

January 4, 2014 6:00 PM Saturday (Pacific)

The Lotus Sutra [Jing Si is like the Lotus Sutra: Pure and Clear]

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Lotus Sutra Episode 7

Jing Si Is Like the Wondrous Lotus, Pure and Clear

靜思晨語-靜思妙蓮華第007集

(法華經·序品第一)

靜思清澄妙蓮華

Time passes very quickly, so I often tell everyone that we need to seize every minute and second. Now we will discuss teachings from the Lotus Sutra. The Lotus Sutra is a Mahayana text. During the Buddha's lifetime, He had to spend seven years explaining it. Moreover, one sentence from the Buddha can encompass principles of all things in the world. For us ordinary people to explain even one of His sentences may take a very long time. So we need to seize the moment and absorb the Dharma-essence of the Lotus Sutra so everyone can realize the spirit of it as taught by the Buddha.

時間如梭，過得很快，所以常常跟大家說，我們要把握分秒。接下來我們就要來說《法華（經）》。《法華（經）》是一部大乘經典，不過，光是佛陀的時代，他就要談七年。何況說佛陀輕輕的一句話，他能涵蓋了普天下萬事物理，我們凡夫要來解釋那句話，可能我們就要用很長的時間。所以，我們要盡量把握時間，將法華的法髓灌輸進來，讓人人能體會佛陀講《法華經》的精神。

The Jing Si Dharma-lineage is a path of diligent practice. The Tzu Chi School of Buddhism is the road of working with others. What is the spirit imbued in the Jing Si Dharma-lineage? "Jing Si is like the wondrous lotus, pure and clear." The Jing Si Abode is our place of practice. We start by "cultivating the essence of sincerity, integrity, faith and steadfastness; and practicing kindness, compassion, joy and equanimity." First we purify our minds by cultivating "sincerity, integrity, faith and steadfastness." Purify to what state? Until they are tranquil and clear. And we do not just practice in solitude to benefit ourselves; we do much more than that.

「靜思法脈勤行道，慈濟宗門人間路。」我們靜思的法脈到底是什麼樣的精神？那就是「靜思清澄妙蓮華」。靜思精舍，我們靜思的道場，我們從開始就是「內修誠正信實，外行慈悲喜捨」。誠正信實，就是我們要心很清淨。靜到什麼樣的境界呢？靜寂清澄。甚至，我們不是只要自修自利、獨善其身，不是只有這樣而已。

In 1966, we established the Buddhist Tzu Chi Merit Association because we hoped to bring the Buddha's spirit into the world. Though we want to transform and save sentient beings, there are so many sentient beings, with so many different types of suffering. Not only do humans all suffer in different ways right now, we have to consider that in the distant future, human minds and their environments will

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continuously change.

我們在民國五十五年那一年開始，成立了「克難慈濟功德會」，也就是希望佛陀的精神來到人間，雖然要度眾生、拯救眾生，不過芸芸眾生這麼多，各種的苦難都是不同。不只是人的苦難不同，尤其是未來的時間又是那麼長，未來的世代，人心和生態都會不斷不斷地變動。

So the Dharma that the Buddha expounded more than 2000 years ago was devised for that era and for all future eras to come. In this boundless universe, foreseeing the changes of human behavior and the increased suffering the future would bring, the Buddha first started by freely carrying out His original intent. Starting with the Avatamsaka [teachings], He shared His spiritual understanding with everyone. But ordinary people could never truly understand. Even heavenly beings did not understand, how could ordinary people? Thus, the Buddha then decided to expound the Dharma that sentient beings can understand, the Agama [teachings]. The Buddha started expounding the Agama [teaching] so everyone could understand karmic retribution.

所以，佛陀在二千多年前開始說法，也就是為了那個時候一直到未來，沒有邊際的宇宙之間，人生生態的變動，知道未來苦難會更多。所以佛陀本來所要說的，要暢演他的本懷，是從「華嚴」開始，要將他心靈的境界和大家分享。可是，人人總是聽不懂。因為人天都聽不懂了，何況一般的凡夫呢？所以佛陀才又決定，來講適應眾生聽得懂的法，叫做「阿含」。佛陀從「阿含」開始說起，就只是要人人能知道因緣果報。

The Buddha spent a long time expounding the Agama sutras. But did all sentient beings understand them completely? It did not happen that easily. But time waits for no one, so the Buddha transitioned into Vaipulya [teachings] to slowly guide those with higher capabilities to realize that life is impermanent. After they learned that life is impermanent, [the Buddha] then transitioned into Prajna [teachings]. He opened everyone's door to wisdom and freed their minds from materialistic obstacles and emotional attachments. All passions, cravings, or desires need to be completely eliminated. Thus, the principles found in the Prajna [teachings] can help free our minds from the attachments of passions, cravings, and material goods.

