

慈恩

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慈恩物语 GRACE TALK

和平

人类自从有历史记录以来，没有一个时代不在动乱中，所以说一部世界史，就是一部战争史，当然也就是一部动乱史。现时代的变动不安，比过去任何一个时代更激烈，这是不争的事实。

从这点来说，人类究竟是在进步，还是退步？如果说人类是在进步中，世间的动乱为什么随着时代的推进而加剧？如果说人类是在退步中，科技怎么突飞猛进？

人类始终在动乱中生活，根本原因在于人人有个自我的观念，总是以为只有自己一人是对的，甚至认为自己高人一等，于是社会上就有种种不平等的现象出现。

若要世界和平，唯有实现人类的平等。佛陀是平等主义者，人们如果真正奉持佛陀无缘大慈、同体大悲的精神，就必然会平等地对待一切众生，世界哪里还会有动乱可言？

~ 演培老和尚

Peace

In the recorded history of mankind, there had not been any era without turmoil. It is thus said that the world history was a history of warfare and hence a history of turmoil. Looking at the flux of turbulence in modern times, it is more intense than in any past era. This is an irrefutable reality.

Is mankind progressing or regressing? If mankind is making progress, why has the world become more chaotic as time advances? If mankind is in regression, how would our science and technology have advanced by leaps and bounds?

Human beings have been living in unrest. The fundamental cause of this is the notion of "self" that every person holds. Everyone invariably considers himself alone to be right and even superior to others. This gives rise to various forms of inequality in society.

It is only by fulfilling the equality of human beings that peace may prevail in our world. Buddha advocated the equality of mankind. If we truly uphold Buddha's spirit of great loving-kindness that is universal and unconditional, as well as great compassion based on empathetic oneness with others, we will certainly treat all sentient beings equally. Would there still be any chaos in our world then?

~ Venerable Yen Pei

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演培老和尚自传

(3) 我踏上求法的征途

3.1 离乡别慈母

民国二十三年（公元1934年）夏历五月下旬，我告别慈母，离开故乡，要到从未去过的地方，想想实在有点害怕，幸而有人带我，不然我可能打退堂鼓。因那时我仅十八岁，既离开慈爱的母亲，又远离慈悲的师父，不知何年何月再得相见，不期然地落下了悲伤之泪。正在这当儿，带我去上海的那位叔叔，到了我家门前，说声要走就走。母亲千拜托、万拜托地请他多照顾我，那位叔叔说：“不要挂虑，我会好好地送你儿子到玉佛寺。”

于是，我跟在他后面，向邵伯镇上走，不断回顾慈母，到了全看不见，才算真与母亲别离！

我们走到邵伯镇上，乘小火轮先到南通港，再转乘大轮船，航向上海。海中波浪滔天，轮船东歪西倾，时而好像沉到水底，时而又向浪头浮起。没有乘过船的人，被颠簸得头昏眼花。很多人在呕吐，我亦不例外，真不知是什么味儿，反复自问为什么还没到上海。

过去所谓大海轮，略有波浪就会颠簸，不像现在的豪华客轮。那位叔叔对我很关心，时常来看看我，并且诸多照顾。他在船上走来走去，好像若无其事，可能他常这样乘轮，在大海中航行。如是航行一昼夜，有人喊“快到上海”，满船乘客没有不欢喜的，我亦希望能早点上岸，不再这样活受罪。真正快到时，那位叔叔来帮我照料行李。

3.2 在两寺挂单

船靠码头，乘客依次上岸，倒是很有秩序，但是到了岸上，强为客人提行李的脚夫，态度令人害怕。如果是我一个人，行李会被抢走，幸得有人照顾，未为他们所乘。那位叔叔雇人力车，直送我到玉佛寺。他完成任务，立刻告辞离去，我则到客堂挂单。知客检查过戒牒，知我是新受戒的，立刻令客堂工友，送我到上客堂，其中挂单僧人不多，大广单上空位很多。广单，等于台湾人所睡的榻榻米，不过范围大些，

可睡数十人至一百人。

我将睡处整理好，问一位挂单的法师：“有位道禅法师，你认不认识？”

对方说：“不认识，不过佛事牌上，常看到这名字。你去客堂问一问。”

经过这位法师指点，我就到客堂去问。没有见到知客，我就问一位工人。工人很客气地说：“有，我替你请他到客堂来见你。”

不一会儿，二哥就到，问我住在什么地方。我说就在此寺挂单，住在上客堂里。二哥带我到上客堂，问我是从家乡寺庙来，还是从家中来。

我说受戒后，回家看双亲，我是从家中来的。

二哥接着问道：“爸爸、妈妈好吗？”

我说他们很好，并将南来经过，详细告诉二哥。二哥说：“既然来了，就先住上客堂。”

当时挂单在上客堂的，约有十五六位僧人。由于彼此从不相识，也就没有什么话说。我最初感到极为无聊，除随众上早晚殿，没其他事做。寺内经忏佛事很多，而我就成为做替牌凑数的对象，做经忏每日有三角钱进账。

我于民国二十三年受具足戒以后，本想立即就到佛学院去读书，但因经济条件不许可，不得不想办法求取几个钱。当时，僧青年取得经济的唯一办法，就是到经忏门庭去住一个短时期。于是，我就由小庙到上海，在玉佛寺与二哥重逢，不久就转到法藏寺挂单。

按照丛林规矩，先到客堂挂单，然后进上客堂，上客堂的挂单诸师，比玉佛寺多，而且还有盘腿静坐。我一句话不敢说，只默默地铺被盖。接着到斋堂用午饭，结斋后要念佛到大殿，没有一人可不去。到大殿，待所有人集合，才唱《回向偈》，礼佛后，各回其寮。单凭这点，就知规矩严。

上客堂的人众，流动性很大，时常有挂单的僧人进进出出，因为挂单就是来不拒，去不留，没有期限的。我在上客堂住不到一个月，不知换了多少新面孔。农历六月中旬到法藏寺，农历七

月初十左右，举行考试，录取僧人做经忏，但不是考文学、佛学，而是考敲打唱念，因这是经忏门庭，唱念不行的僧人，当然不会被录取。

随众哼哼，我是可以应付的，但要我独自唱念，由于声量不好，无论如何是唱不好的。因此，考试能不能过关，我是一点把握都没有的。当其他同道被考的时候，我感到坐立不安。

除上客堂有僧人参加考试，还有新来挂单的僧人，共约五十余人，坐满整个客堂，我偏偏是最后一个。

主考官是在寺内任客堂头单知客的续祥法师，续师的唱念，不论水陆、焰口、华严字母等，不但在法藏寺是第一流的，就是江浙一带都是相当闻名的，从他学习唱念的人不知多少。不特僧众爱听他的唱念，就是来寺院做佛事的信徒也爱听。还有一些老信徒，来寺院做水陆或放五大士焰口，必指定续祥法师做正表及正坐，因此他的人缘很好。

考试那天，按照次第，要唱一段水陆，或唱焰口里最难唱的一段。我坐在最后面，虽不是完全不会唱念，但如果是考之前几位老参所唱的，我一定不会被录取，因而深深为此担心。

在我前面应考的僧人是否被录取，我一点都不知道，可是轮到我时，续师看一看我，带着微笑地说：“好，你很耐心地坐了这么久，我不要考你了，明天准备进堂。”

不考我的唱念，我就这样被录取了，心里当然有说不出的欢喜，但我的目的是求法，不是在这方面成状元，所以每日做经忏所得的钱，一文都不敢浪费，全收藏起来。

我在法藏寺做经忏，整六个月，期头进，期头出，可说最守规矩，从没有调皮过，所以寺内职事，同住大众，对我都不错。在做佛事期间，寺内有做僧衣，我做了两三套短衫裤，一件长衫，现成罗汉鞋买两双，另做一条新的棉被，为求法作准备，用去约二十元，另寄二十元给师父上人过年，其余一个钱都不敢乱用。

诵经礼忏之余，我向同住的人探询到什么地方读书好。保守的都劝我去观宗寺，进步的劝我去闽南佛学院。时间未到，我只听他们说说，尚未决定到什么地方去，每天仍然不动声色地做经忏。其间亦有一二人说：就在本寺听听兴慈老法师、如三大法师讲经就好，何必要到佛学院？

兴慈老法师是当时上海很有名的高僧，文字及书法都很有

名，可惜他不常讲经，况且经忏这么多，我怎能息下心来学习？我对这意见，不能接受。

我要去求法的计划，不知怎么传到知客续祥法师耳里。一天，他问我：“是不是有这事？求法是好的，我绝对赞成。”

他可能也是保守的，认为到观宗寺，从谛闲老法师学天台最好。谛闲老法师是当时天台宗的泰斗，从老法师学习的人不少。其他主张我去观宗寺亦多，因而我就听从他们的劝告，不再考虑其他佛学院。

到了一期六个月，算算我的经忏之资，竟有一百二十元大洋，于是我再也不能安心做经忏下去，就向客堂告假，要求离去。续师得知我的求法志愿，不但没有阻止我，反而竭力地鼓励我，认为僧青年应该求法，以期他日弘扬如来正法！

在那个时候，经忏门中人，特别是已经做了纲领职事的人，对于僧青年求法，并不怎么欣赏，而续师与众不同。如果当时续师不准我请假，不赞成我读书，甚至说读书没有用，做经忏是怎样好，那我不但会在经忏门中浮沉一辈子，就是这个生命恐已不在人间！如今我还能做点自己所能做的事，教我怎能不忆念续祥法师这位具有悲愿的大德？

3.3 到观宗寺求法

在我受戒时，第八引礼师虽然一再地劝我出外求法，但我除知道镇江超岸寺有佛学院可供读书之外，其他地方哪里有法可求，全不知道。在法藏寺做佛事，有时向同道探听，他们大都是以经忏为主，或有人知道哪里可以听经闻法的，亦都指宁波观宗寺。当我决定要去观宗寺求法，首先向续祥法师告假。续师关心我的去处，但我未敢再麻烦他为我安排，乃从法藏寺直到我大哥宝庭店中，小住两三日，请大哥代购船票，



演培法师（右一）与同学

并送我上船，一切较为方便，没有麻烦别人。

晚上在沪（上海）上船，翌晨就到宁波，航行一夜，确实很方便。宁波一向被传为佛教之地，一般都很尊敬僧人。我到后上岸，雇车至观宗寺。码头工人、黄包车夫都很有礼貌，不像别处的工人，对客人敲竹杠。

到了观宗寺门口，我先到客堂挂单。寺内正在讲经，知客看我年轻，要我先挂经单，并说讲经圆满，可入学戒堂学习，时为民国二十四年（公元1935年）孟春。

观宗寺原为宋代延庆寺观堂旧址，“观堂”不是早午用斋的“五观堂”，而是按照《观无量寿经》建立的“十六观堂”，以供行者修净土的“十六观行”，所以名为“观宗”；到谛闲大师出任住持，遵四明尊者的遗法，以三观为宗，以说法为用，改称“观宗讲寺”，而逐渐成为东南名刹。

我到时，寺内有禅堂、上客堂、念佛堂、学戒堂、研究社、弘法社，真正可说是个解行并重的道场。谛闲大师建大法幢，到处讲经说法，德望极隆，因而来寺求法者很多。我去本要亲近谛闲大师的，哪知他于民国二十一年（公元1932年）秋早已圆寂。那时讲寺的住持，是谛闲大师的法徒宝静法师。

住经单，除我还有其他诸位同参，早晚上殿，晨午过堂，都要随众，不得例外。每日午后二时，经单同住诸师集合，同到斋堂，听宝静法师讲经。师的浙江音很重，我听了不怎么懂，感到非常吃力，但听三五日后，语言障碍慢慢消除。师讲《地藏经》的经义，因我是初次听讲，不懂之处亦多，回来请教同参，才略为了解。月余讲说，我没有一天不到，且听得很有兴趣，或说“初尝法味”。

