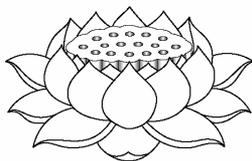


**ABIDE IN
THE MAHAYANA MIND**

安住大乘心
善開方便門

**Dharma Lecture by
The Grand Master Wei Chueh**

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**Chung Tai Translation Committee
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This Dharma lecture by the Grand Master Wei Chueh was translated from the Chinese into English by the Chung Tai Translation Committee. The CTTC comprises of Dharma Masters and lay disciples and convenes regularly. To view or download the English translations of various sutras and Dharma lectures, visit “Dharma Gems” on <http://sunnyvale.ctzen.org>. Comments and suggestions may be sent to translation@ctzen.org

FOUNDING ABBOT OF CHUNG TAI: VENERABLE MASTER WEI CHUEH

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Venerable Master Wei Chueh was born in Ying Shan, Sichuan Province of China. In his youth he was educated in the Confucian classics and delved deeply into the study of Buddhism.

In 1963, he was ordained under Master Lin Yuan at the Shi Fan Da Jue (“Great Enlightenment”) Chan Monastery in Keelung, Taiwan. There he arose before dawn each day to clean the monastery hall and courtyard. While others were resting after lunch, he would remain in the Buddha Hall and prostrate mindfully. In all his daily duties and interactions, he was always devoted, considerate, and diligent.

To further his practice, Venerable Wei Chueh went into solitary seclusion for over ten years in the mountains near Wan Li, a suburb of Taipei. Over time, as the area became more accessible, more and more people came to seek the wisdom of this eloquent Buddhist master. His followers then asked him to come out from his mountain retreat to spread the Dharma.

The Master responded by building the Lin Quan Chan Monastery at the very place of his retreat, expanding later to Chung Tai Chan Monastery in the town of Puli in central Taiwan. (To show our utmost respect, we address Venerable Wei Chueh as the Grand Master.)

The Grand Master, in adhering to the Buddha's aim to teach the Dharma, to show the way to lasting joy, and to promote peace, established Chan meditation centers all over Taiwan as well as internationally.

He is frequently invited to lecture at universities and various organizations. He conducts seven-day meditation retreats every year to help participants realize their intrinsic perfect nature.

In order to preserve the teaching for future generations, he emphasizes the importance of education for Buddhist monks and nuns and thus established the Chung Tai Buddhist Institute to train knowledgeable and qualified teachers of the Dharma. He also founded the Pu Tai Schools (from elementary to high schools), which underscore the values of respect, compassion, and moral integrity in the education of the youth. Furthermore, to promote traditional culture and preserve the Buddhist heritage, the Grand Master also founded Chung Tai Museum.

Beginning at Lin Quan and now Chung Tai Chan Monastery, Grand Master Wei Chueh has provided his vision, inspiration and guidance to hundreds of thousands of followers, monastic teachers and lay people alike. Under his leadership, the essence of Chan teachings has been deeply and widely planted and is bringing the fruits of serenity and wisdom to the world.

ABIDE IN THE MAHAYANA MIND

安住大乘心 善開方便門

“Abiding in the Mahayana Mind helps the self; skillfully employing expedient means helps others. By using various expedient means we can teach and guide countless sentient beings to abide in the Mahayana Mind.”

Expedient means and ultimate method

Today I will discuss the importance of “abide in the Mahayana mind while skillfully employ expedient means.” We have advanced from an agricultural society to the space age. Since every person’s perception, values, and lifestyle differ, it is not easy to teach and practice Buddhism in the present society. An ancient master said, “Buddha taught countless Dharmas to cure different afflictions of the mind.” This punctuates the importance of skillfully employing expedient means to bring different kinds of people to enlightenment. If expedient means are not skillfully employed, there may be no benefit but harm instead. Yet, without expedient means, Buddha Dharma will become inaccessible and may not prosper.

Furthermore, if there are only expedient means but no ultimate method, it will be difficult for both laypersons and monastics to reap the true benefits of the Buddha Dharma. With the ultimate method, one can transcend all suffering and attain perfect enlightenment like the Buddha. To achieve this, we must abide in the Mahayana Mind.¹ Abiding in the Mahayana Mind benefits oneself; skillfully employing expedient means benefits others. By using various expedient means we can teach and guide countless sentient beings to abide in the Mahayana Mind.

