculture, Mohism, the School of Nomenclature, Legalism, the School of Diplomacy, the School of Stories, the School of Yin-yang, the School of Medicine, and the Miscellaneous School.

Buddhism

The purpose of Buddhism is to help people uncover their innate perfect wisdom and virtues so that they can restore their original enlightenment and virtuousness.

Daoism

The purpose of Daoism is to help people maintain good health, promote a healthy lifestyle, and live a long life.

Confucianism

Confucianism expounds on proper and ethical human relationships and explains that people should observe the Three Essentials (the relationships between rulers and subjects, parents and children, and husbands and wives) and the Five Constant Virtues (kindness, justice, courtesy, wisdom, and trustworthiness).

The School of Agriculture

This school emphasizes that one should meticulously fulfill one's duties and embrace the fundamental importance of agriculture.

Mohism

Mohism advocates universal love.

The School of Nomenclature

This school argues that one must discern whether names fit the facts. It advocates that names must fit the facts.

The School of Legalism

This school advocates the use of harsh punishments [for crimes and great rewards for good deeds], strict laws, rules, and regulations to help govern the country.

The School of Diplomacy

The followers of this school travel to various states and lobby political leaders with brilliant debate and florid language. They are like today's diplomats.

The School of Stories

This school collects strange news, extraordinary stories, and street talk, all of which form this school's thoughts, and promotes social education.

The School of Yin-yang

This school attaches great importance to the observation of the astronomic and atmospheric changes and teaches people to achieve success by according with the change in climate and the seasons.

The School of Medicine

The medical experts use medical skills to help a body restore its functions and remain healthy.

The Miscellaneous School

The followers of this school understand all the above-mentioned teachings. They only cite the teachings of others and do not create their own.

It is hard for those who read extensively to be a specialist in every and all branches of knowledge. Those who specialize in one branch of knowledge are not able to read extensively and be erudite.

All creations in the universe—heavenly bodies such as the sun, the moon, and stars; minerals such as gold and jade; grains such as rice, maize, ji, wheat, and beans; even the mind and the body organs such as skin, nose, mouth, ears and eyes—have their own distinct functions. They fulfill their roles and work together so that the whole universe functions smoothly. They exist and flourish side by side. This is a lesson from the harmonious working of nature.

Some people do not understand the truth, so their thinking is distorted, and they are attached to their own viewpoints. They group with those who think like they do and shut out those who think differently.

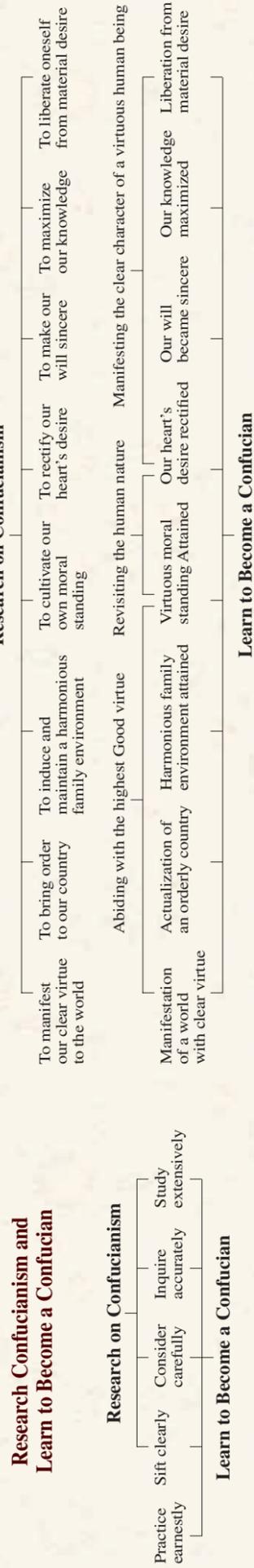
The truth is that the universe is one entity. We should not be concerned about the different appearances of all creations. We should know that everything has its own unique merits and is necessary [to the universe]. It is most important for us to have a broad mind and consider all sides. In this way, everything will be perfectly harmonious, without any obstruction. There is only one immutable principle underlying all phenomena: phenomena are all manifested by the mind, and [when analyzed], return to the mind, [because all have inseparable true nature as the mind].

If we trace them back to the beginning, we will find that the Three Teachings of Buddhism, Daoism and Confucianism are originally one entity; the Nine Schools of Thought originate from the same source; all schools of thought share the same noumenon; and all methods lead to only one goal: harmony, happiness, and perfection.

