

導師的話：佛法所以超乎世間法

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法光學壇 Dharma Light Lyceum 第一期(1997 年)

法光佛教文化研究所出版

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在研究的過程當中，有一點我看得很重要：佛法究竟有什麼不同，比世間其他的更好？這可以分二方面來講。

一、釋迦牟尼佛時候，有一種完善的制度——戒律。傳到中國，後來有叢林制度，到現在也許有新的制度。不要以為制度都是一樣，佛的制度，實際上研究的人很少，……戒律中真正重要的事情，好像不知道一樣。戒律的真正意義，我們出家人要有人發心去研究。

據我的了解，佛教的戒律是一種集體的生活，修行也就在集體生活中去鍛鍊。依戒律的觀點，佛法並不重於個人去住茅蓬修行——這樣共世間的，雖然一般都很尊敬這種人。佛教戒律有什麼特色？它是道德的感化和法律的制裁，兩者統一起來。犯了錯誤，戒律中有種種處罰的規定，但不止於此，而是在充滿道德感化之下，有一種法律制裁的限制。所以在佛的時代，真正出家的一個個都了不得，就是動機不純正的人，在這面多住幾年，經過師友的陶冶，環境的熏習，慢慢也會成為龍象的。在這個集體生活，大家都有共同的信念，淨善的行爲，彼此和睦，這就是佛教戒律的特質，而發生偉大的作用——正法住世。

這種組織，與社會上的組織不太相同，它是道德感化與

法律制裁相綜合的。在這面，是很平等的，是法治的，每一律制，不是對某些人而訂的。如在學院的話，如果是學生不許可，老師也絕對不許可。佛的制度很平等，即使釋迦牟尼佛在世，佛也一樣的依法而行。佛的律制，是真正的平等、民主。在這道德感化、法律制裁之下，人人都修持佛法、研究法義，各盡其力去發揮。

當然，嚴格的說，現在中國並沒有這個東西——依律而住的僧團。假使我們去研究，把這面真正精神原則，用現在的方式去實踐

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的話，我想比照著自己的想法，搞一套組織，或是參照政治或其他組織，照人家的辦法也來一套，我想會更合於佛法。這是佛法偉大的特質，在我認識釋迦牟尼佛不像世俗一般那樣，我在研究中加深了我的信心。

另一方面，佛開示我們，用法來指導。在當時，沒有現在那樣，研究法華經、華嚴經，一大部一大部的，不過在義理上，或在修行方法上，作簡單的指導。佛所說明的著重在什麼地方呢？那些與世間不同呢？依我的了解，佛法確有不共之法，與世間法不同，……我們必須確認佛法的不共之法！世界上的宗教很多，中國的、印度的、西方的，佛教至少有一種與他們不同的地方。又如哲學，從東方到西方，哲學家不曉得有多少？但佛法至少要有與他們不同的地方。如自以為佛法偉大，而佛法所講的與他們所說的一樣，那就糟了，因為既然一樣，有了他們的，更何必再要佛法。

就世間法所沒有的——不共世間的來說，當然就是「緣起性空」。……「諸行無常，諸法無我」，都是依此而顯示出來。緣起是說世間的一切，無論是天文、地理、自然界、動物界，乃至我們個人生理上、心理上的現象，都是依緣而存在的。佛說「緣起」，是最通遍的法則。從這才會了解佛的制度與其他的所以不同。理論與制度有關，佛法稱為「依法攝僧」。把握緣起的原則，在思想上、制度上，及實際的修持上，都會有與世間不同處。世間上有許多進步的思想，有些近於緣起，但他們不能夠徹底的完全的把握。

我們為什麼信佛？是因為佛是大徹大悟了的。佛的大徹大悟是怎樣呢？你不曉得，我也不曉得。既然不曉得，那怎

麼生信呢？佛在菩提樹下大徹大悟以後，爲了使人也能徹悟，所以說法。佛所說的法義，及指導出家人應做的生活軌範——律制，與世間不同；這表示了他證悟的內容與別人不同，這是可以了解的。放在心我們不知道，說出來，做出來，總可以看到一點。研究佛教制度的根本原則，從理論事實的統一中，我發覺佛法義理超越世間特殊的地方。佛老人家的

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證智，我們都不知道，但從他表現出與世間不同的，特別偉大，我是從這些上，深深信得佛是真正的證悟。