讲经结束后，我请求入学。当时的大知客，亦是弘法研究社的副讲，他问我一些佛理，知我不曾听过佛法，要我先入学戒堂，从初级开始学习。当时，学戒堂有学僧六十余名，年龄在十五岁至二十岁之间。时我年十九岁，正是入学年龄。虽说是初级的，有年龄更小的同学，从来没读过书，不特佛法听不懂，一般知识也不了解，所以有小同学（现为大和尚或一方之主），常来问我这是什么意思，那是什么意思。我所知的同样不多，只能略为他们解答。监学法师见此，以为我读过很多书，特喊我到监学寮，向我问东问西后，认为我是可造就的青年，乃予特别照顾。

在学戒堂读一学期，期终同样需要考试，但学僧升学，不是规定在学戒堂要读几年，而是看你考试的成绩如何。考试的法师认为成绩不错，就可使你升级，我即因此而被升入研究社。当时研究社开讲《四教仪集注》，为初学天台的一

部重要著作，由主讲宝静法师先讲。我记得很清楚，他是讲“五时八教图”。图中，一条线牵到这里，一条线牵到那里。师讲得津津有味，而且讲得非常圆熟，证知他对天台教理有相当认识，但我听来好像在听天书，不知法师究竟讲些什么。师讲完如蜘蛛网似的“五时八教图”，就到他处弘法利生，其余就由副讲继续讲解。

副讲对天台教理亦有相当研究，讲来同样头头是道，但线装本《四教仪集注》有四册，讲完最初两册，我真仍然不懂，不能不说我是相当愚笨。幸我对求法有很大兴趣，不论怎样听不懂，仍继续地听下去，未萌退学的意念。我听到第三册一半，开始有点儿了解；到第四册全讲完，对天台思想较有领会。抽签抽到我复讲，虽不如老同学讲得那么好，但我已不像以前一句都讲不出。副讲可能是为了鼓励我，说我复讲得不错，而在研究社已学两三年的同学、同寮说我的复讲，不特能表达副讲所讲的原义，且还有条理地略为发挥。老师及同学们虽对我赞许，但我并不以此自满。

民国二十四年快要结束，主讲宝静法师弘化回来，既与寺众同度新岁，又为学众举行考试。由于平时只讲《四教仪集注》一课，所以不如其他佛学院有很多科目可考，就是所考《集注》，既不是列出几个问题，要学僧笔答，亦不是出一道论文题目，要学僧写文，实如平时复讲那样，主讲读一段原文，抽到哪个就那个讲。讲时所重视的是：声音是否洪亮，言语是否清楚，消文有没有条理，显义有没有错误。在这几方面，主讲认为满意，就算成绩不错，有望升入弘法部。

我那天考试，自认讲得不如平时，同学亦说我没有平时复讲那么好，我当然不敢妄想入弘法部。可是过了两天，监学忽通知我，要我搬进弘法部某个房间，表示我已升入弘法部，不特出乎我的意料，同学亦认为我或许是由于平时讲得可以，如以考试当天的复讲，是不可能升入弘法部的。

观宗寺的教学方法，全不依于教育原则，是天台一家的独特风格。不论讲什么经论，或天台教理思想：假定下午讲大座，由主讲或副讲来讲解，晚上七时半就由弘法部学员讲偏座，即将下午主讲或副讲所讲的，从头至尾对预科及研究社同学讲一遍。这样，既使弘法部学员学习讲说，亦使预科及研究社同学更得深刻地将内容收入脑海。隔天上午九时复小座，之前一日讲大座的法师，同样坐在法座上面，由他从签筒中抽出某支签，签上写哪个名字，就由那个同学复讲。

经过之前一天午后及晚上两次讲解，被抽签选中的同学照理应能多少复讲一点，可是仍有少数同学，一动不动地默然而立。复讲不出，并不会受到责罚，但必须站在原位，等另一同学复讲

完毕，才准许坐下。这本没有什么，但讲不出的同学，总觉得不好意思。有的经过多次，就离开研究社，是不是到别处参学，那就非我所知。

至于文学，每月只讲《古文观止》一次，从不教学生怎样作文，对文学全不重视，也许是认为文字属于葛藤，弘法并不怎样需要文学基础。

在观宗寺住过多年的法友，每日受到佛法的熏陶，不论是个怎样根钝慧浅的人，都能讲几句佛法，没有问题，但写不通一封信的人亦不少。我就因感到如此，难以安心地再继续住下去，经常向学友探听到什么地方学文字较好。很多学友都这样告诉我：你如真的想学文字，最好到闽南佛学院，那儿相当注重文字。在那儿学的僧青年，不但会写很通顺的信件，文章亦都写得相当不错。

我听后就想转学闽院，在此不但没有文字可学，就是报纸亦不准看，甚至太虚大师创办的佛教月刊《海潮音》，如有学僧看了，可能会被迁单(开除)。限制这样严格，怎能学到世俗文字？

但我们住的房间，离延庆寺仅五六尺，窗口对窗口，不但随时可以讲话，《海潮音》一到延庆寺，就有同道从窗口传过来，同学没有不抢来看的。我也是《海潮音》迷之一，只要《海潮音》一到，立即设法借来，先读为快。尽管寺方限制很严，同学没有不偷看的，可以想见《海潮音》在当时有怎样的摄受力。世人就是这样奇怪，越是不准看的书，越是想要看，如看不到就不肯罢休。最使同学感到不满的，就是佛教其他各宗主要理论同样不准看。同学对此，有时不免要发牢骚，说思想控制过多！

不知以何原故，同学的牢骚，有些传到主讲宝静法师耳里，他很巧妙地开示说：“佛教大小乘各宗各派的典籍，没有一种不可看，因各宗各派的思想理论皆是佛法。现在，你们在此学习天台，要先对天台教理，有个确切的定解，然后再看其他各宗祖师的著述。不论他们讲得与本宗所讲有什么不同，或与本宗思想根本对立，都不会动摇你们对本宗的见解。不然，如果你们看看这宗的理论，又看看那宗的理论，不能辨别各宗理论的胜义，怎能出去弘扬正法？为此，凡是来此学习天台教理的，都不准看其他各宗理论。到了自宗思想搞通，要看哪宗典籍，都没有什么不可的，不要误会为对你们的思想控制！中国佛教各宗各派，既然皆是佛法，当可自由阅读。”

主讲的这番开示，细想有他的道理，除了能会通各宗思想理论，思想不复杂确极重要，不然彼此互相破斥，反而不得正论。因我就要离开观宗，没有再与同学讨论此一颇饶兴味的问题，同学是作怎样想法，为我所不知道。各宗皆是佛法，有其不同思想，是为了适应不同根性，不能

不说都有他们的方便，因各宗皆接引不少人！

我离开住了两年的观宗寺，登上离甬（宁波）赴沪（上海）的轮船，前往闽南佛学院。

3.4 转赴闽院求学

闽南佛学院设在厦门南普陀寺内，是当时佛教界最有声誉的僧教育机构。全国较有思想的僧青年，只要有心求学，都以闽院为所仰望的目标，认为能进入闽院求法，是自己的最大光荣。可知闽院在僧青年心目中，具有怎样崇高地位，就是世人，特别是护法的正信居士，亦说闽院是真正造就僧才的学府，佛教的复兴有赖于闽院学僧。

厦门南普陀寺，原是子孙丛林，在中国佛教界并不怎样闻名。因受时代冲击，闽南诸山大德，恳请远在外方参学的转逢和尚回厦，住持南普陀寺。师回到厦门，接任住持，恢宏殿宇。师感于时代在变，就集议改子孙丛林为十方丛林，并拟定十方选贤规约二十条，不特扫除子孙因袭，亦扫历来法派陋规，不但得到当地诸山赞誉，亦得全国佛教长老共同称许，认为这是改革僧制的最好方法。

新制度规划完成，特选会泉法师为第一任住持。除在万石岩办佛学研究社，泉师复在南普陀寺创“闽南佛学院”，为教育才。他高风亮节，诸方所尊，被誉为“闽南第一人”，可以想见他的德业殊隆。

泉师三年任期圆满，民国十六年（公元1927年），因常惺法师的推荐，公举太虚大师接任。当时由于文化大革命，正发生僧寺危机，非有德学俱优的高僧住持，僧寺危机很难挽救，乃由常惺、转岸二大德，专程到沪礼请。大师受请，乃随赴厦，于同年四月二十九日，接任南普陀寺，行住持进院礼，兼任闽南佛学院院长。寺务请转岸、觉斌二师为监院，复请已回小雪峰（福建南安雪峰禅寺）祖庭的转逢长老为都监，以统理全寺寺务，寺内大众得以安和。

是年九月二十七日，太虚大师主持闽院开学典礼。大师素来最重视僧教育，接办后扩充闽院，招收新生，全国僧青年纷纷从千山万水投奔而来。因初派主持学院人事不当，不特使诸学子失望，而且发生严重学潮。大师为使闽院成为有规模的学院，真正培植有用的僧才，借此进行改组，特委大醒、芝峰二大弟子，前往整理，务使恢复正规，学僧安心求学。

其后在大师任期内，闽院成为教育事业中心，受到全国佛教徒的注目，并认为这是复兴中国佛教的大本营。院誉不特传遍于全国，边陲的蒙藏，盛行北传佛教的日、韩，盛行南传的缅、泰、锡等诸国，亦无不另眼相看，交相赞叹！

是年大师任满，辞住持及院长，经寺众及诸山长老挽留，允再连任。民国二十一年（公元1932年），大师任期又满，决辞南普陀寺丈席及闽院院长，公推常惺法师继任，举行交接典礼，大师才得以放下重任。

民国二十五年（公元1936年）夏，大哥为我办好一切由沪赴厦手续，送我上船时，仍再三嘱我要照顾自己，手足之情溢于言表，现在想来仍深感动。当我们兄弟握手分别时，依依不舍固是常情，待大哥离船时，我乃顿感茫然，不知将来怎样。

世事真有颇出人意表的，就是在我沉思时，忽发现有一位僧青年亦在此船上，相谈之下，知他是苏北兴化人，法名“能静”，亦去闽院读书。其人非常热情，对我诸多照顾，办事能力亦强，因而船行海上，不特不感寂寞，相谈极为投契。

船到厦门，上岸以后，我们雇人力车赴南普陀寺，首到客堂，说明来院求学。知客是位僧青年，富有青年人的热情，把我们安顿好，就立刻通知佛学院负责人，看是哪天为我们考试。说到考试，我真相当担心。虽在观宗寺学过两年佛法，但是文字太差，不知能否被录取。能静曾在镇江某学院读过，对于考试似乎很有把握，并不为此担心。

过了一天，学院通知我们到讲堂考试，时为闽院教务主任的是寄尘法师，身体矮矮胖胖，戴金边眼镜，使人见之有亲切感，并不对他有何畏惧，因而内心稍为安定。我和能静同学参加了考试，是否会被录取，我真没有把握。为我们举行考试的监学法师，年龄不大，对来求学的，亦极为同情。上午考试，下午通知可以入学，那时我不安定的一颗心始放松。

进入学院，我住在一个房间，能静住另一个房间。行李等安排好了后，监学带我们去向教务主任礼座。教务主任对我们说：“僧青年肯求学，是最好不过的。现既考入本院，今后除了努力学习，更要严格遵守院规，安定地住下去！”

闽院附设在寺内，院址可算不小，三五十个学僧，住在里面不挤，只是房屋已旧。后来看看全寺，除大悲殿新建，相当庄严堂皇，余皆年代已久。常惺法师虽任住持与院长，但在上海时多，很少住在寺内。我们进院，从未看到院长。时院内所授课程，与观宗寺确不同：观宗寺除讲天台一家言，根本没有其他课程；闽院课程表上，明显地列有佛学、国文、日文、地理、历史、论理学等，当然是以佛学为主修。我看了课程表，真有说不出的欣慰！

