

A Life of Sincerity and Respect

The Life of Venerable Master Chin Kung:

Propagating the Buddha's Teachings through Education

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PREFACE

PROFILE OF VENERABLE MASTER CHIN KUNG

Yae-Hong Hsu, better known by his Buddhist name Chin Kung Shi, was born in February of 1927 in Lujiang County, Anhui Province of China. He attended the National Third Guizhou Junior High School and Nanjing First Municipal High School. In 1949, he went to Taiwan and worked in the Shijian Institution. For thirteen years thereafter, Venerable Master Chin Kung spent his spare time studying sutras, history and philosophy under the guidance of the eminent Professor Dong-Mei Fang, a Tibetan Living Buddha Master Zhang Jia, and well known Buddhist Dharma Master Bing-Nan Lee, a successor of the great Master Yin-Guang. He is well versed in numerous sutras and discussions of various Buddhist schools, also in the teachings of Confucianism, Taoism, Catholicism, Islam and other religions. He has spent most of his time and effort in studying, practicing and teaching Pure Land Buddhism in which he attained his greatest achievements.

In 1959, Master Chin Kung became a monk at Linji Temple of Yuanshan, Taipei, and was given the Buddhist name Chin Kung. After receiving full ordination, he began lecturing and propagating the Buddha's teachings in Taiwan and abroad. For more than forty years, he has continuously given lectures on the *Five Sutras of the Pure Land School*, the *Flower Adornment Sutra*, *Lotus Sutra*, *Surangama Sutra*, *Complete Enlightenment Sutra*, *Diamond Sutra*, *Earth Treasure Sutra*, *Brahma Net Sutra*, *Awakening of Faith Sastra* and many more. Fortunately, these teachings have been recorded on thousands of audio and videotapes. To this day, he is still happily and tirelessly lecturing daily.

During his extensive teaching career, Master Chin Kung has held positions

as: an instructor at the Tripitaka Institute at Shipu Temple in 1960, a committee member of the Propagating Teachings Committee in 1961, a member of the Planning Committee of the Buddhist Association of Taiwan in 1965, head instructor at the Buddhist Seminar for University Students at the Buddhist Association of Taiwan in 1972, a Buddhist research fellow at the Chinese Academia Institute, professor and editor on the Association of Buddhist Sutras, Commentaries and Translations of Taiwan in 1973, a professor in the Philosophy Department at the Chinese Culture University, professor of the Spiritual Living Course for East Asian Catholics at Fu Ren Catholic University in 1975, the president of the Chinese Buddhist College in 1977 and the president of the Chinese Pure Land Practice Research Institute in 1979. All of the above institutions are in Taiwan.

He also founded the Hwa Dzan Dharma Giving Association, the Hwa Dzan Buddhist Audio-Visual Library, the Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation, the Hwa Dzan Pure Land Learning Center and also various Buddhist and Pure Land Learning Centers throughout the world.

Master Chin Kung helped pioneer the use of radio and TV broadcasting, satellites, the Internet and other forms of modern media in propagating the Buddha's teachings in Taiwan. He has also sponsored the printing and free worldwide distribution of the *Great Buddhist Cannon*, the *Four Books*, the *Five Classics of Confucius*, as well as books and tapes on Buddhism, morality and ethics, and Chinese culture, in addition to over a million prints of various Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

In 1977, Master Chin Kung began to accept invitations to lecture abroad. He emphasized the principles of Mahayana Buddhism as the way to eliminate superstition, enable people to clearly differentiate right from wrong, proper from deviated and to perfectly solve all problems. In the effort to make this

possible, he has helped to establish over fifty Pure Land Learning Centers and Amitabha Buddhist Societies around the world, including those in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, North America, Australia, Spain and England. Over several decades, he has advised numerous Buddhist and social organizations.

Master Chin Kung has extensively promoted the idea to people of Chinese descent worldwide that they establish ancestral memorial halls to educate people to be sincere and honorable. Also to encourage the practice of filial piety and the remembrance of the great kindness of past generations, to advocate ethics and morality, to improve traditional values, to help the nation to grow and prosper, and to create a peaceful world. Each of us needs to preserve, honor and pass on to future generations our individual traditions of excellence.