¹ Mahayana Mind (大乘心):The bodhi mind, the enlightened mind, the original mind, the Buddha nature inherent in all of us.

An ancient master said, “One lamp dispels the darkness of a thousand years.” The lamp is this very mind that is listening to the Dharma right now. Enlightened, the afflicted mind becomes the bodhi mind and mundane existence becomes nirvana. A sutra says, “Single is the inherent nature we return to, many are the expedient gateways that bring us there.” Even though there are many Buddhist paths—the three essentials that end outflows (morality, samadhi, and wisdom); the six perfections (charity, morality, tolerance, diligence, meditation, and wisdom); or any of the 84,000 methods—they all ultimately lead back to the revelation of our inherent nature. This inherent nature is simply the present mind that is listening to the Dharma now. So where is this present mind? It is in our awareness.

Levels of enlightenment

There are different levels in the enlightenment of the mind. The first is “fundamental bodhi.” This is the inherent awareness that everyone has. It is what knows and what perceives. It is the mind that is hearing these words at this moment.

Mundane beings give rise to ignorance, affliction, greed, anger, killing, robbery, and adultery. Their lives are filled with darkness, emptiness, conflict, violence, and deception. They are “unenlightened”; they do not know their bodhi mind yet.

When we listen to and study the Dharma, we know that life consists of birth, aging, illness, and death. If we wish to be free, all we have to do is to transform our thoughts, then we can immediately turn this ocean of suffering into a Pure Land, we can transcend mundane existence and attain bodhi and nirvana. “Water can support a boat, but also sink a boat.” It is all in this present mind. This is the beginning of enlightenment, or “initial bodhi.”

After “initial bodhi” we continue to work unceasingly. Whether by the method of sudden enlightenment or gradual cultivation, we finally eradicate the six fundamental afflictions of the mind: greed, anger, ignorance, arrogance, doubt, and false views. This is called “sambodhi” (correct awakening), the state of the Buddhist saints.

After attaining sambodhi, we must continue the path of Mahayana by bringing forth a mind of great compassion, practicing the bodhisattva way, pursuing the noble buddha path, and liberating all sentient beings. We further “cultivate non-cultivation” and “being mindful of no-mind”, eventually realizing the principle of Middle Way Reality. This is the stage of true bodhisattvas. Now we begin to erode our “original ignorance”, the most subtle and deeply rooted delusions. When we eradicate a part of this ignorance, we reveal a part of our Dharmakaya, the true body of the buddha, which is neither physical nor non-physical. When the Dharmakaya is fully revealed, one attains buddhahood. This process is called “progressive realization of bodhi.”

Progressing this way, we finally arrive at “virtually perfect bodhi”. At this stage, all that remains is the last vestige of the original ignorance, which we must shatter by entering into “vajra samadhi”, then buddhahood is complete. This is known as “unsurpassed complete enlightenment” or “ultimate bodhi”.

“Awareness” is the bodhi mind: in the eyes it is the seeing; in the ears it is the hearing; in the nose it is the smelling of the fragrance; in the mouth it is the speaking; in the hands it is the grasping; in the feet it is the moving; in the faculty of consciousness, it is the thinking of the past, present and future. It is the mind that knows; this mind is at the gate of the six senses. Everyone has it, but if we do not make serious efforts, this mind can never settle and attain peace.

Purity and defilement arise from the mind, not from outer objects

There once was a Chan Master, Miao Fung, who traveled far and wide on foot to seek the Dharma. He was spending the night at an inn and suddenly woke up with a fever. In the darkness,

he groped his way to the kitchen to drink some water. The next day, he recollected the sweetness of the water, and went back to get some more. What he found was actually dirty and smelly

water used for washing the feet. He immediately vomited, but at that very moment he was enlightened to the nature of the mind: “When drinking, it is very sweet; when smelling, it is very fetid; purity and defilement arise from the mind, and not from external objects.” The water had not changed; the difference was all due to his discriminating mind, the mind of attachment.

After enlightenment, we still need gradual cultivation to attain the Way. The Way is not something that we create. Whatever is created will perish; it does not last. To cultivate the Way is to eliminate delusive thoughts, afflictions, ignorance, and karmic habits, then the inherent nature of our mind will naturally manifest. This is the Way.