当时的佛学课，是由会觉长老讲《圆觉经》。会觉长老是太虚大师所主办高级武昌佛学院的

第一届毕业生，对佛学固有深入的研究，中国的古诗、文言文皆臻上乘，为武院同辈诸法师所共尊重，大师亦对他的成就称许。他是湖南人，讲的湖南口音，我初听实在听不懂，但一两星期听下来，就不感到困难。会觉长老授课，深受全体同学爱好。

当时讲《发菩提心经论》的慧童法师，为人极为随和，脸上老是挂着微笑，同学都很乐意接近他。有些较为顽皮的同学，甚至去摸他的头，他亦无所谓，从不发脾气，但是他授课，“那末”、“那末”太多，几乎一句一个“那末”。有位同学在他说一次“那末”，就在纸上下一点墨，一课下来，约两百余点。最恶作剧的，就是把所点墨的纸，拿去给法师看。他看了亦不生气，只说：“好好听课。”从此，同学为其起一绰号，称为“那末”法师，他同样地答应，并不以为忤！

讲国文的是教务主任寄尘法师，他矮而肥胖，真像弥勒大士。所讲国文，是用《开明（书店）活叶文选》，讲得清楚而声朗不高。他是安徽合肥人，我对其所讲皆能听懂，但他总是低头看着文选讲，很少抬头看诸学生。学生在看别的书，他却完全不知道。由于体胖，他看起来很庄严而不威严，学生对他并不畏惧，一致称他为“好好法师”。他有时为学僧出作文题，同学都写得不错，因我从未作文，写来自然不好，但是教务主任对每篇作文，都没有怎样改正，是以我的国文，有没有进步，我完全不知道，这是最感遗憾的！

教日文的是日人神田慧，固然教得很好，但同学们对日文学习都没有兴趣，上课时在看自己所愿意看的书。我在闽院有日文可学而不愿学，等到我知道日文资料对佛学研究，有其可参考的作用，想学而却无处可学。后来到台湾宝岛，我虽学日文短时期，但因植根不怎么深，加上年龄老大，讲学时多，所认识的一些日文，时久又全忘记，不能用到日文，不能不说是一件憾事！因而知道，**不论要学什么，有机会应把握，机会错过就可能不再有了！**

其他论理学、历史、地理等各科，都是厦门大学教授讲解，当然都讲得很好，因诸教授都是专家，可惜的是，除上课时见到一面，平时少有机会接触，是以诸教授的大名，现已无复记忆。

在闽院时有圆拙、白慧、妙钦、达居、达灵及我六人，分别来自福建、广东、台湾、江苏等地，籍贯尽管不同，但相当谈得来，一天聚会一处闲谈时，有人突然说：“我们是同在一院求法的僧青年，对未来佛教负有相当的责任，但是审观志同道合的不多，我们既很投契，应该想到在佛教中，如何做到**不白生，不白死，不白出家**，

不白在人间走一遭，更不白在佛教中空过。对此如皆同意，我们结为盟友怎样？”

原来这是素被认为重视戒行的圆拙同学的高论，我们当然没有一个不赞成的。

平时最活泼而又最会说话的达居说道：“既然都要不白生等，各人应起个‘白’什么的名字，大家以为如何？”

白慧首先抢着说：“那我仍名‘白慧’好了。”他是目光锐利，智慧高超，绝顶聪明的，名为“白慧”自然很恰当。

妙钦说：“我改名‘白云’”，如青云在空中飘浮那样洁白，不受尘世的各种污染。他对学问的研究，佛法的勤求，精细而认真，心智亦相当灵活。

圆拙说：“我名为‘白痴’”，表示自己相当愚痴，其实这是他的谦虚。事实上，他有很高的理智，治学极为笃实，毫不马虎。他曾亲近弘一律师多年，对于持戒的重视，甚于自己的生命，名为“白痴”，不过要做一个老实和尚，不如聪明人做糊涂事。

达居说：“我叫做‘白岩’”，显示他为人清白，比白的岩石更为坚白。他写得一手很好的小品文，短篇小说亦写得相当不错，做事极为能干，做人亦极谨严，名为“白岩”，亦可说是名符其人。

达灵则自改名为“白杰”，显示自己将来做个杰出的法将，不白做一个哑羊僧，不白负佛教的培植。这种极为难得的志愿，是很符合以“白杰”为名的特质。

我觉得连圆拙学长都自称“白痴”，那么像我这样愚钝笨拙的人，绝对不能与前五“白”相比。况且，从初出来求法，我就感到自己的知识过于浅薄，深恐将来没有成就，只好本于自己愚蠢，名为“白愚”。

那时在闽院读书，同学们相处，特别我们“六白”，真是和乐融洽，所授各课亦好，加上气候温和，晚餐后，三五同学就在寺院的四周散步。这实是理想读书场所，没有同学感到不满。唯一感到遗憾的，就是常惺院长，少为同学讲课。他是江苏泰州人，说一口标准的国语，且他说法授课，有条理，有组织，凡是听过的人没有不称善。这样一位善为授课的师长，且是院长，却甚少教导，同学怎不感到失望？

有一次，院长回寺，同学集议，难得院长回来，应派代表去求院长。那时派四个代表，我是其中之一。到院长室，顶礼如仪，有位同学代表大家请求：“院长慈悲，我们来院，是为亲近院长来的，但未听过您教导，在您未为法再度到外弘化，恳请您为诸同学讲课，以慰渴仰之情！”

院长毕竟是位善为说法的大德，听了同学陈



演培法师（左一）；妙钦法师（右二）

词后答说：“讲到授课，我不能说不会，但是你们应知，真正讲好课的，是诸青年法师。他们刚出来当老师，教学很认真，搜集资料多。同学用心听，会得实际学问。中文有句话‘倚老卖老’，现我已老，拿起课本来就讲，既未准备资料，亦未课前看看。同学听来好像不错，实际没有一点内容，同学反而一无所得。我望你们安心读书，现在院中授课法师，不特佛学深有研究，教学方法亦极善巧。你们用心学习，必能得到法益，知识亦会累积。”

就这么几句，同学对此当然失望，但也只能如仪退出院长室。

那时，南普陀寺内，除办有高级的闽南佛学院，教导高级的同学，另办有初级的佛教养正院，以教导初级的同学。一个寺内办高级和初级学院，造就佛教僧才，一般寺内少有，实属极为难得，为诸方所赞叹，亦证闽南大德对僧才的培植是怎样重视。高级闽院学僧，多数是外省的僧青年；初级养正院学僧，全是本省的青少年僧。

学期结束，白慧兄回港，白痴兄返寺，白杰兄决意赴杭州去学天台，白云、白岩及我白愚，商洽同去亲近大醒法师。醒公那时在江苏北端淮阴觉津寺，虽没有挂学院招牌，但确有三十余名好学的僧青年，从醒公学习，每日都在上课。醒公奉太虚大师慈命，曾到闽院负责教务，编行《现代僧伽》，鼓吹佛教革新，颇有声于教界，更是僧青年崇拜的对象！在南普陀寺时，醒公与觉斌和尚极为友善。我们动了此念，妙钦问其师觉斌和尚，其师极为赞成，且为我们写介绍信，所以学院假期一到，我们立即离别闽院，同船赴沪转淮阴觉津寺。主持教务的是醒公，同去同学都感到无限欢喜！

下期待续 ……



Autobiography of Venerable Yen Pei

(3) Quest for Dharma

3.1 Farewell to My Kind Mother

I left my homeland in the fifth lunar month of the year 1934. After bidding farewell to my kind mother, I set forth for a place that I had never been to. The thought of it was somewhat intimidating. Fortunately, there was someone to bring me there, otherwise I might have backed out. As I was only eighteen years old then, I could not help shedding tears of sorrow when I parted from my kind mother and my compassionate teacher, with no idea of when I would meet them again.

The uncle who would bring me to Shanghai arrived at my home and was anxious to leave immediately. My mother repeatedly requested him to take care of me. The uncle said, "Do not worry. I shall send your son to Yufo Monastery safely."

As I followed him towards Shaobo town, I kept turning back to see my kind mother, until she was totally out of sight.

At Shaobo town, we took a steamboat to Nantong Pier, where we transferred to a big ship setting sail for Shanghai. The ship was tossed about by towering waves in the sea. At times, it seemed to be sinking to the seabed, but at times, it rose above the waves. Those passengers on their maiden voyage felt dizzy due to the tossing. Many people vomited. I was no exception. I kept asking myself why we had not reached Shanghai.

The ships of the past would get tossed about by slight waves, unlike luxury ships of modern times. The uncle often came to see me and took care of me in various ways. He walked here and there on the ship, seemingly unaffected. Perhaps he often sailed on the high seas. We sailed for one day and night before someone shouted, "We are reaching Shanghai!" All the passengers were overjoyed. I also wished to disembark soon and end this traumatic experience. Just before we reached Shanghai, the uncle came to take care of my luggage.

3.2 Lodging at Two Monasteries

After the ship docked at the pier, the passengers disembarked in an orderly manner. Once we landed, we encountered porters who forcibly carried luggage for disembarked passengers. Their attitude was intimidating. If I were alone, my luggage would have been snatched by them. Fortunately, that uncle was around to protect

my luggage from them. He hired a rickshaw to bring us directly to Yufo Monastery. After completing this task, he left immediately.

I sought lodging at the Reception Parlour. The Reception Prefect checked my Certificate of Higher Ordination and instructed the reception staff to bring me to the Guest Hall. There were not many monks dwelling there temporarily, so there was plentiful unoccupied space on the extensive tatami mat, on which nearly a hundred guests could sleep.

After arranging the sleep area allocated to me, I asked another monk staying there temporarily, "Do you know a monk called Venerable Dao Chan?"

He replied, "No, but this name is often seen on the chanting roster board. Why don't you enquire at the Reception Parlour?"

At his suggestion, I went to enquire at the Reception Parlour, but the Reception Prefect was nowhere to be seen. I then asked a staff there who politely replied, "Yes, let me inform him to meet you here."

Not long after, my second brother arrived and asked me where I was staying. I told him that I was staying temporarily in the Guest Hall of that monastery. He brought me up to the Guest Hall, then asked whether I had come from my temple or home.

I replied that I had gone home after Higher Ordination to visit our parents and proceeded from home to Shanghai.

He then asked, "How are Father and Mother?"

I replied that they were fine and related to him in detail how I came southward. He said, "Since you have come, stay in the Guest Hall first."

At that time, there were around fifteen to sixteen monks staying temporarily in the Guest Hall. As we were not acquainted, we hardly talked. At first, I was very bored. Apart from joining the morning and evening prayers, there was nothing else to do. There were many ritualistic chanting sessions at the monastery and I soon became a relief candidate for unfilled chanting roles. This gave me an income of thirty cents per day.

After receiving Higher Ordination in 1934, I had

thought of attending a Buddhist institute immediately, but I was constrained by lack of money for the trip. I had to think of ways to get some money. At that time, the only way for a young monk to get money was through a short-term stay at a monastery that specialised in ritualistic chanting. I thus travelled from my village temple to Shanghai, where I was reunited with my second brother at Yufo Monastery. Not long after, I shifted to dwell at Fazang Monastery, which was most reputable at that time.

In accordance with monastic protocol, I registered at the Reception Parlour for admission to the Guest Hall. The number of monks dwelling in the Guest Hall at Fazang Monastery exceeded that at Yufo Monastery. Moreover, there were monks who sat cross-legged in meditation. I did not dare to speak at all, but quietly laid my blanket at the allocated spot. Then I proceeded to the Dining Hall for lunch. After the Meal-Conclusion Prayer, we recited Buddha's name as we moved to the Shrine Hall. Everyone had to assemble in the Shrine Hall to chant the *Verse for Transference of Merits* and pay respects to Buddha before returning to our quarters. The discipline was clearly stringent.