In 1985, Master Chin Kung immigrated to the United States. During the time he lived there, his remarkable achievements in race relations and his work towards promoting morality and peace won him awards in 1995 from both the city of Dallas and the state of Texas as an Honorary Citizen.

In recent years, he has lectured at numerous universities including the National University of Singapore and Nanyang Technological University in Singapore; the University of Minnesota, the University of Texas, and the University of Hawaii in the U.S.; Melbourne University, Bond University, Curtin Technology University, and Monash University in Australia; Fu Ren Catholic University, the Chinese Culture University, Cheng Gong University, and Chong Shan University in Taiwan, and other institutions of higher learning. He has also given talks to radio and TV audiences in several countries.

Since May of 1995, Master Chin Kung has been instructing training classes for lecturers, which are sponsored by the Singapore Buddhist Lodge and the Amitabha Buddhist Society of Singapore, as well as being their Director of

Education. He is currently residing in Singapore to deliver a lecture series on the *Flower Adornment Sutra*, *Infinite Life Sutra* and *Earth Treasure Sutra*. He is now establishing the Buddhist Educational College, the first college of its kind in Singapore, to nurture and train successors to continue the Buddhism.

CHAPTER ONE

THE ORIGINS OF THE AMITABHA BUDDHIST SOCIETY

Empathizing with the suffering of all sentient beings, Buddha Shakyamuni came to our world to teach people how to transcend both that suffering and the cycle of birth and death. His goal was to enable all beings to understand his teachings, to become enlightened. In our Dharma Ending Age, our negative karma is very strong, creating many obstacles to our way of practice. Lacking wisdom and good fortune, it is extremely difficult for us to find a good teacher who can guide us and properly explain the Buddha's teachings. Knowing all this, the Buddha taught a special method for the beings of our time, this Pure Land method.

As the famous late Buddhist scholar Mr. Guang-Xi Mei once said, "If we can accept and uphold the Pure Land teachings, not only will we eradicate future sufferings, but we could attain peace of mind now. People who do not sincerely cultivate pure conduct will never be able to understand or experience the happiness of the practice of this wondrous method. Likewise, those who do not practice the teachings will never realize their profundity. If we wish to spread the Buddha's teachings in this age, it is definitely necessary to advocate the Pure Land teachings."

Amitabha Buddhist Societies were proposed for the first time after World War II, when the respected Mr. Lian-Ju Xia, an eminent Buddhist teacher, began promoting the exclusive study and cultivation of the Pure Land School. Master Chin Kung, with over forty years of experience in propagating Buddhism, also deeply understands that the Pure Land teachings are the foremost method for helping sentient beings. In recent years, he has tirelessly

lectured around the world, primarily in Asia, Australia and North America.

He has funded the free worldwide distribution of books and tapes on Buddhism, ethics and morality, and Chinese Classics. It is his heartfelt wish to help in the establishment of independent Amitabha Buddhist Societies all over the world. He respectfully hopes these organizations will extensively promote proper education, explain the Law of Cause and Effect, generate the Bodhi mind and encourage all people to chant Buddha Amitabha's name and vow to be born into the Pure Land.

The guideline for fellow practitioners of these societies is to cultivate according to the five Pure Land sutras and one sastra, the *Infinite Life Sutra*, the *Amitabha Sutra*, the *Visualization Sutra*, the "Chapter of Universal Worthy Bodhisattva's Conduct and Vows", the "Chapter on the Perfect and Complete Realization of Great Strength Bodhisattva", and *Vasubandhu Bodhisattva's Report*. We emphasize the importance of our practice complementing our understanding, and that we carry out our vows in accordance with the Five Guidelines of the Three Conditions, Six Principles of Harmony, Three Learnings, Six Paramitas, and the Ten Great Vows.

The first of the Three Conditions includes being filial and respectful toward our parents, teachers and elders, being compassionate and not killing any living beings, and following the Ten Good Conducts. The second of the Three Conditions includes taking the Three Refuges, observing precepts, laws and customs, and conducting ourselves in a proper and dignified manner. The third includes generating the awakening mind, deeply believing in the Law of Cause and Effect, reciting and upholding Mahayana Sutras and encouraging others to advance on the path to enlightenment.

Second, the Six Harmonies includes sharing the same viewpoints and goals, observing the same rules, living and practicing together harmoniously, not

quarrelling, experiencing the inner peace and happiness from practicing together and sharing benefits harmoniously.