This mind must have clarity and understanding. It is not a simple task and requires great determination. Try this meditation: for three minutes do not think of anything about the past, present, or future; do not become drowsy; be the master of your mind. When you achieve this, you are like a buddha for three minutes. If you can maintain this for ten minutes, you are like a buddha for ten minutes. This pure and lucid mind is our true self.

To abide constantly in this pure mind is to “abide in the Mahayana Mind.” But in our present society, if we only teach the above principle, most people may not easily understand or accept it. Therefore, we also need to “skillfully employ expedient means.” Without different expedient means to help and guide sentient beings to enlightenment, most people have no way of attaining buddhahood.

Five directions of Buddhism

At Chung Tai, we set forth five expedient means in propagating Buddhism to the multitude:

1. **Buddhism in Academic Research:** Buddhism essentially is a body of profound wisdom. We can use modern methods of research to investigate Buddhism so that the study can be more systematic and accessible. This expedient means helps the academic world understand the Dharma.

2. **Buddhism in Education:** Chung Tai Chan Monastery established its Buddhist Institute to educate the Sangha, and over 100 meditation centers worldwide to teach the Dharma and meditation to a wide variety of people. Furthermore, it established the Pu Tai elementary, middle, and high schools to apply the Buddhist principles in education.

3. **Buddhism in Science:** Buddha's approach to understanding reality and human suffering is based on empirical observations; this is in congruence with scientific methods. The principle of causality is fundamental in both Buddhism and science. In addition, we use modern technology, such as computers and the internet, to spread the message of Buddhism.

4. **Buddhism in Culture and the Arts:** Throughout the ages, Buddhism has inspired prominent and outstanding artistic creations. The architecture and interior of Chung Tai Chan Monastery embodies Buddhist art of a very high order, unifying symbolism from ancient India and China with modern engineering and technology.

5. **Buddhism in Daily Living:** Buddhism is practical and anyone can lead a happier life by following its principles. For example, the Four Tenets of Chung Tai are practical ways to apply Buddhism in daily life: (1) to our elders be respectful, (2) to our juniors be kind, (3) with all humanity be harmonious, and (4) in all our endeavors be true.

In summary, applying the central principles of Mahayana Buddhism benefits the self by benefiting others. If we can abide in the Mahayana Mind, skillfully employ expedient means, make diligent effort and persist in these directions, we will surely bring happiness to ourselves and to others.

FOUR TENETS OF CHUNG TAI

中台四箴行

To our elders be respectful,
To our juniors be kind,
With all humanity be harmonious,
In all endeavors be true.

對上以敬，對下以慈，
對人以和，對事以真。

THREE REFUGES

三皈依

I take refuge in the Buddha, may all sentient beings
Understand the Great Way profoundly, and bring forth the
bodhi mind.

I take refuge in the Dharma, may all sentient beings
Deeply enter the sutra treasury, and have wisdom vast as the sea.

I take refuge in the Sangha, may all sentient beings
Form together a great assembly, one and all in harmony.

自皈依佛	當願眾生	體解大道	發無上心
自皈依法	當願眾生	深入經藏	智慧如海
自皈依僧	當願眾生	統理大眾	一切無礙
和南聖眾			

FOUR GREAT VOWS

四弘誓願

Countless are sentient beings, I vow to liberate;
Endless are afflictions, I vow to eradicate;
Measureless are the Dharmas, I vow to master;
Supreme is the Buddha Way, I vow to attain.

眾生無邊誓願度 煩惱無盡誓願斷
法門無量誓願學 佛道無上誓願成

REPENTANCE

懺悔偈

All the harm I have ever done, since time immemorial,
Are caused by greed, anger, and ignorance,
And produced through my body, speech, and will,
Now I confess and amend all.

往昔所造諸惡業 皆由無始貪瞋痴
從身語意之所生 一切罪障皆懺悔

DEDICATION OF MERITS

回向偈

May the merits of our deeds
Reach every part of the world;
Sentient beings large and small
All attain enlightenment.
Maha-Prajna-Paramita

願以此功德 普及於一切
我等與眾生 皆共成佛道
摩訶般若波羅蜜



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