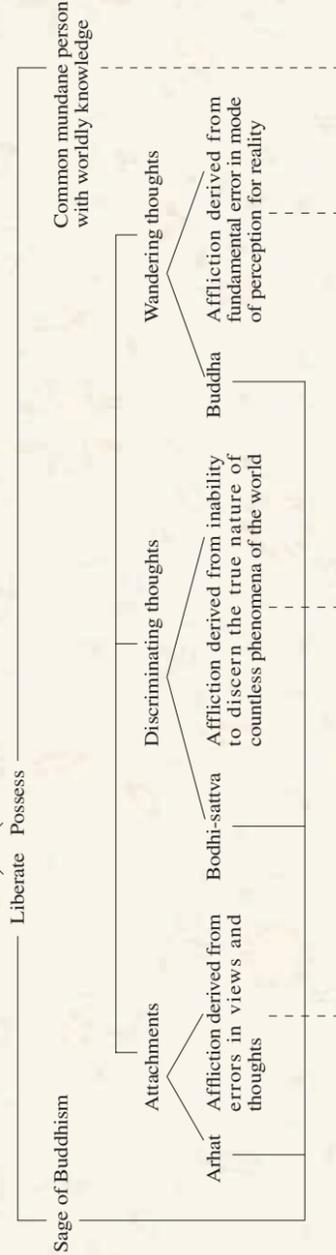
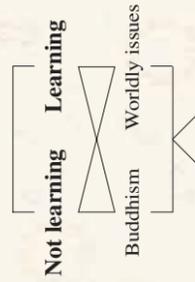
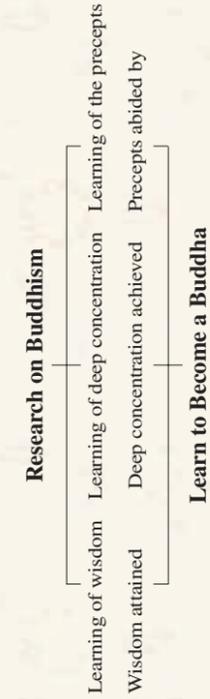


Equality, Harmony, Tolerance,
Respect, Love, Concern, Care,
Assistance, and Cooperation
We are one family.
Shi Chin Kung

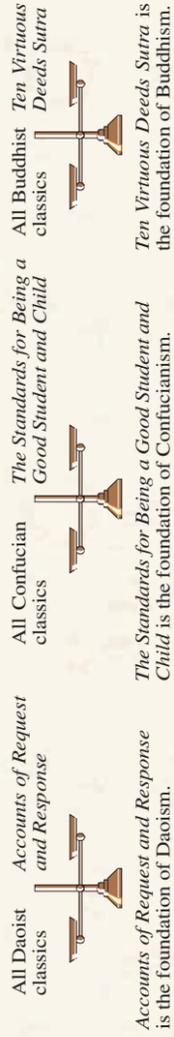
These three foundations are as significant as all the classics of the three schools



Research Buddhism and Learn to Become a Buddha



These three foundations are as significant as all the classics of the three schools



Those who cultivate themselves by laying a solid foundation and practicing the three fundamental classics diligently will certainly achieve their desired goals with great success

Professor Qijia Guo of The Beijing Teachers' University stated that some contemporary college students, postgraduates, and intellectuals do not treasure and admire traditional Chinese cultural classics any more. They are "good at science while neglecting the study of humanity, good at computers while leaving their heart and mind untrained, good at the Internet while ignoring human interactions, good at selecting commodities while ignoring basic etiquette and morality, good at power struggles while disregarding the pursuit of self-cultivation." I am very much concerned about the current trends. How can we change this situation?

Moreover, in the world today, all nations are facing three universal confrontations; human versus human, human versus nature, and the human body versus the human heart. How can we resolve these confrontations and conflicts? Does the human race have any hope for a brighter future? Where can we go from here?



愛心遍法界 善意滿人間

Love reaches everywhere. Kindness fills our world.

種善因得善果

Planting good causes will gain us good consequences.

常懷慈忍

Always be compassionate and tolerant for all.

純淨純善

Purity, and Goodness.

仁慈博愛

Loving kindness and universal love for all.

事非經過不知難

Without experiencing the hard works in person, how can we understand its difficult process of completion?

實事求是

We should do our best in everything we do according to facts and propriety.

學然後知不足

We only see our shortcomings after we have studied and learned.

真誠清淨平等正覺慈悲
看破放下自在隨緣念佛

Sincerity, Purity, Equality, Proper understanding, Compassion, See through to the truth, Let go, Be liberated, In accord with condition, Chant Amitabha Buddha's name.

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Reconciling Conflict and Promoting Social Stability
and World Peace Through Teaching
Venerable Master Shi Chin Kung
- The Buddha's Contribution to Humanity and World Peace
Prof. Dr. Amanda W.P. Garage

Panel

- Buddhist Contributions to Culture and Human Development
Moderator: Dr. T. Dharmaratana
- Role of Religion in World Peace
Moderator: Prof. Dr. Amanda W.P. Garage

Buddhist Testimony

- A Happy Life
Mr. Tsai Lihua, Education Director, Cultural Education Centre
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- Education is the Priority to a Harmonious Tanchi
Report from Mr. Li Yidun, Deputy Director
of Cultural Education Centre of Lujiazui, China

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亞曼達教授

小組

- 佛教徒對人類文化及發展的影響
主持人：法真博士
- 佛教在世界和平所扮演的角色
主持人：亞曼達教授

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蘇維雄 麗江文化教育中心主任
- 和諧是福 教學為先—來自麗江文化教育中心的報告
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