佛陀用這麼長的時間來講「阿含經」，眾生是不是全都聽懂了呢？其實也不是那麼簡單，但是時間無法等人，所以佛陀開始轉入「方等」。慢慢對根機較利的人，體會到人間無常，知道人生是無常，開始就進入了「般若」，讓人人開啟智慧的門，使人人可以心沒有物質的障礙，能沒有情牽著的障礙，不管是物，或是情、愛、欲念，完全將它剷除。所以這就是在「般若」裡面的道理，要讓人人的心沒有掛礙——沒有情、愛、物的掛礙。

But does this lead to a state of true emptiness? No. Because to be truly free from attachments, we need to fully understand the law of karma. Starting from the Avatamsaka [teachings], the pure, undefiled, tranquil, and clear state of the Buddha has been difficult for sentient beings to grasp right away. In the state of Avatamsaka, the Dharma is broad and boundless. How is it possible for unenlightened beings to

embrace such a broad, boundless, tranquil and clear state? It is not possible. Therefore, we need to first understand the law of karma.

不過，難道都完全真空了嗎？不是。因為你要真正到無掛礙，就要將因緣果報都能夠真正透徹貫通。所以從「華嚴」開始，佛陀清淨無染，那種「靜寂清澄」的境界，眾生沒辦法一時就能夠歸納。在華嚴的境界，法，廣無邊際，我們凡夫哪有辦法去容納如此開闊、廣無邊際，那種靜寂清澄的境界？沒辦法。所以，讓大家先了解因緣果報。

But as sentient beings, we will continue to be attached to things like creating merits. We have learned about karma and karmic causes. Sentient beings suffer because they have created karmic causes and then have to face their painful effects. We know that everyone suffers, but we do not know from which karmic cause. As we experience suffering, we seek to prevent disasters and difficulties. So, we seek to create merits to prevent disasters and difficulties. Is this really possible? To put an end to disasters and eliminate suffering, we must return to their source and understand how we have attracted so much suffering.

不過，眾生就會因此執著下去，執著該如何造功德。所以，雖然知道這個業，業因，眾生受苦難就是因為有造了業因，才會得到苦果。

知道大家苦，不知道是什麼樣的業因，只有在受苦的當中要如何能消災免難，這樣就會追求。求，求功德，求能消災免難，真是有可能嗎？要消災，能去掉苦難，除非也要回歸到源頭去了解，我們如何才招來這麼多的苦。

So if people only learn the Prajna [teachings], some will become attached to emptiness, and thus they will deny the law of cause and effect. This is wrong. The Buddha quickly said that in this “emptiness,” there is “wondrous existence.” Wondrous existence is a karmic seed. So, the Lotus Sutra is called the “perfect teaching.” It is not attached to existence nor emptiness. In emptiness there is wondrous existence. Therefore, our minds need to return to that state of “tranquility and clarity.”

所以，若只是說「般若」，有些人就會偏空，偏空就會撥無因果。這樣不對。佛陀就是趕快開始說：在這個「空」中還有「妙有」，妙有就是業的種子。所以《法華經》是叫做「圓教」，不執有，也不執空，空中還有妙有存在。所以，這就是我們的心要回歸那分「靜寂清澄」。

So we must calmly self-reflect and quietly consider the following: why is our spiritual state so complicated? Can't just one saying from the Buddha bring us clarity and understanding? So why is our daily living still filled with afflictions and obstructions? Thus, in our spiritual practice, we must enter the perfect, wondrous state of true emptiness, which is complete tranquility and clarity. This is by no means easy. The Buddha then used the Dharma-flower (lotus) as a metaphor. Since we are living in the evil world of five turbidities, what metaphor did He use in this perfect teaching of true emptiness and wondrous existence? A lotus flower, which grows out of mud but is undefiled. Because the current era we live in is one of evil and the five turbidities, we learn Buddhism to be like lotuses, which remain

undefiled in a turbid environment. This is what we need to work on in our spiritual practice.