Third, the Three Learnings are self-discipline, deep concentration and wisdom. Fourth, the Six Paramitas are giving, self-discipline, patience, diligence, deep concentration, and wisdom.

Fifth and last, the Ten Great Vows are as follows: First is to respect all people and treat everything with care. Second is to praise all the virtues and kind practices of others. Third is to practice giving respectfully. Fourth is to feel deep remorse for our faults, which obstruct us from seeing our true nature and to vow not to commit them again. Fifth is to rejoice in the virtuous deeds of others and not harbor jealousy. Sixth is to request for those with true practice to widely propagate the teachings. Seventh is to ask teachers to remain by our side in guidance. Eighth is to forever hold the Buddha's teachings in our hearts. Ninth is to accord with conditions and people around us. Tenth is to dedicate the peace and happiness gained from practicing the above deeds to all living beings, hoping that they will attain the unsurpassed understanding.

We would do well to chant Buddha Amitabha's name single-mindedly without doubt, without intermingling with other methods or thoughts, and without interruption, to seek birth into the Western Pure Land and to return to our world and help others.

It is our sincere hope that people will recognize that the cause of our problems originates from our polluted minds. We would do well to turn back from delusion, from our false beliefs and our improper viewpoints. If we truly wish our future to be filled with loving-kindness and compassion, we will follow the guidance of the *Infinite Life Sutra*, "Wherever the Buddha's teachings have flourished, either in cities or countrysides, people would gain inconceivable benefits. The land and people would be enveloped in peace. The

sun and moon will shine clear and bright. Wind and rain would appear accordingly, and there will be no disasters. Nations would be prosperous and there would be no use for soldiers or weapons. People would abide by morality and accord with laws. They would be courteous and humble, and everyone would be content without injustices. There would be no thefts or violence. The strong would not dominate the weak and everyone would get their fair share." If we would read and follow the teachings of this sutra, then we will give rise to wisdom, reduce our negative karmas, live a long, healthy and happy life. Furthermore, if this sutra could be widely distributed and accepted, then people would become kinder and gentler. This sutra is the key to solving all of our problems and to establishing world peace.

We establish the Amitabha Buddhist Societies for practitioners to follow the Five Guidelines and accord with the teachings of Master Chin Kung to practice the Pure Land method and to study the *Infinite Life Sutra*. With these, we will be able to repay the kindness shown to us by the Buddhas, our country, our parents and teachers and all sentient beings. We will also be able to help all those who remain in suffering. We have before us a rare and precious opportunity, one not encountered in infinite aeons. Fellow cultivators, we need to harbor the mind of true sincerity, purity, equality, understanding and compassion to see through, let go, attain freedom, accord with conditions and be mindful of Buddha Amitabha, to follow his teachings and vow to be born into the Western Pure Land.

Respectfully,

Yin Han, Former President

Hwa Dzan Buddhist Library

January 1, 1993

CHAPTER TWO

CURRENTLY ESTABLISHED AMITABHA BUDDHIST SOCIETIES

The United States:

1. Dallas Buddhist Association, Inc.
2. Amida Society (LA)
3. Amitabha Buddhist Society of Philadelphia
4. Amitabha Buddhist Society of USA
5. New York Amitabha Society Inc.
6. Amitabha Buddhist Society (Michigan)
7. Mietoville Academy Inc.
8. Amitabha Buddhist Society of Houston
9. Amitoefo World Peace Chanting Association
10. Amitabha Buddhist Society of Austin
11. The Pure Land Learning Center
12. Amitabha Buddhist Society of Madison
13. Amitabha Buddhist Society of Washington, DC

Canada:

14. Amida Buddhist Society (Vancouver)
15. Amitabha Buddhist Society of Canada
16. Amitabha Buddhist Society of Toronto

Australia:

17. The Amitabha Buddhist Association of Queensland (Australia)
18. Amitabha Buddhist Association of Western Australia (Perth)

England:

19. Buddhist Education Foundation (UK)

20.Amitabha Buddhist Society (UK)

Spain

21.Amitabha Buddhist Society (Spain)

Singapore

22.Amitabha Buddhist Society (Singapore)

23.The Singapore Buddhist Lodge

Malaysia

24.Persatuan Penganut Agama Buddhist Amitabha (Malaysia)