The turnover of dwellers at the Guest Hall was high, with frequent movement of monks in and out of the Guest Hall. In accordance with monastic protocol, itinerant monks who sought lodging would neither be rejected nor asked to remain longer and there was no time limit for itinerant lodging. During my short stay of less than a month in the Guest Hall, I saw countless, new faces. I arrived at Fazang Monastery in the middle of the sixth lunar month. An examination was held around the tenth day of the seventh lunar month, to recruit monks for chanting duties. The examination was based on neither literature nor Buddhist studies, but on ritualistic chanting and percussion. As this was a monastery specialising in ritualistic chanting, a monk who was not adept in ritualistic chanting certainly would not be recruited as a resident monk.

I could chant in a group, but I could not do solo chanting as my voice projection was poor. Lacking confidence in passing the examination, I was on tenterhooks while other candidates were being tested.

More than fifty people took part in the examination, comprising the monks already dwelling in the Guest Hall and newly admitted itinerants. The Reception Parlour was filled to capacity with examination candidates and I was the last to be tested.

The chief examiner was Venerable Xu Xiang, the Reception Head Prefect. His chanting, *be it Water and Land Deliverance Prayers, Prayers for Deliverance of Beings with Flaming Mouths* or *Hua Yan Letters*, was top-notch at Fazang Monastery. He was well-known for his chanting in Jiangsu and Zhenjiang. Countless people had learnt ritualistic chanting from him. Not only monastics liked to hear his chanting, even devotees who arranged for special rituals also liked to hear his chanting. Some elderly devotees, who arranged for deliverance prayers, specifically requested for him to lead the chanting, so he had excellent affinities with people.

Each candidate was tested in singing a stanza from *Water-Land Deliverance Prayers*, or the stanza in *Prayers for Deliverance of Beings with Flaming Mouths* which was hardest to sing. I sat in the last seat and was deeply worried. I was not totally incompetent in chanting, but if I were tested on the stanzas that the experienced candidates before me had to sing, I certainly would not be recruited.

I did not know whether the candidates before me were recruited. When it was my turn, Venerable Xu Xiang looked at me and said smilingly, "Well, you have sat patiently for so long. I shall not test you. Prepare for hall-entry tomorrow."

I was thus recruited without being tested in chanting. Of course, I was inexpressibly delighted, but my goal was to pursue Dharma studies rather than become an expert in chanting. Therefore, I kept all the money that I obtained daily through ritualistic chanting, without wasting a single cent.

I did ritualistic chanting at Fazang Monastery for six months exactly. I might be said to be the most obedient and well-behaved, so the staff and fellow monks treated me well. During that period, robe-tailoring was available in the monastery. In preparation for my trips in quest of Dharma, I had three sets of upper garments with pants made, along with one long robe, as well as bought two pairs of monastic shoes. I also had a new blanket made. I used about twenty yuan for this purpose and remitted twenty yuan to my teacher for the new year. I did not dare to use the rest of my money carelessly.



(Right) Venerable Yen Pei

In my spare time, I asked other itinerant monks about good places for Dharma studies. The conservative ones advised me to go to Guanzong Monastery, while the progressive ones advised me to go to Minnan Buddhist Institute. Since it was not time to leave yet, I merely listened to their views, without deciding where to go. Every day, I performed my chanting duties as usual. A few people suggested that I remain there and just listen to Dharma talks by Senior Venerable Xing Ci or Senior Venerable Ru San, instead of going to a Buddhist institute.

Senior Venerable Xing Ci, an eminent monk in Shanghai at that time, was renowned for his writings and calligraphy. Regrettably, he seldom gave talks. Moreover, the chanting duties at the monastery were so heavy, how could I quiet my mind for learning? I could not adopt this suggestion.

Somehow, the Reception Head Prefect heard of my intention to pursue Dharma studies. One day, Venerable Xu Xiang asked me, "Is it true that you plan to pursue Dharma studies? That is excellent. I am absolutely supportive of your plan."

He was perhaps conservative too and considered it best to learn Tiantai teachings from Senior Venerable Di Xian at Guanzong Monastery. Senior Venerable Di Xian was an eminent scholar in Tiantai teachings at that time, with many students learning from him. Many classmates supported my choice of Guanzong Monastery, so I accepted their advice and did not consider other Buddhist institutes.

At the end of the six-month period, I had an income of one hundred and twenty yuan from ritualistic chanting. I did not want to continue with ritualistic chanting and made a request at the Reception Parlour for leave. Venerable Xu Xiang knew of my aspiration for Dharma studies. He did not stop me from leaving, but encouraged me instead. He was in favour of young monks pursuing Dharma studies, so as to propagate Buddha's teachings.

At that time, monastics specialising in ritualistic chanting, especially those in leadership positions, were not in favour of young monks pursuing Dharma studies. Venerable Xu Xiang was different though. If he had not permitted me to take leave at that time, if he had disapproved of my quest for learning, or if he had said that learning was useless compared to ritualistic chanting, then I would have drifted along in life, just immersed in ritualistic chanting. I might not even have survived till today. Now that I can still do my part for Buddhism, how could I not remember the kindness of Venerable Xu Xiang, a virtuous elder with compassionate aspirations?

3.3 Dharma Quest to Guanzong Monastery

During my Higher Ordination, the eighth Etiquette Instructor had repeatedly advised me to venture out for Dharma studies. Apart from knowing of a Buddhist institute at Chao An Monastery in Zhenjiang, I did not know of any other place for learning Dharma. During my stay at Fazang Monastery, I had asked other monks, but they were mostly involved in ritualistic chanting. Those

who knew where to go for learning Dharma invariably pointed to Guanzong Monastery in Ningbo. When I decided to proceed to Guanzong Monastery, I took leave from Venerable Xu Xiang. He was concerned about where I would go, but I did not dare to trouble him to make arrangements for me. From Fazang Monastery, I went directly to the shop of my eldest brother, Baoting, where I stayed for a couple of days. I asked my brother to help me buy a ship ticket and send me to board the ship. This was much more convenient, without causing troubles to others.

I boarded the ship departing from Shanghai at night and reached Ningbo the next morning. The one-night voyage was indeed convenient. Ningbo had always been reputed as a Buddhist place where monks were well respected. Once ashore, I took a rickshaw to Guanzong Monastery. The port workers and rickshaw pullers were very polite, unlike those at other places who ripped off visitors.

Upon reaching Guanzong Monastery, I registered at the Reception Parlour for lodging. There were Dharma talks being held at the monastery. Seeing that I was young, the Reception Prefect assigned me to be lodged for listening to Dharma talks. He said that at the end of the Dharma talks, I could enrol for Precept-Learning. That was in early spring of the year 1935.

Guanzong Monastery was formerly called "Yanqing Monastery" during Song Dynasty. Its Contemplation Hall was not a dining hall for Fivefold Contemplation of Meals, but for the Pureland practice of "Sixteen Types of Contemplation" based on *Discourse on Contemplation Upon Infinite Life*. This was the meaning of the name "Guanzong", which meant "school of contemplation". When Senior Venerable Di Xian became the Abbot, he upheld the teachings bequeathed by Senior Venerable Si Ming on Threefold Contemplation, with application in Dharma-exposition. The monastery was thus renamed "Guanzong Monastery" and gradually became well-known in the southeastern region.

At the time of my arrival, the monastery may be said to put equal emphasis on theoretical understanding and spiritual practice, with a Meditation Hall, Guest Hall, Recitation Hall, Precept-Learning Department, Advanced Studies Department and Dharma-Propagation Department. As Senior Venerable Di Xian propagated Dharma in many places, he was held in high esteem and many people came to the monastery to learn from him. I went there with the intention of learning from him, not knowing that he had already passed away in the autumn of 1932. At the time of my arrival, the Abbot was Venerable Bao Jing, a disciple of Senior Venerable Di Xian.

All monks in my dormitory had to attend the morning and evening prayer sessions, as well as follow monastic hall dining for breakfast and lunch. Every day, at two o'clock in the afternoon, we assembled and then proceeded to the Dining Hall for Dharma talks by Venerable Bao Jing. He spoke with a heavy Zhejiang accent, so I hardly understood what he said and found it tedious to listen.

However, after five sessions, the language difficulty was overcome. As it was the first time that I listened to Dharma talks about *Discourse on Kshitigarbha Bodhisattva*, there were many parts that I did not understand. I gained some understanding after consulting other monks in my dormitory. The Dharma talks lasted a month. I was present every day and listened with deep interest. It was my “first taste of the flavour of Dharma”.

After the Dharma talks ended, I requested for enrolment in the monastery. The Reception Head Prefect was an Assistant Lecturer in Dharma-Propagation Department and Advanced Studies Department. He quizzed me on Buddhist teachings and thus knew that I had not heard Buddhist teachings before coming to Guanzong Monastery. He assigned me to Precept-Learning Department to learn the basics.

At that time, there were over sixty student-monks in Precept-Learning Department, with ages ranging from fifteen to twenty years. I was nineteen years old then and eligible for enrolment. Even at this elementary level, there were younger classmates who had no prior learning. They not only could not understand Buddhist teachings, but also lacked ordinary knowledge. Therefore, some younger classmates (who are abbots or senior monks now) often asked me the meaning of this and that. With my limited knowledge, I offered them some brief explanations. The Academic Supervisor hence thought that I had a good foundation in learning and summoned me to his room. After quizzing me, he considered me a promising youth to be given special grooming.

There was an examination near the end of each semester. The promotion of students was not based on the duration of study in Precept-Learning Department, but on the examination results. If a student's results were considered good by the examiner, he would get promoted. I was thus promoted to Advanced Studies Department. The department started a series of lectures on *Collected Commentaries on Tiantai Fourfold Teaching*, which was an important text for Tiantai beginners. The initial lectures were delivered by the Chief Lecturer, Venerable Bao Jing. I remember clearly that he explained the *Mind-Map of Five Periods and Eight Teachings*. He explained enthusiastically and proficiently the connections indicated by the web of lines. His understanding of Tiantai teachings was clearly profound, but I could not understand what he said. After lecturing on the web-like *Mind-Map of Five Periods and Eight Teachings*, Venerable Bao Jing went elsewhere for Dharma-propagation and the remaining lectures were delivered by the Assistant Lecturer.

The Assistant Lecturer was similarly proficient in Tiantai teachings. His lectures were clear and logical. The *Collected Commentaries on Tiantai Fourfold Teaching* were contained in four thread-bound books. At the end of the lectures on the first two books, I still could not understand the teachings, but I had immense interest in learning Dharma. Regardless of my lack of understanding, I continued to listen, without any thought of quitting. After listening to half the lectures on the third book, I started to gain some understanding. By the end of the

lectures on the fourth book, I had a better understanding of Tiantai doctrines.

I was balloted to do a lecture recapitulation. I did not speak as well as the veteran students, but at least, I was not speechless like in the past. The Assistant Lecturer said that I had spoken well in the recapitulation, probably just as encouragement to me. My classmates and roommates, who had been in Advanced Studies Department for nearly three years, commented that my recapitulation not only conveyed the original purport of the Assistant Lecturer's lecture, but also developed it in an orderly manner. Despite the praises given by my teacher and fellow students, I did not become complacent.

Near the end of the year 1935, Venerable Baojing returned from his teaching trip. He ushered in the new year with the monastics and conducted examinations for the students. As there was only one lecture series on *Collected Commentaries on Tiantai Fourfold Teaching*, we did not have as many examination subjects as other Buddhist institutes. The examination did not consist of questions to be answered in writing, or an essay topic. It was just like our usual lecture recapitulation. The Chief Lecturer recited a paragraph from a commentarial text and the verbal recapitulation would be done by a balloted student. The assessment criteria included loudness, clarity of speech, organisation of the explication and correctness in conveying the purport. If the Chief Lecturer was satisfied with the student's performance in these aspects, the student would score good grades and most likely get promoted to Dharma-Propagation Department (DPD).