我有很多看法與人不太相同，譬如說，某人在修行，某人開悟了！修行、開悟當然是好事情。不過，不只是佛法講「修行」，世界上的宗教都要修行的。道家有修持的方法，中國儒家也有一點，印度婆羅門教，六派哲學都有修行的方法，西洋的神教也有啦！他們的禱告也是修行的一類。如真的修行，自然會身心有些特殊的經驗，這是信仰宗教的人所應相信的，不管你自己有沒有得到，這是絕對可信的。在內心中或身體上，得到些特殊經驗，宗教就是要靠這種特殊經驗來支持的。

所以單講修行，並不一定就是佛法，世界上各種宗教都有修行呢！你說你看到什麼東西，經驗到什麼？這並不能保證你經驗的就是佛法。那麼用什麼方法來區別呢？這有兩個方法：一、與佛法的根本義理是否相合。二、行爲表現是什麼樣子。且舉一件事來說，我們中國人有時候真自覺得驕傲，美國西皮有很多人要學禪，寒山很吃香，簡直崇拜得不得了。然在我的想法，若以此爲典型，作爲我們學佛的模範，大家這樣學，這成什麼樣子！因爲佛教也好，其他宗教也好，都要教你正常，修行的人也要正常，中國佛教過去許多大師，能夠組織佛教，能夠發揚，都是平淡正常的。又如釋迦牟尼佛教化，有所謂「神通輪、教誡輪、記心輪」，身業、語業、意業都可以教化，可是佛法的重點是教誡輪。用語言來引導你，啓發你，使你向上。現在有些人，稍微修行，就說前生後世，談神通，這不是純正的佛法。從佛的證悟以後，佛所表現出來，對弟子之間的活動的歷史事實，不是那些怪模怪樣的——寒山式、濟公式、瘋子喇嘛式的。佛老人家，生在我們人間，主要用教誡來引導，不是侈談神通，因爲

外道也有神通。用神通來建立佛教，佛教就和外道一樣了。我對佛法的研究，著重在這兩方面，這兩方面的了解，能使我信心增強，推動支持我很衰弱的身體，在佛法之中，多少奉獻自己的一分心力。

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Words of the Master

How does buddhadharma excell worldly dharma?

Master Yin-Shun

While doing research I have been emphasizing one point very much: What is it that makes Buddhism different, better than anything else in the world? This can be discussed from two angles · First, in Buddha's time there was a perfect system, i · e · the vinaya · After it was transmitted to China, the system of the great monasteries developed, and now maybe a new system will come into being · We should not think these systems are all the same · As a matter of fact, there are only very few people who study the Buddha's system, and it is almost as if nobody knew what is really important about the vinaya · There should be some among us, ordained sangha, devoting themselves to the study of the real meaning of the vinaya ·

As far as I understand, Buddhist vinaya is a form of communal life, and spiritual practice is training in communal life · From the vinaya point of view, buddhadharma does not emphasize that an individual is practising in a hermitage -- though such a person would be highly respected, it's still common with the world · So what are the peculiar characteristics of the Buddhist vinaya? It is improvement by ethics and control by law, both of them applied together · If you make a mistake then there a great number of

penalties set forth in the vinaya, It doesn't stop here, though, but means curbing by the implementation of law imbued with improvement by ethics . Thus, in the Buddha's time, everybody who truly left the home was really incredible . Even those who had some warped motivation would gradually under the forming influence of their brothers and the environment turn into sages if they stayed there for a few years . Everybody led this communal life with a common belief

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and pure, good behaviour in great harmony . This is the special quality of the Buddhist vinaya which had a great function -- to ensure that the true teaching remained in the world .

Such an organisation differs from other organisations in the society since it combines improvement by ethics and restraint by law . Equality reigns therein as does the law . None of the rules was set up against a certain group of people, like in our institute -- what the students do not agree to, the teachers would never agree to either . The Buddha's system is an equal one . Even the Buddha himself would follow the rules . These regulations set by the Buddha are truly equal and democratic . Under such a system of improvement by ethics and restraint by law, everybody is devoted to dharma practice and the study of the teaching developing as much as possible .

Of course, in a strict sense, you won't find such a community living in accordance with the vinaya in China today . I feel it would be much more in conformity with dharma if we were to study this system and put its real spiritual principle in a modern way into practice than if we were making up by

ourselves or copy government or other organisations and then come up with something .