25.Persatuan Penganut Agama Buddha Amitabha Melaka

26.Amitabha Buddhist Society (Sabah),

27.Amitabha Buddhist Society (Tampoi)

28.Amitabha Buddhist Society (Kuching)

29.Amitabha Buddhist Society (JB)

30.Amitabha Buddhist Society (Johor)

31.Amitabha Buddhist Society (Karak)

32.Amitabha Buddhist Society (Pontian)

33.Amitabha Buddhist Society (Sungei Petani)

34.Persatuan Penganut Agama Buddha Jelapang Ipoh

35.Amitabha Buddhist Society (Segamat)

Taiwan

36.Hwa Dzan Pure Land Learning Center

37.Hwa Dzan Audio-visual Library

38.Amitabha Buddhist Society (Gansan)

39.Hua-Lian Amitabha Buddhist Society

40.Guann Tzyh Tzay Amitabha Buddhist Society

41. The Pure Land Learning Center of Chia-I
42. Amitabha Buddhist Society (Sanchung)
43. Amitabha Buddhist Society (Taoyuan)
44. Changhwa Pure Land learning Center
45. The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation
46. Miaoyin Amitabha Buddhist Society
47. Kaohsiung Pure Land Learning Center
48. Amitabha Buddhist Society (Taizhong)
49. Amitabha Buddhist Society (Xizhi)
50. Tainan Pure Land Learning Center

Hong Kong

51. Amitabha Buddhist Society of Infinite Light (Hong Kong)
52. Hong Kong Buddhist Educational Foundation Ltd.

CHAPTER THREE
THE AMITABHA BUDDHIST SOCIETIES'
POLITICAL GUIDELINES

The Amitabha Buddhist Societies around the world function independently of each other. They adhere to the cardinal principle of "Focusing solely on propagating the Buddha's teachings through education without engaging in any other activities". Although functioning independently, they follow the same guidelines regarding non-involvement in political activities:

1. There is to be no participation or discussion of government or political affairs, no joining any form of political parties and no activities of a political nature.
2. There is to be no forming of an association or conducting a meeting illegally. No mass rallies or demonstrations are to be held.
3. There is to be no sanctioning of any kind of activity, which could disrupt or break up a country.
4. Support the task of unifying a country as well as any actions that create a harmonious relationship among races, religions, cultures and counties.
5. Attend meetings such as 'The World Conference on Religion and Peace' and other similar conferences. Introducing Master Chin Kung's viewpoints on 'Buddhism as an Education' to religious and academic leaders. No statements opposing any organization are to be issued.
6. Advocate peaceful means to solve the problems among different races, religions and countries through communication, negotiations etc. or any peaceful and non-partisan way.
7. Encourage all people to cooperate in the pursuit of "International

multicultural education".

8. Advocate and demonstrate ways of living that respect and protect living beings, the environment and natural resources and that maintain the ecological balance.
9. Advocate that groups preserve, honor and pass on to future generations cultural traditions. Furthermore races, religions, countries and individuals seek the common ground and lay aside their differences to learn from and help each other.
10. Strengthen and foster rapport and friendship among different groups.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE INDEPENDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

There are more than fifty Amitabha Buddhist Societies around the world, all run independently. Master Chin Kung does not support establishing one general leadership committee to issue orders to others, or to control others' personnel administration or financial policies. In contrast, he sincerely hopes that all the Amitabha Buddhist Societies will help and cooperate with each other and to always be Dharma brothers. He also deeply wishes that all fellow practitioners emphasize practice not theory and serve as a good role model for all. To do this is to propagate the Buddha's teachings and introduce the Pure Land method to people around the world. The following are the management guidelines for all of the Amitabha Buddhist Societies:

1. All societies will organize activities according to local and state laws and policies.
2. All societies will sincerely follow Buddha's guidelines and teachings.
3. All societies are independent, having no affiliation with any international organizations.
4. All the boards and directors of the Amitabha Buddhist Societies are democratically elected by their own members. Additionally, local citizens are to hold these positions. All procedures are to follow local customs
5. Generally, Master Chin Kung is invited to be a permanent advisor to the Amitabha Buddhist Societies.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE VIEWPOINTS OF VENERABLE MASTER CHIN KUNG

“Sincerity, Purity, Equality, Proper Awakening, Compassion, See Through, Let go, Attain Freedom, Accord with Conditions, and be Mindful of Buddha Amitabha”. These ten qualities are the fundamental guidelines of Venerable Master Chin Kung’s teachings. He has not only tirelessly guided people to accord with the above qualities, but has exemplified them throughout his life. Since his first talk in Taiwan, he has lectured continuously for forty years. With great patience, he has explained to all people that "First; Buddhism is a most virtuous and perfect education directed by the Buddha towards all sentient beings in the universe. Second, Buddha Shakyamuni is a responsible voluntary social educator. Third, Buddhism is neither a religion nor a philosophy, but essential for our modern world.”