On the day of my examination, I did not meet my usual standard in recapitulation. My classmates commented likewise about my recapitulation, so I did not dare to think of promotion to DPD. However, two days later, I was notified by the Academic Supervisor to move into a room in DPD. This meant that I had been promoted to DPD. It was beyond my expectation. My classmates also thought that my promotion might be based on my usual standard in recapitulation. My recapitulation during the examination could not have enabled me to get promoted to DPD.

The teaching methodology adopted by Guanzong Monastery was not based on secular pedagogical principles. It was a unique style of Tiantai edification. In expounding any Buddhist discourse, commentary or Tiantai philosophy, if a “formal lecture” was delivered by the Chief Lecturer or Assistant Lecturer in the afternoon, then a “side lecture” would be delivered by a student from DPD at half past seven o'clock that night. This student had to repeat the formal lecture entirely to the students of Preparatory Department and Advanced Studies Department. This gave opportunities for DPD students to practise lecturing. It also enabled the students of Preparatory Department and Advanced Studies Department to absorb the lecture contents more fully.

This was followed by an “informal lecture” at nine o'clock the next morning. The lecturer of the previous day would be seated on the Preaching Seat. He would do

a ballot by drawing a stick out of a cylinder of bamboo sticks. The lecture recapitulation would be done by the student whose name was written on the drawn stick.

The same lecture had been delivered twice on the previous day, once in the afternoon and once at night, so the balloted student should be able to recapitulate some parts of the lecture. However, there were still a few students who stood speechless and frozen to the spot. A student who could not fulfil the lecture recapitulation would not get punished, but he had to stand at the original spot and wait for the next student's recapitulation to be completed, before he would be allowed to sit. Some students quit the Advanced Studies Department after several occasions of such embarrassment. I do not know if they went to other places for Dharma studies.

As for literature, apart from the monthly lesson on *Gems of Classic Chinese Prose*, we were not taught essay-writing. There was no importance placed on literature. The written word was perhaps considered as "vine entanglements" in Dharma-learning and a literary foundation was not deemed necessary for Dharma-propagation.

Those who had stayed at Guanzong Monastery for many years were edified with Dharma every day. Even a dull-witted student with little wisdom could utter a few sentences about Dharma. However, many students could not even write a letter properly. I thus could not continue staying at Guanzong Monastery with peace of mind, but often asked my classmates which places offered curricula for learning language. Many classmates told me that if I really wanted to learn language, it would be best to go to Minnan Buddhist Institute, where considerable emphasis was placed on language. The young monks there could write letters fluently and produced good essays.

I then thought of transferring to Minnan Buddhist Institute. At Guanzong Monastery, there was no formal learning of language. We were not allowed to read newspapers or even *Sound of the Tides*, a monthly Buddhist periodical started by the Buddhist reform leader, Senior Venerable Tai Xu. If a student disobeyed these rules, he might get expelled. With such stringent restrictions, how could we learn secular language?

However, our dormitory was merely two metres apart from Yanqing Monastery, with our windows facing theirs, so we could talk at any time. Whenever *Sound of the Tides* periodicals were delivered to Yanqing Monastery, our counterparts there would pass the periodicals to us through the windows. These periodicals would be grabbed and read avidly by my classmates. I was also a fan of *Sound of the Tides*. Whenever the periodicals arrived, I would immediately borrow one to read. Despite the strict restrictions imposed by the monastery, the students all read *Sound of the Tides* secretly. The appeal of *Sound of the Tides* was clearly so great at that time. This is how strange people are. The more a book is not allowed to be read, the more people want to read it and they will not give up. The greatest grievance of the students was the prohibition on reading other Buddhist doctrines. Inevitably, we sometimes grumbled about the excessive mental control.

Venerable Bao Jing, the Chief Lecturer, somehow heard of our grievances. He advised us tactfully, "The texts of all Buddhist schools of thought may be read, as their tenets are Buddhist teachings. You are learning Tiantai teachings here, so you should first have insightful understanding of Tiantai teachings, before you read the writings of other masters. Then, even if their teachings are different from Tiantai tenets, or fundamentally opposite to Tiantai teachings, your insight into Tiantai teachings will not be shaken. Otherwise, if you read the teachings of various schools, but cannot distinguish the purports of various schools of thought, how could you go out to propagate true Dharma? For this reason, anyone who comes here to learn Tiantai teachings is not allowed to read the teachings of other Buddhist schools of thought. Once you are proficient in our teachings, you may read the texts of any other school. Do not misconstrue this as mental control. Of course, the teachings of all schools of Chinese Buddhism are Dharma and may be read freely."

Upon careful reflection, these words of the Chief Lecturer were reasonable. Besides integrating the teachings of various Buddhist schools, it is exceedingly important that one's thinking is not sophisticated. Otherwise, one may not gain right understanding amidst the mutual refutation of different schools of thought. As I would soon leave Guanzong Monastery, I did not discuss this interesting issue further with my classmates, so I did not know their views. All schools of Buddhist thought are Dharma, and their differing philosophies cater to diverse spiritual capacities of sentient beings. This may be said to be their skilful means, as many followers had been edified by each school of thought.

I left Guanzong Monastery, where I had dwelled for two years, and headed for Minnan Buddhist Institute on board a ship sailing from Ningbo to Shanghai.

3.4 Transfer to Minnan Buddhist Institute

Minnan Buddhist Institute was located within the premises of South Putuo Temple in Xiamen. It was the most reputable monastic institution in the Buddhist community at that time. All over the country, monastic youths with progressive thinking and aspiration for learning looked up to Minnan Buddhist Institute. Admission into this institute would be their greatest glory. The institute clearly occupied a lofty position in the minds of monastic youths. It was extolled, especially by lay Buddhists with right faith, as an educational institution that truly produced monastic talents. It was also said that the revival of Buddhism would depend on the student monks of Minnan Buddhist Institute.

South Putuo Temple was originally a hereditary monastery and not well-known in the Chinese Buddhist community. Due to the challenging times, the senior monastics in southern Fujian earnestly requested Venerable Zhuan Feng to return from his itinerant learning tour to Xiamen and assume the abbotship of South Putuo Temple. Venerable Zhuan Feng refurbished the temple halls and convened an assembly to discuss its conversion into a public monastery, in adaptation to the changing times.

In addition, the formulation of twenty rules, for selecting virtuous and capable monks from all quarters as successors, abolished the traditional system of succession by disciples of the same lineage. This move was unanimously praised by senior monastics in the locality and even the whole country. It was regarded as the best way to reform the monastic system.

Upon completion of the institutional planning, Venerable Hui Quan was appointed as the first Abbot of the public monastery. Besides setting up a Buddhist Research Society at Ten Thousand Rock Crag, Venerable Hui Quan established Minnan Buddhist Institute at South Putuo Temple for nurturing monastic talents. He was extolled as "The Foremost Person of Minnan", being highly esteemed in all quarters for his moral integrity.

At the end of Venerable Hui Quan's three-year tenure, Venerable Chang Xing recommended Senior Venerable Tai Xu, who was elected to take over the abbotship in 1927. At that time, Buddhist monasteries were in crisis due to the Cultural Revolution. An eminent monk who excelled in both virtues and learning was needed for the abbotship, so that the temple might be spared from destruction. Venerable Chang Xing and Venerable Zhuan An made a special trip to Shanghai to invite Senior Venerable Tai Xu to assume the abbotship. Senior Venerable Tai Xu went to Xiamen with them. He was installed as the new Abbot of South Putuo Temple and appointed as the Dean of Minnan Buddhist Institute on 29 April 1927.

The monastic affairs were supervised by Venerable Zhuan An and Venerable Jue Bin as superintendents. Venerable Zhuan Feng, who had returned to his ancestral monastery, Xue Feng Ch'an Monastery located in Nan'an, Fujian, was appointed as the Chief Supervisor, to manage all monastic affairs and harmonise all within the monastery.

On 27 September 1927, Senior Venerable Tai Xu presided over the Opening Ceremony of Minnan Buddhist Institute. He had always placed importance on monastic education. After he assumed leadership, he expanded the institute and recruited new students. Monastic youths from all over the country travelled from afar to the institute. Student protests occurred at first, due to disappointment with management of the institute. Senior Venerable Tai Xu reorganised and scaled up the institute, for nurturing monastic talents to contribute to Buddhism. He appointed two chief disciples, Venerable Da Xing and Venerable Zhi Feng, to revamp the institute for resumption of normal operations, so that students could settle into their studies.

Subsequently, under Senior Venerable Tai Xu's leadership, Minnan Buddhist Institute gained attention as a Buddhist education centre, regarded by Buddhists nationwide as the headquarters for revival of Chinese Buddhism. The institute, reputed throughout the country, was viewed favourably with praise in Mongolia, Tibet, Japan and Korea where Mahayana Buddhism was prevalent, as well as in Burma, Thailand and Ceylon where Theravada Buddhism prevailed.

When Senior Venerable Tai Xu's tenure ended that

year, he resigned from the positions of Abbot and Dean. The resident monastics and senior monks of other monasteries persuaded him to remain. He agreed to continue for another term, at the end of which in 1932, he resolutely resigned from the abbotship of South Putuo Temple and deanship of Minnan Buddhist Institute. Venerable Chang Xing was appointed as the new Abbot and Dean. After the handover ceremony, Senior Venerable Tai Xu finally relinquished these heavy duties.

In the summer of 1936, my eldest brother helped me with the procedures to go from Shanghai to Xiamen. When he sent me to board the ship, he instructed me repeatedly to take care of myself. I still feel deeply touched whenever I recall his brotherly affection, which was evident in his speech and facial expressions. We were reluctant to part when we shook hands in farewell. When my brother left the ship, I suddenly felt lost and apprehensive about my future.

Worldly affairs can indeed be rather unexpected. While I was lost in thought, I suddenly discovered another young monk on the ship. We had a conversation, through which I knew that he hailed from Xinghua, northern Jiangsu. His monastic name was "Neng Jing" and he was also going to study at Minnan Buddhist Institute. He was very warmhearted and took care of me in many ways. He was also competent in doing many things. Therefore, I did not feel lonely during the voyage. We got along well and enjoyed our conversations.

Upon reaching Xiamen, we disembarked from the ship and hired a rickshaw to bring us to South Putuo Temple. We went first to the Reception Parlour and made clear that our purpose was to study at Minnan Buddhist Institute. The Reception Prefect was a young monk with youthful warmth. He arranged lodging for us and immediately informed the person-in-charge at Minnan Buddhist Institute to fix a date for our examination. I was indeed rather worried about the examination. Although I had learnt Dharma for two years at Guanzong Monastery, I was very weak in language and thus unsure if I could gain admission. Neng Jing had previously studied at a college in Zhenjiang and seemed very confident about examinations, so he was not worried at all.

The next day, we were informed by the Institute to go to the lecture hall for the examination. The Education Director, Venerable Ji Chen, was short, plump and looked friendly with his golden-rimmed spectacles, so I did not feel intimidated and calmed down slightly. Neng Jing and I took the examination. I was really not confident of gaining admission.

The Academic Supervisor who conducted the examination was not old. He was very sympathetic towards those who came for Dharma studies. The examination was held in the morning. We were informed of our admission in the afternoon. It was then that my mind relaxed and calmed down.

Upon admission, Neng Jing and I were assigned to separate rooms. After our luggage had been settled,

the Academic Supervisor brought us to pay respects to the Education Director who said, "It is most excellent for monastic youths to be eager in learning. Now that you have passed our entrance examination, you should learn diligently henceforth. Moreover, you must strictly obey our rules and settle into the life here."

The premises of Minnan Buddhist Institute, located within a monastery, was large enough to accommodate fifty students without overcrowding, but the buildings were already old. When I looked at the entire monastery later, I found that the buildings dated back to many years ago, except the newly-built Great Compassion Hall which was stately and grand.

Venerable Chang Xing, the Abbot-cum-Dean, was mostly in Shanghai and seldom stayed in the monastery. During our period of study, we had never seen the Dean.