所以我們必定要靜思來反省，靜靜來思考，我們的心靈境界為什麼會這麼複雜呢？佛陀的一句話，不就是會讓我們透徹明瞭嗎？為什麼我們在日常生活中還是煩惱障礙重重呢？所以我們必定要修行，我們要進入圓融真空妙理，那就是在靜寂清澄。談何容易！佛陀也還要再為我們用「法華」來比喻。因為我們都是在五濁惡世中，所以佛陀在真空妙有的圓教中用什麼譬喻呢？就如蓮花一樣，蓮花出淤泥而不染。因為我們現在這個世間，已經是進入五濁惡世的時代，所以我們學佛必定要像蓮花，在五濁惡世中不受它污染。這就是我們要修行的地方。

Although the Buddha told us that we intrinsically possess the same pure nature as all Buddhas, since Beginningless Time we have lived through life after life of cyclic existence in the Six Realms. Throughout these continuous cycles we have continuously formed habitual tendencies. Thus, we were all born with those afflictions and habitual tendencies. Therefore in this world, even if we say we want to practice, and we make a vow and develop an aspiration, our habitual tendencies still have not left us whether we are lay or monastic practitioners. So, the Buddha told us that we need to thoroughly eliminate the turbidity in our minds.

雖然佛陀告訴我們，我們與生俱來有清淨與佛同等的本性，不過，無始以來，我們已經是一世又一世在六道中輪迴，不斷在輪轉，不斷養成了我們的習氣，所以我們人人都有與生俱來那分煩惱習氣。所以在人間，雖然說我要修行，我發願，我發心，不管在家出家，同樣這種習氣還沒有離開。所以佛陀他就跟我們說，我們要好好地將我們內心的濁氣要去除。

Starting from the time of the Buddha, up till now and into the future, for lifetime after lifetime, we have continuously transmigrated in the Six Realms and have developed more and more habitual tendencies. What should we do? We now know that maybe in the past, we did not have the opportunity to hear the Buddha-Dharma. Even once we have learned about it, we have not eliminated our habitual tendencies, so we are still defiled by the turbid world. Therefore, we have a lot of habitual tendencies. Now we have the karmic affinity to be in the same spiritual practice center. This place is called Jing Si, and the state we all aspire to reach is that of tranquility and clarity. At our Jing Si training ground, we need to pass down our Dharma-lineage. Though we live in the Evil World of Five Turbidities, we still need to be like the undefiled lotus flower that rises out of the mud.

因為，從佛的時代一直到我們現在，還有未來，這一生一世，不斷不斷生生世世在六道中輪迴，習氣愈來愈多，該怎麼辦呢？我們現在知道，過去說不定我們沒有因緣接觸到佛法，即使接觸到時，我們的習氣還未斷，還是在濁世中受污染，所以我們習氣很多。我們現在既然有緣在同一個道場，這個道場的名稱叫做「靜思」，甚至我們大家所要的境界就是「靜寂清澄」，我們在靜思的道場要承我們的法脈，我們雖然處在五濁惡世，我們還是要像出淤泥而不染的蓮花。

This means that our minds should not be defiled by the state of the evil world of five turbidities. Now we know that we have inherent habitual tendencies, we can no longer wait. How much more time do we

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have left in our lifetime to enter the “perfect teaching?” So starting from now, in our daily living and lifestyle, we need to seize the moment to eliminate our remaining habitual tendencies. Right now, “Jing Si is like the lotus flower, pure and clear. Tzu Chi is the Bodhisattva-path in the world.” We do not practice to benefit ourselves. We need to invite everyone, far and wide, to join us, so that one more person can walk from this turbid world through the Tzu Chi door.

意思就是說，我們的心不要被五濁惡世這種的生態把我們污染。明知我們有與生俱來的習氣，我們沒辦法再等下去了，還有多少時間讓我們這輩子能走入「圓教」裡呢？所以我們現在開始，我們就要趕緊在日常生活中、在我們的生態裡，我們還有什麼習氣未除，我們要趕緊把握時間。在我們現在「靜思清澄妙法蓮華，慈濟人群菩薩道」，我們不是要獨善其身，我們還要廣招來眾，人人一起來，讓我們這個濁惡的世間能多一個人走入慈濟的門。

In Tzu Chi, we must develop kindness, compassion, joy and equanimity. The Bodhisattva-Dharma taught by the Buddha showed us that to step onto the Bodhisattva-path, we need kindness, compassion, joy and equanimity. So, we internally develop our sincerity, integrity, faith and steadfastness and externally practice kindness, compassion, joy and equanimity, which is the Bodhisattva-path. As we engage in our own spiritual practice, we also need to walk the Bodhisattva-path. Besides eliminating our own habitual tendencies, we also have the aspiration to benefit everyone.