This is one great quality of the buddhadharma . My trust in research increased greatly when I realized that Śākyamuni Buddha was not just somebody worldly . From another angle, Buddha taught us to use dharma to direct . In his time it wasn't like today . People wouldn't study huge texts like the Lotus Sutra or the Avatamsaka Sutra but in terms of doctrinal understanding or practical methods just give meagre guidance . What did the Buddha emphasize? What was different from worldly dharma? As far as I can see buddhadharma definitely has its special features which differs from the ways of the world . We have to grasp these uncommon aspects firmly ! There are many religions in the world, Chinese, Indian, Western ones . There is at least one point

in which Buddhism differs from all of them . Also in terms of philosophy, one really has no way of knowing how many philosophers there have been in the East and West but there must be at least one point in which buddhadharma differs from all of them . If we just feel buddhadharma is great but teaches only the same as they, then it would be a mess because since if it were the same there would be no need for buddhadharma !

As far as the uncommon part is concerned, that which can't be found in worldly dharma, it is of course the teaching of " dependent origination / emptiness . " Concepts " like all conditioned phenomena are impermanent, all dharmas are without self" have been taught on its basis . Dependent origination tells us that everything in the world no

matter whether it relates to astronomical phenomena or to those belonging to geology, the whole nature, the animal world, even our own physiology and psychology, all these phenomena exist on the basis of conditions. The dependent origination taught by the Buddha is the most valid law. Only this point allows us to understand what the difference between the Buddha's system and other systems is. There exists a connection between theory and institution which is in Buddhist parlance called "to keep the community together in accordance with dharma". If we can grasp this principle of dependent origination, no matter whether in terms of philosophy or institution or practice, it will be different from the world. There are many progressive ideas in the world some quite close to dependent origination, but they lack a penetrating and complete grasp of the whole matter.

Why do we believe Buddha? Because he had a most penetrating and profound awakening. How was this penetrating and profound awakening? You don't know, and I don't know either. Then, how can we believe him if we don't know this? After his penetrating and profound awakening under the bodhi tree, the Buddha began to teach dharma so that other people could attain the same awakening. The meaning of his teaching and of the rules he set

in order to guide the sangha, the vinaya, are different from worldly ones. This proves that the contents of his awakening differed from those of other people. That much we can understand. If he had kept it in his mind we had no way of knowing this, but through speech and action we're able to understand at least somewhat. When I studied the basic

principle of the Buddhist system I discovered from the congruence between theory and facts the point where Buddhist teaching excels worldly ones. The wisdom Buddha realized is beyond us but looking at his activities which were so different from worldly ones, so great, I deeply believe that he had a genuine awakening.

Many of my ideas differ from those of other people. For example, "this or that person is practising," "this or that person had an awakening!" For sure, to practice and to awaken is something positive but not only Buddhism is talking about practising, all religions in the world do. The Taoists have their way to practice, even the Chinese Confucians have something along these lines, the Brahmins and the six philosophical schools in India had their methods, so do the theists of Western religions. Their prayers are also a way to practice. If we really practice, there will be naturally some special bodily or mental sensations. This any believer in any religion can be sure of no matter whether he himself had them or not. You can trust that there are special experiences on the mental or physical level. Religions are maintained by them.

Thus if you only talk about "practicing" then there is nothing specially Buddhist about this, it's shared by all religions in the world. If somebody says he's seen something or experienced something that doesn't guarantee that his experience was buddhadharma. So how can we draw a distinction? There are two ways: check whether it is in agreement with the basic teachings of Buddhism, and how the person behaves. Let's use an example. We Chinese sometimes feel really proud because there are so many American hippies learning meditation. Han-shan is immensely popular and revered. In my view,

however, if you take him as a role model for our practice of the dharma, if every body behaved like he did, what would this be like?! Buddhism, as all other religions, hopes that you're a normal human being, that every practitioner is a normal person . The great Chinese Buddhist master of old were able to organize Buddhism and spread dharma because they were simple and normal . Moreover, in Buddha 'Saakyamuni's teaching you find the wheels of spiritual power, teaching and mental marking which means it is possible to teach through body, speech and mind . The emphasis, however, is on the wheel of teaching -- guiding and inspiring through speech so that one can improve . But now there are some people around who engage in a few practices and then begin to talk about other people's past and future lives or about supernatural powers . This is not pure dharma . What Buddha manifested after his awakening, the historical facts of his activities with his disciples, these were not at all strange and weird in the style of Han-shan, Chi-kung or the crazy lama . Lord Buddha was born among us human beings and used primarily teaching to guide us . He did not indulge in talk about supernatural powers because also the non-Buddhist have these . If you want to rely on supernatural powers to establish Buddhism then there is no difference with other religions .

My study of buddhadharma has been emphasizing these two points . Understanding them has increased my faith and supported my weak body to that I could fulfill my wish and make some trifling contribution to the teaching .