The curriculum was indeed different from that of Guanzong Monastery, which covered only Tiantai teachings with no other course of study. At Minnan Buddhist Institute, the timetable clearly listed Buddhist Studies, Chinese language, Japanese language, Geography, History and Logic, with Buddhist Studies as the major subject. I felt truly and inexpressibly gratified after seeing the timetable.

For Buddhist Studies, Senior Venerable Hui Jue gave lectures on *Discourse on Perfect Enlightenment*. He was among the first batch of graduates of Wuchang Buddhist Institute for advanced studies established by Senior Venerable Tai Xu. With profound learning in Buddhism, as well as erudite mastery of ancient Chinese language and poetry, he was highly esteemed by peers at Wuchang Buddhist Institute. Senior Venerable Tai Xu also commended his accomplishments. I could not understand his teachings at first due to his Hunan accent, but overcame this difficulty after a couple of weeks. His lectures were well received by all students.

Venerable Hui Tong lectured on *Treatise on Awakening the Mind for Enlightenment*. He was very amiable and always smiling, so students approached him gladly. Some mischievous students even approached him to touch his head, but he did not mind and never got angry. However, he used many "so" in his teaching, with one "so" in almost every sentence. One student made an ink dot on paper whenever he uttered "so". At the end of each lesson, there were over two hundred dots on paper. The worst prank was to show the paper marked with ink dots to Venerable Hui Tong, but he did not get angry and merely said, "Listen well in class." Students hence gave him a nickname "Venerable So". He did not take offence and still responded when he was called by this nickname.

The Education Director, Venerable Ji Chen, taught us Chinese language. Being short and plump, he really looked like Mahasattva Maitreya. He taught clearly in a loud voice, based on *Loose-Leaf Collection of Essays* published by Kai Ming Bookstore. Although he had an Anhui accent, I could understand all that he taught. However, during the lectures, he was always looking at the textbook and seldom raised his head to look at his students. He was

totally unaware that some students were reading other books during his lectures. Due to his corpulence, he looked dignified but not awesome, so students were not afraid of him and called him "Venerable Nice". Sometimes, he set essay topics and my classmates all wrote fairly well. As I had not written essays before, I did not do well in essay-writing. He made few corrections of each essay, so I could not know whether I improved in Chinese language. This was most regrettable.

A Japanese called Shentian Hui taught us the Japanese language. He taught well, but my classmates were not interested in learning the Japanese language. During his lectures, they browsed books that they were willing to read. At Minnan Buddhist Institute, I had this opportunity to learn the Japanese language, but I was unwilling to learn then. By the time I knew that Japanese theses on Buddhist studies were useful references and I wanted to learn the Japanese language, there was nowhere that I could learn it. Subsequently, I learnt the Japanese language for a short period of time when I went to Taiwan. However, due to my shallow foundation in the language, aging and considerable time spent in teaching, I have completely forgotten what I learnt, so I am unable to use Japanese. This is indeed regrettable. Hence, I learnt that one should seize opportunities for learning, as a missed opportunity may not be available again.

The other subjects, such as Logic, History and Geography, were taught by professors from Xiamen University. These experts' lectures were excellent, but regrettably, we hardly had any chance to interact with them other than during lectures. Therefore, I cannot remember their names now.

I had five peers Yuan Zhuo, Bai Hui, Miao Qin, Da Ju and Da Ling. Six of us hailed from different places such as Fujian, Guangdong, Taiwan and Jiangsu, but we got along very well. During one gathering, someone suggested, "As monastic youths learning in the same institute, we bear considerable responsibilities for Buddhism in future, but there are not many like-minded students like us. We should think of how to make our births, deaths and renunciation meaningful, without wasting our time in this human world, especially as Buddhist monastics (不白生, 不白死, 不白出家, 不白在人间走一遭, 更不白在佛教中空过). If you all agree, why don't we become spiritual allies?"

This brilliant idea came from Yuan Zhuo, who was always mindful of disciplined conduct. Of course, none of us objected.

Da Ju, who was the most eloquent and liveliest among us, said, "Since we do not want to have been born in vain ("bai sheng 白生") and so on, everyone shall bear a name starting with "Bai". What do you all think?"

Bai Hui was the first to respond, "I shall still be called 'Bai Hui' then." Being hawk-eyed and exceedingly clever with great wisdom, the name "Bai Hui" (pure wisdom) was very suitable for him.

Miao Qin said, "I shall be called 'Bai Yun' (white clouds)." With a supple mind, he was earnest and

meticulous in seeking knowledge and Dharma, being pure like clouds drifting in the sky, undefiled by worldly dust.

Yuan Zhuo said, "I shall be called 'Bai Chi' (fool)." He intended it to mean that he was rather foolish, but he was just being humble. He actually had a high level of intellect, being diligent, earnest and meticulous in learning. He had associated closely with Discipline Master Hong Yi for many years, so he valued precept-observance above his own life. He named himself "Bai Chi", to be an honest monk, unlike people who are clever but act foolishly.

Da Ju said, "I shall be called 'Bai Yan' (white rock)." He intended it to mean purity of character that was cleaner and sturdier than white rock. He was adept at writing skits and short stories. The name "Bai Yan" was suitable for him, as he was competent and prudent in conduct.

Da Ling named himself "Bai Jie", indicating his aspiration to become an outstanding Dharma-general living up to his monastic grooming, rather than just an ignorant monk. The name "Bai Jie" befitted his noble aspiration.

Since Yuan Zhuo named himself "Bai Chi", I felt that a dull-witted and ignorant person like me certainly could not compare with my five peers. Moreover, from the time that I came out in quest of Dharma, I had been worried that I might not accomplish anything due to my lack of knowledge, so I named myself "Bai Yu" due to my ignorance.

During that period of study at Minnan Buddhist Institute, my classmates got along harmoniously, especially six of us, the "Six Whites" (六白). The lessons were good. The climate was mild. After dinner, we strolled around the monastery, in groups of threes or fives. This was indeed an ideal place for learning. No student was dissatisfied. The only cause for regret was that our Dean, Venerable Chang Xing, seldom taught us. He hailed from Taizhou, Jiangsu. Speaking standard Mandarin, his lectures were well-organised in content and praised by his audience. How could we not be disappointed with the scarcity of lessons by such a skilful lecturer who was, moreover, the Dean?

Once, when the Dean returned to the monastery, the students assembled and discussed about sending representatives to make a request on that rare occasion of his return. I was one of the four representatives. When we reached the Dean's Office, we paid respects to the Dean and one of us made the request, "Compassionate Dean, we have come to this institute to learn from the Dean, but we have not heard your teachings yet. Before you leave on Dharma-propagation missions again, we earnestly request you to deliver a lecture, to assuage our thirst for your instruction."

The Dean, an eloquent preacher, replied, "I cannot say that I cannot deliver lectures, but you all know that the young teacher-monks truly lecture well. Being new teachers, they are very serious in teaching and do extensive research. Attentive students will gain true knowledge from them. There is a Chinese saying about 'taking advantage of one's seniority'. Now that I am old, I just take a textbook and teach, without preparing reference materials or prior reading of the textbook. Students may think



Venerable Yen Pei (back row, 1st from right)

that I teach well, but actually, my lecture lacks content, so students gain nothing. I hope that you all study here with confidence. The lecturers here are not only erudite in Buddhist studies, but also very skilful in teaching. If you learn earnestly, you will certainly benefit from the Dharma teachings, as well as accrue knowledge."

We were certainly disappointed with this reply, but we could only leave the Dean's Office.

At that time in South Putuo Temple, Minnan Buddhist Institute offered advanced Buddhist studies, while Buddhist Yangzheng Institute offered elementary Buddhist studies. It was rare for a monastery to run institutes for both elementary and advanced Buddhist studies, for the purpose of nurturing monastic talents. This was widely commended and showed the importance placed by senior monks in southern Fujian on the development of monastic talents. The advanced-level students in Minnan Buddhist Institute were mostly young monks from other provinces, while the students in Buddhist Yangzheng Institute were all youth monks and teenaged monks from Fujian province.

At the end of the semester, Bai Hui returned to Hong Kong, Bai Chi returned to his temple, Bai Jie decided to learn Tiantai teachings in Hangzhou. Bai Yun, Bai Yan and I decided, after discussion, to learn from Senior Venerable Da Xing at Juejin Monastery in Huaiyin, northern Jiangsu. Over thirty monastic youths were learning keenly under his guidance there. Lessons were held daily although there was no formal setup of a Buddhist institute there.

Senior Venerable Da Xing was previously sent by Senior Venerable Tai Xu to supervise academic affairs at Minnan Buddhist Institute and publication of *Modern Sangha* to promote Buddhist reforms. He was thus well-known in the Buddhist community and venerated by monastic youths. At South Putuo Temple, he had good relations with Venerable Jue Bin. Miao Qin consulted his master, Venerable Jue Bin, who was very supportive of our plan and wrote a recommendation letter for us. When the vacation started, we immediately set off by ship to Shanghai and then proceeded to Huai Yin Monastery. We were immensely joyful to know that Senior Venerable Da Xing was in charge of academic affairs there.

To be continued in the next issue

演培老和尚的做人艺术

中道缘起，二谛圆融

人们为什么有这么多烦恼和痛苦呢？同样面对一件事情，有的人能够平静地面对，而有的人却怨天尤人；有的人成功了却依然惶惶不安，而有的人失败了却能够重新站起来。造成这种差别的原因，不在于外在环境，而在于人们观察人生、面对人生的方式不同。

演公一生弘扬大乘佛法，特别重视龙树菩萨的中观和唯识学。般若中观和唯识，其实就是禅修的内观法。人生充满烦恼，并不是因为世界有问题，而是因为众生不了解缘起、中道、二谛，所以执著有与无、得与失、顺与逆、成与败，在不断的分别与执著中，为自己制造了无尽的烦恼。

龙树菩萨《中论》说：“**因缘所生法，我说即是空，亦为是假名，亦是中道义。**”这首偈颂是中观内观法的精华。缘起法告诉我们生命的真相，中道教导我们正确的方法，二谛帮助我们圆融现实与真理。一个真正懂得缘起中道的人，不会逃避现实，也不会执著现实，而能在人生中不断提升人格，增长智慧。这是佛法指导做人的真正意义。

一、明白因缘

佛法所说的缘起，并不是抽象的哲学理论，而是说明宇宙人生的真实法则。佛陀说：“**此有故彼有，此生故彼生；此无故彼无，此灭故彼灭。**”这句话说明世间一切事物，都依因缘而生，没有任何事物能离开因缘而独立存在。

演公讲解缘起时，特别强调缘起法并不是宿命论，也不是自然论。人生并不是命运安排好的，也不是

毫无原因发生的。每一种结果，都有它相应的原因与条件。今天的快乐，有过去努力的因缘；今天的痛苦，是由于过去错误行为的积累。因此，**了解缘起，不是消极认命，而是积极承担！**

一个人明白缘起，就不会把成就完全归功于自己。因为任何成就，都离不开父母的养育、师长的教导、朋友的帮助，以及社会大众共同创造的因缘。当他遭遇挫折时，他也不会一味责怪别人，埋怨环境，而是反省自己是否因缘不足，欠缺努力。

演公常常提醒学人：**佛法所说的因缘观，就是一种负责的人生观。**懂得缘起的人，知道今天的自己，是昨天无数选择所形成的结果；未来的人生，也取决于今天的每个起心动念。因此，他不会等待好运降临，而是**努力创造善因**；他不会抱怨命运不公平，而是**积极改善因缘**。

做人也是如此。人与人相遇，是缘；彼此互相信任，是缘；一起共事或学习，更是难得的善缘。既然一切皆依因缘而成，就应该珍惜每一分缘，感恩每一次相遇，善待每个帮助自己的人，也宽容每个与自己意见不同的人。因为今天所结下的每一分善缘，都会成为未来生命成长的重要力量。