慈濟，必定就是要有慈悲喜捨。佛陀要教菩薩法，要來教育我們走入菩薩道，我們必定要慈悲喜捨。所以，內修是信實誠正，外行是慈悲喜捨；慈悲喜捨就是菩薩道。雖然我們修行，我們也要兼行菩薩道。雖然我們自己要去去除習氣，我們也要為天下人發心。

The current world population has increased a lot compared to the Buddha's lifetime. During the time of the Buddha, there were a little over 200 million people. Now there are nearly 7 billion. Just think about the effect of breathing; consider what happens when nearly 7 billion people exhale. Think of how that pollutes the climate and the air. Moreover, human desires are endless. The industrial world continues to advance the pursuit of our desires. In this kind of world, think about how very seriously the land, air and minds are polluted.

現在現代的人口比佛陀的時代增加很多。佛陀的時代只有二億多的人口，我們現在將近七十億的人口。只要想到人的呼吸間，有將近七十億的人口，呼吸時呼出去的氣，想想看氣候、空氣都污濁了。何況是人心的欲念不斷，世界工業一直發達，欲念的追求，這種世間，你們想，大地污染、空氣污染、人心污染是多麼的嚴重呢！

So we must develop great aspirations and work among all people. We need to widely transform sentient beings so they can all understand that the Buddha came to this world to let everyone encounter the Buddha-Dharma and learn these teachings. Therefore we must go among people and walk the Bodhisattva-path.

所以我們必定要發大心，我們要走入人群中，我們要廣度眾生，讓眾生人人能夠理解，佛陀來人

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間，能夠讓人人接觸到佛法、認識佛法。所以我們必定要走入人群行菩薩道。

Everyone, “the Jing Si Dharma-lineage is the path of diligent practice. The Tzu Chi School of Buddhism is the road of working with people.” At our spiritual training center, this is our common direction and common goal. With this mindset, we need to constantly be self-vigilant. Our minds should always remain in a pure and clear state like a wondrous lotus and we must also walk on the Bodhisattva-path among others.

各位，「靜思法脈勤行道，慈濟宗門人間路」，這是在我們的道場中，我們要有共同這個方向、共同心願。所以這念心我們要常常自我警惕，我們的心時時要有那分「靜思清澄妙蓮華」的心，還有在人群中我們要行菩薩道。

Everyone, I hope you are all Bodhisattva-practitioners who work among all people. We must forge a straight and broad Bodhisattva-path for others, which is also part of the great Bodhi-path. We all have this responsibility and need to take this task upon ourselves. We hope that lay practitioners can bring in a wide array of people and help them all recognize this.

各位，希望你們是入群入世的菩薩行者，我們必定為人間開一條菩薩大道直的菩薩道，菩提大直道的這一條菩薩道，我們人人有責任，我們人人要有這分的承擔。所以我們對在家居士，希望能廣招來眾，讓人人能認識。

The Lotus Sutra is very lengthy but we need to adapt it to modern times, modern places, and modern interpersonal relationships. Compare the world population of 200 million people more than 2000 years ago to today's almost 7 billion people; the levels of complications are tremendously different. But if more people can learn about the wondrous Lotus Sutra, everyone's minds may remain undefiled in the evil world of five turbidities. If this can happen, I believe that this world, the societies, and people's minds can definitely be purified. Purifying human minds is the best way to put an end to disasters.

所以，《法華經》其實是很長，因為我們要適應現代的時代，還要適應現在的空間，還要適應現在人與人之間，這和佛陀二千多年前，世界二億的人口，和現在將近七十億的人口，這種人與人之間的複雜性，真的是距離很遠。不過，我們若能愈多的人來認識「妙法華」，大家的心都能在五濁惡世而不染，若能如此，相信這個人間、社會、人心一定能淨化。人心若淨化，就是消弭災難最好的方法。

So fellow Bodhisattvas, we must have no disputes with the world at large, and no discord over any matters, and definitely no conflicts with other people. We need to follow these principles and walk the Bodhisattva-path. Starting today, we must renew our vows to eliminate our discursive thoughts and habitual tendencies. Remember, our minds need to be pure and clear like the lotus and we must walk the Bodhisattva-path in this world. This is what we mean by following the Jing Si path and the Tzu Chi road. With this, we aim to pave the way for the Lotus Sutra. To learn how to penetrate the essence of

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the Lotus Sutra, we must always be mindful.

所以各位菩薩，我們與世無爭，但是我們要與事無爭，更要與人無爭，更要會合道理，行入菩薩道。所以，請大家從今天開始，我們要重新將過去的雜念、習氣，我們要發心願趕快去除掉。記著，我們的心要「靜思清澄妙蓮華」，我們要「慈濟人群菩薩道」。所以，「靜思勤行道，慈濟人間路」，這就是希望為法華來鋪路。我們要如何走入法華的法髓精華，請大家要時時多用心！