缘起法告诉我们：**生命可以改变。**正因为一切都是缘起的，所以没有永恒的成功，也没有永恒的失败；没有永恒的快乐，也没有永恒的痛苦。懂得这个道理，就能以积极、负责的态度面对人生，这正是演公所强调的做人智慧。

二、不落两边

缘起法说明人生的真相，中道指出做人处世的方法。龙树《中论》提出“**八不中道**”：**不生不灭，不常不断，不一不异，不来不去。**这并不是故作高深的哲学分析，而是通过闻、思、修的内观，帮助我们离开一切观念和行为上的偏执，建立正确的人生态度。

中道并不是折衷，也不是两边各取一半，而是超越一切对立与分别。**众生最大的毛病，就是总会走向极端：**在顺境中忘乎所以；在逆境中一蹶不振。被赞叹时洋洋得意；被批评时怨恨不平。得到一点利益，就生起贪恋；蒙受一点损失，就失去信心。这都是因为心落在两边，不能安住中道。

懂得中道的人，不否定成功，也不拒绝财富，而是不被成功所迷惑，不被财富所束缚。他知道，一切是因缘和合而有的，自然也会由于因缘变化而散失，因此**得之不喜，失之不忧，始终保持一颗平常心。**

中道也是一种待人的智慧。人与人相处，最忌讳固执己见，以自己的标准衡量别人。世间没有绝对相同的人，也没有绝对相反的人。人们的成长背景、生活环境、知识经验都不同，因此看法自然有所差异。站在缘起的立场理解别人，就不会轻易批评，也不会急于否定，而能多一分包容与体谅。

因此，**中道不是消极妥协，而是一种充满智慧的平衡能力，**使人不偏激，不固执，不情绪化，无论面对顺逆得失，都能保持理智与清明。这样的人，虽然身处纷扰的社

会，却不会被外境牵着走；虽然面对复杂的人际关系，却始终能坚持原则，不失圆融。

三、二谛圆融

缘起法帮助我们认识人生，中道教导我们正确处世，二谛进一步引导我们圆融人生。

佛陀说法，不离二谛：**世俗谛与第一义谛**。世俗谛，是依世间因缘假立的一切现象；第一义谛，则是透过缘起现象，体悟诸法无自性的真实。二者不是彼此对立，而是相互依存。离开世俗谛，就无法体会第一义谛；离开第一义谛，世俗谛便容易成为执著。

因此，学佛并不离开现实生活，而是在现实生活中体悟真理。一个真正懂得二谛的人，不会因为学佛而逃避社会责任，也不会因为忙于世俗事务而忘失生命的方向，正如莲花生于污泥，却不为污泥所染；菩萨行于世间，却不为世间烦恼所系。

《中论》说：“**若不依俗谛，不得第一义；不得第一义，则不得涅槃。**”演公讲解这首偈颂时指出：佛法必须落实于人生。做人要尽家庭责任，守社会伦理，尽工作本分，这些都是世俗谛。在尽责任的同时，不执著名利，不计较得失，不被外境所转，这便是第一义谛。

如果只重视利益，而忽略道德修养，就容易迷失方向；如果只追求空性的体悟，而忽略责任，就流于空谈。真正的智慧，是把两者统一起来。例如：老师认真教书，是世俗谛；他不以名利为目的，而真心成就学生，就是第一义谛。商人诚信经营，是世俗谛；他不欺骗顾客，不见利忘义，而以利益大众为原则，就是第一义谛。父母尽心照顾家庭，是世俗谛；以慈悲和智慧教育子女，使家庭成为培育人格的园地，就是第一义谛。

演公认为，佛法之所以伟大，就在于它不是脱离人生，而是净化人

生；不是否定社会，而是提升社会。真正懂得二谛圆融，就能在生活中实践理想，在工作中培养慈悲，在人际关系中增长智慧，在奉献中圆满人格。这种做人之道，不偏空，也不执有，而是在缘起之中广修善行，在空性的智慧中利益众生。

二谛圆融，是一种生活智慧。它教导我们脚踏实地做人，同时崇奉生命的真理；认真做好每一件事，又不被事物所束缚。如此，人生便能理事无碍，进退自在。

四、返观自心

人生所有的问题，归根究底，都要回到这一念心。

演公讲解《金刚经》时，特别重视一句话：“**应无所住，而生其心**”。这句话是教导我们不要执著任何境界。心有所住，就会生起分别；有所分别，就会产生烦恼；烦恼不断增长，人生自然不得安宁。

因此，学佛最重要的不是向外追求，而是向内观照。

人在顺境中容易生起骄傲，在逆境中容易生起怨恨。其实，真正影响我们的，不是事情本身，而是面对事情时所生起的那一念心。每一次烦恼生起时，静下来观察：这一念贪心从何而来？这一念嗔心为何而起？这一念执著是否符合缘起法？如此不断返观自照，烦恼便会渐渐减轻，智慧也会增长。

演公认为，**修行并不是追求神秘的境界，而是在日常生活中不断净化自己的内心**。每天少一点自私，多一点关怀；少一点计较，多一点包容；少一点抱怨，多一点感恩。这就是修行，也是做人。

《金刚经》所说的“无住”，并不是消极放弃，而是积极、自在的人生态度。做事认真负责，却不执著结果；帮助别人，却不期待回报。面对成功，不骄傲自满；面对失败，不灰心丧志。这就是般若智慧在人生中的具体表现。

人们忙着认识世界，却忽略了认识自己；忙着改变别人，却忘了改变自己；忙着追逐外在的成就，

却忘了安顿自己的内心。因此，物质享受愈丰富，烦恼反而愈多；生活愈便利，内心反而愈空虚。

演公常勉励学人：**真正的成长，不在于拥有多少知识，而在于不断修正自己的心。真正的成功，不在于赢过多少人，而在于超越昨天的自己**。时时返观自心，以般若智慧调伏烦恼，以慈悲心利益他人，那么生命自然会变得安定、充实、自在。

演公一生弘扬缘起、中道、般若思想，并不是推广艰深的哲学理论，而是让佛法成为指导人生、完善人格的智慧。

缘起法，让我们懂得承担责任，不怨天尤人。中道，让我们远离偏执，保持平衡，不再落入对立。二谛，让我们理事圆融，在人生中实践真理。般若，让我们返观自心，净化烦恼。

这四者并不是各自孤立的，而是层层深入，互为因果。认识缘起，才能理解中道。理解中道，才能圆融二谛。圆融二谛，才能以般若照见自心。般若智慧落实在日常生活之中，就成为慈悲、诚信、包容的人格力量。

学佛，并不是脱离人生，而是提升人生；不是放弃责任，而是圆满责任；不是追求玄妙，而是生活实践。**真正的做人艺术，在于拥有缘起中道的智慧。真正的人生价值，不在于外在的成功，而在于以清净心面对顺逆，以慈悲心善待众生，以般若智慧谛观人世。**

如果一个人以缘起观人生，以中道处世，以二谛圆融，以般若修心，那么，无论环境怎么变化，他都不会失去内心的安定。无论遭遇顺境或逆境，他都能够保持正见、正念、正行。这样的人生，既不执著有，也不落入无；既能积极承担责任，又能超越一切分别与执著。这正是演公毕生弘扬佛法的精神所在，也是对于现代人学习佛法、实践做人艺术的最重要启示。

在家佛教徒的生活指南 《佛说善生经》白话解(9)

宽严法师讲于1978年，新加坡佛教青年弘法团



四善亲

居士子，善亲当知有四种。云何为四？

一者同苦乐，当知是善亲；
二者悯念，当知是善亲；
三者求利，当知是善亲；
四者饶益，当知是善亲。

非亲似亲的伪君子，之前已经一一指出，但世间并非每个都是坏人，也有不少善良的正人君子，现在就说四种善亲。

佛陀对居士子说：当知有四种“善亲”，你应该有所认识。“善亲”，当然是相对于“似亲”而说的。善亲，对我们亲善，却没有一点儿虚情假意。多与他亲近，有百利而无一害，所以应该常与善亲接近，这样对自己的德行以及待人处世将有所增进。

有四种人堪为善亲，“云何为四”是问哪四种人，下面一一解说。

一者同苦乐，当知是善亲

非亲似亲的人，只能共安乐，不能共患难；但善亲是可以同甘共苦的。当你安乐时，善亲与你友好；即使在你困苦而没有办法时，善亲同样会关心你，决不会远离你。他不会因为你境况艰苦，怕你对他有所要求而离你远远的。唯有像这样同甘共苦的善亲，才值得我们接近，因为他是君子而非小人，当知这就是“善亲”。

二者悯念，当知是善亲

悯念，就是怜悯之心，也就是高度的同情心。我们生存在这世间，如俗话所说“不如意事常八九”，无论如何是不会一帆风顺的。当你有危难时，善亲会对你生起高度的同情心，而且在他能力所及的范围内，给你相当的助力，帮你度过难关。善亲不会看你受困而不给予援助。

像这样的有益善亲，有时会对我们直言苦谏，听起来纵然不入耳，但这其实是最值得亲近的善亲。

三者求利，当知是善亲

这里的“求利”，并不是向你要求利益，而是要求有利于人，有益于社会。善亲只想到利益人群，决不为自己谋求利益。这与非亲似亲的人专门为自己牟利，当然有显著的不同。我们决不可以误会那些为了利益大众而求利的人，误以为他贪心。我们应该善于分别，不要将大公无私的善亲与自私自利的人等量齐观。

四者饶益，当知是善亲

“饶益”是指利益他人，这是以善亲本身的力量许可而言。只要他做得到，如果你真正有困难，向他求助，他都乐意尽他的力量所能及，为你解决困难，使你获得饶益；或者以他所知道的善法去利益人群，使人们的身心行为如法如律，不至于做出不正当的罪恶行为，这也可以说为“饶益”。如果以财施、法施，对人有所饶益，当知这就是“善亲”。

下期待续……





Guide for Living as a Lay Buddhist

Sigalovada Sutra (9)

Translation of Venerable Kuan Yan's talk delivered in Mandarin
at Singapore Buddhist Youth Mission in 1978

Four Types of True Friends

Young householder, there are four types of true friends. What are these four?

1. A true friend is a friend in both good and bad times.
2. A true friend is a compassionate mentor.
3. A true friend is an altruistic benefactor.
4. A true friend is a ready helper and giver.

In my earlier talks, it had been pointed out that there are hypocritical people in the guise of friends. However, in this world, not everyone is bad. There are also many righteous and kind people. We shall now talk about four types of true friends.

Buddha told the householder, Sigala, about four types of true friends. True friends, in contrary to false friends, are kind to us, without any pretence or hypocrisy. There are many benefits and no harm at all in associating closely with true friends, so we should interact with them more often. This will help us improve in ethical behaviour and conduct ourselves better in society.

1. A true friend is a friend in both good and bad times.

A person in the guise of a friend shares only your joy, but not your woes or troubles. However, a true friend shares both your joy and woes. He remains friendly, in both good and bad times. When you experience hard times and you are at your wits' end, he still cares for you and absolutely will not forsake you. He will not keep a distance from you for fear that you request help from him. Only such true friends in both good and bad times are worth associating with, as they are not petty people, but are noble at heart.

2. A true friend is a compassionate mentor.

As the saying goes, "Life is not a bed of roses." Things often do not turn out the way we want. Life is never plain sailing. When you are in a difficult state, a true friend will be sympathetic. Within his capabilities, he will offer you considerable support, to help you overcome your crisis. A true friend will not watch with folded arms while you struggle in your plight.

Such true friends truly benefit us. Sometimes, they may offer us frank and earnest advice which, however, may not sound pleasing to us, but they speak with good intentions like mentors. Such friends are most worthy to associate with.

3. A true friend is an altruistic benefactor.

A true friend does not seek benefits from you, but seeks to benefit people and society. His intentions are altruistic, for benefitting others, and he does not seek self-benefit. This is clearly different from people in the guise of friends who seek profits for themselves. We must not misconstrue the altruistic intentions of true friends as greed, when they seek to benefit vast masses of people. We should clearly distinguish altruistic intentions from selfish greed.

4. A true friend is a sincere helper and giver.

If you have difficulties and seek help from a true friend, he is willing to do his best, within his capabilities, to resolve your problems. He may also share with people advice for good conduct and thinking, so as to avoid unwholesome actions. A true friend is ready to offer material gifts such as financial help, as well as immaterial gifts such as advice and teachings, for the benefit of others.

To be continued in the next issue

君子务本，谈戒三毒（67）

古人云：“君子务本，本立而道生。”学佛修行，同样要先找到根本。佛教戒律，表面看是规范身口行为；深入来看，真正要防护的却是这一念心。身口之恶只是枝叶，贪、嗔、痴三毒才是根本。如果不从心上认识三毒，即使外在行为暂时收敛，烦恼仍会不断相续。

龙树《因缘心论颂》中说：“灯镜及印，火精神梅声，诸蕴相续结，不移智应察。”这首偈颂可以帮助我们理解：为什么要戒三毒？“戒三毒”究竟要戒什么？

一、灯灯相续

一盏灯点燃另一盏灯，前一盏灯的火并没有移到后一盏灯里，但后一盏灯又确实由前一盏灯而燃起。火没有实体迁移，却有因果相续。

我们的烦恼也是如此。今天起一个贪念，明天再起一个贪念，看起来只是一个个念头，实际上已经形成习惯。今天发一次脾气，下一次遇到类似境界，嗔心往往更容易生起。前念不是后念，后念也不是凭空而来，这就是“相续而不移”。

因此，不能因为“一切法空”，就以为贪、嗔、痴无所谓。空，不是否定因果；无我，也不是没有业果。恰恰因为烦恼是缘起的，所以可以改变；正因为因果不失，所以起心动念必须谨慎。

一位老人问百丈禅师：“大修行人还落因果否？”过去有人回答“不落因果”，因而堕野狐身五百世。百丈禅师则说：“不昧因果。”老人闻言顿悟。“不落因果”容易落入断见，以为证悟后便可以超越因果；“不昧因果”则是说：虽然一切法无自性，因果丝毫不谬。所以，真正的持戒，不是害怕因果，而是明白因果；不是压制烦恼，而是看清烦恼的缘起。

二、镜中无物

镜子可以显现万象，但影像并没有真正进入镜子。贪、嗔、痴也是如此：它们虽然能影响我们的身心，却找不到一个固定不变的“贪心”或“嗔心”。当嗔心生起时，修行人首先不是责备自己：“我怎么又生气了？”而是清楚地知道：

嗔心生起了。这一念“知道”，非常重要。

如果把嗔心当成“我”，就会认为：“我脾气不好，我就是讨厌那个人。”若能观察嗔心只是因缘和合而生：有境界，有过去的习气，于是嗔心现前；一旦条件改变，嗔心就消失。如此观察，便知道它“有现象而无自性”。

禅宗常以“明镜”说明修心。神秀说：“身是菩提树，心如明镜台。”这是提醒我们时时照顾这一念心。慧能则进一步说：“本来无一物，何处惹尘埃？”一个是修，一个是悟；一个从事上用功，一个从理上见性。落实于持戒，就是：先要时时照见三毒，进一步还要看破三毒本空。

三、种子生芽

种子发芽，如果没有土壤、水分、阳光等条件，果实不会无缘无故出现。三毒也是如此。贪心，是由境界、习气、分别、执著等众缘和合而起。因此，修戒不能只在行为上“禁止”，还要改变使烦恼产生的条件。比如看到别人获得利益而生起嫉妒，如果随顺它，嫉妒就会继续增长。如果当下觉察“这是嫉妒心”，不跟随，不扩张，再进一步观它无常、无我，嫉妒心的力量便会减弱。

戒的真正精神，是截断恶因，改变缘起。

这也是“君子务本”的意思。君子不是在事情发生后补救，而是在根本处下功夫。佛弟子持戒，不是等到恶业形成后才忏悔，而是在贪、嗔、痴生起时，就回光返照。

四、闻梅生津

一听到“梅”，口中自然生津。声音没有变成酸味，梅子也没有进入口中，但因缘一具足，身体和心识便产生了反应。别人一句话，令我们马上生气；看到一样东西，我们就想获取它；听到一句赞美，我们立刻欢喜。这些感受不是假的，但它们不是“我”。

有人来请教佛法，赵州禅师叫他“吃茶去”，似乎没有回答问题，实际上正是把人从分别思量中拉回当下。

持戒也一样。真正的戒，不只

是戒条上的“不可以”，而是在境界现前时，看见自己的心。贪起，知道贪；嗔起，知道嗔；痴起，知道痴。知道而不随，观察而不取，这就是戒心的开始。

五、诸蕴相续

“诸蕴相续结”告诉我们：所谓“我”，并不是一个永恒不变的主体，而是色、受、想、行、识五蕴不断生灭、相续，假合而成。正如车轮不是车，车轴不是车，车厢也不是车。众多条件组合起来，才假名为“车”。同样，色、受、想、行或识都不是我；五蕴因缘和合，假名为“我”。

既然没有一个固定的“我”，三毒又是谁的呢？从世俗谛说，是“我的贪、嗔、痴”，所以必须承担因果；从胜义谛说，观察到底都找不到一个真实不变的“我”和“烦恼”。这就是中道：有烦恼的作用，而无烦恼的自性；有因果的相续，而无实体的迁移；有修行的过程，而无实在的修行者。

六、智慧观照

偈颂最后说“智应察”，说明一切不能只靠概念理解，而必须用智慧观察。执著有一个真实的“我”在轮回，就落入常见；认为“既然无我，什么都没有”，便落入断见。佛法所说的是中道：缘起，所以相续；性空，所以无我。无我，所以不应执著；因缘故，所以不能放逸。

戒三毒，并不是建立一个“我要变成好人”的坚固自我，而是在每一次贪、嗔、痴现前时，观察它如何生起，如何增长，如何消失。观察久了便会发现：烦恼虽来，无所从来；烦恼虽去，无所从去。它只是因缘暂现的一种作用。

“君子务本”，本在一心；戒三毒时，“智应察”，察其缘起性空。当下觉察，贪、嗔、痴便无所依；若能以智慧观察，五蕴相续而无我。这就是最实际的修行：不是向外找一个戒，而是在每一个当下，看护自己的这一念心。心清净，戒自然清净；戒清净，智慧便有了生长的根本。

禅 修 营

Meditation Retreat

4/7/2026 ~ 5/7/2026



修学佛法的人，应该勤下功夫，磨练身心，消灭烦恼，以证得生命的自由解脱。修定需要调身、调息、调心，而最难的就是调心，因为心的妄念很多。静坐时，心好飘动，甚至身也不安。怎样将心调好？佛教经论中说：不沉不浮，是心调伏之相。

~ 演培老和尚

A Buddhist practitioner should put diligent efforts in training his mind-body, so as to get rid of defilements and attain liberation from cyclic existence.

In mental development through meditative concentration, one has to regulate one's body, breathing and mind. The mind is the most difficult to regulate, as it is distracted by many deluded thoughts. During sitting meditation, the mind invariably drifts and the body is restless. How does one tame the mind? It is stated in Buddhist texts that a tamed mind neither sinks nor drifts.

~ Venerable Yen Pei





福慧青年日

5/7/2026

福慧青年团以“感恩24小时”为主题，庆祝青年节。这富有意义的“福慧青年节”，让青年佛子们在节奏紧凑的生活中，停下来反思，并“重新发现”自己生命中所应该感恩的人、事、物。

筹委精心安排的活动，考验青少年团员的脑力和体力。通过一系列互动游戏，包括“极速前进”，以及“密室逃脱”，他们亲身体会到：成功往往并非孤军奋战，而是需要众缘促成，群策群力。

“福慧青年日”庆祝活动，营造了安全的空间，让青少年成员学习欣赏彼此的优点，建立信任，并培养同理心。在“蒙眼迷宫”活动中，他们必须在感官功能受限的情况下解谜，从中学习

彼此信任与有效沟通。这些技能的意义和影响，远超出游戏和活动之外，并将延伸入他们日常生活的人际关系中。

通过”秘密任务”、团队建设活动和反思总结，我们鼓励参加者对于生活中常被忽视的善意，表示感激。青年日活动，让大家对于家人、师长、朋友们，涌生更深的感恩心。

感恩心不只是一种感觉，更是一种修行。我们希望通过这样的修习，培育一群充满慈悲心与感恩心的青少年，在学佛路上携手共进！

罗子翔
福慧青年团主席





Fu Hui Youth Day

5 / 7 / 2026

Fu Hui Youth celebrated Youth Day with a meaningful event of rediscovery, reflection and gratitude, themed "24 Hours to Thank".

It was a day for our youths to pause, reflect, recognise the people and moments that have shaped their lives. It was a rigorous test of both brains and brawn as they tackled a series of interactive challenges, including an Amazing Race and escape room. Participants experienced firsthand that success is rarely achieved alone.

The event provided a safe space for our youths to appreciate diverse strengths, build trust and develop empathy. From navigating mazes with blindfolds to solving puzzles with sensory limitations, participants learned to trust one another and communicate effectively – skills that extend far beyond the games, into

their interpersonal relationships in daily living.

Through secret missions, group bonding activities and reflective debriefs, participants were encouraged to express appreciation for the quiet, everyday acts of kindness that often go unnoticed. At the end of the day, they experienced a renewed sense of appreciation for their family members, teachers, mentors and peers.

Gratitude is not just a feeling it is a practice and through this practice, we hope to continue nurturing a community of compassionate and grateful youths who walk the Buddhist path together!

Benedict Loh Zi Xiang
President, Fu Hui Youth

弹琴的中道智慧



一位比丘日以继夜地修行，却未得成就，因而退失信心。

佛陀问比丘：“你出家前，是否弹过琴？”

比丘回答：“世尊，我不但弹过琴，而且弹得挺好的。”

佛陀问：“如果琴弦调得太紧，能弹出好听的音乐吗？”

比丘回答：“弹出来的声音难听，而且琴弦容易断。”

佛陀又问：“如果琴弦调得太松，弹出来的声音好听吗？”

比丘回答：“声音也不好听，甚至弹不出声音！”

佛陀再问：“如果琴弦调得恰到好处，不松也不太紧，弹出来的声音好听吗？”

比丘回答：“这样才能弹出美妙、好听的音乐。”

佛陀说：“修行也是如此。急于成就，把自己绷得太紧，会失去韧性，像调得太紧的琴弦容易断。相反地，如果修行不精进，过于懈怠，也难以成就，像太松的琴弦弹不出音乐。真正修行，是不紧不松的中道行。”

比丘听了，茅塞顿开，他领悟到修学的关键，不久即证悟。

Parable of the Lute

A monk called Sona meditated diligently day and night, but felt discouraged by his lack of spiritual progress.

Buddha asked him, “Before you became a monk, had you played the lute before?”

Sona replied, “Yes, World-Honoured One, and I was good at playing the lute.”

Buddha then asked, “If the lute-strings are too taut, will the sounds produced be nice?”

Sona said, “No, and the strings might break.”

Buddha asked again, “What happens if the lute-strings are too slack?”

Sona replied, “The lute will sound out of tune and no sound might be produced at all.”

Buddha said, “If the lute-strings are neither too taut nor too loose, will the sounds produced be nice?”

Sona answered, “Melodious music may be produced then.”

Buddha explained, “It is the same with spiritual cultivation. If you apply yourself too intensely, you may reach a breaking point, just like a lute-string that is too taut may snap. On the other hand, if you are too lax, you will just drift off and achieve nothing, just like a loose lute-string cannot produce music. Therefore, tread the Middle Path that avoids two extremes.”

The monk followed Buddha's advice on moderation and soon attained realisation.

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