He has advocated the ideas that Buddhism is an education, of being filial to our parents, being respectful to our teachers and traditional values. In propagating the Buddha’s teachings, he has traveled all over the world, primarily in China, South East Asia, Australia and North America. He is highly respect by people around the world and has earned admiration from different associations, groups and schools. The principles and philosophy of Master Chin Kung with their rich and profound content are elucidated as follows.

Propagating the Buddha’s Teachings through Education

Establishment of the Corporate Body of the

Buddha Educational Foundation.

Under the guidance of Master Chin Kung, the Hwa Dzan Dharma Giving Association was established in 1962. Its purpose is to freely distribute sutras as well as books on morality and ethics. In January of 1985, the Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation was officially founded in Taipei. Its purpose is to promote morality and ethics and to help people give rise to compassion sentient beings. It does this through the free distribution of books, audio and videotapes, as well as sponsoring lecture series on Buddhism and funding scholarships.

The foundation has printed the *Great Buddhist Canon*, the works of Buddhist Patriarchs, the *Four Books* and the *Five Classics* of Confucius, books promoting morality and ethics, traditional Chinese values. These have been distributed throughout Asia, Australia, the Americas, Europe and Africa. In 1998 alone, there were more than two hundred groups throughout the world that had received books and tapes from the Foundation. More than twenty-eight thousand boxes containing over one million seven hundred thousand books were distributed in 1998 alone.

Buddhism as an Education

Under the guidance of Master Chin Kung, any newly established Amitabha Buddhist Society should set as its priority the free distribution of sutras, audio and video tapes and materials that will help people to understand that Buddhism is an education, a way of living. Master has always said that Buddhism is mistaken for a religion, and a polytheistic religion at that. Nowadays, our first

priority as Buddhists is to clarify and understand the relationship between the Buddha and us. We call Buddha Shakyamuni our original teacher because the Buddha and we share a teacher-student relationship. This is different from religions where the relationship is that of parent-child or master-servant.

Buddhism is a teaching with a high level of artistry. Every Buddha and Bodhisattva image, every ceremony and offering are perfect expressions of various teachings. They represent infinite and profound qualities. When we enter a typical Way Place, we will see the image of Maitreya Bodhisattva situated in the center of the hall of Heavenly Guardians. With a big smile and huge belly, he conveys the idea that in order to learn and practice Buddhism, we first learn to be cheerful and broadminded, to be tolerant, considerate and impartial to all others.

Four Heavenly Guardians, four Great Bodhisattvas and eighteen Arhats, as well as of water, incense, lamps, flowers and fruit each provide additional teachings. To worship Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, to burn incense and prostrate to them hoping for wealth or a promotion is superstition and an insult to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Everything exists according to the Law of Cause and Effect. If we do not understand cause and effect, do not follow the teachings and principles of the Buddha, but blindly worship, then we totally violate the goal of the Buddha's teachings.

For forty years, Master Chin Kung has continuously propagated and explained why Buddhism is an education. Mr. Lian-Ju Xia named the societies Pure Land Learning Centers, another name for the Amitabha Buddhist Societies. But the idea, originated after World War II, was not implemented until Master advocated the idea of Buddhism as an education, bringing Mr. Xia's idea to life.

Scholarships for Master Chin Kung's Native Country, China

Master Chin Kung has done much for general education. In 1993, he first set up and funded the Hwa Dzan Scholarship at Beijing University, Fudan University, Liaoling University, Nanjing Normal University and Nanjing First High School (Master Chin Kung's early alma mater). In 1998, Master also set up and funded the Filial Piety-Honesty Scholarships in thirty schools. In five years, he had set up scholarships in eighty-eight schools throughout China, including thirty normal universities, twenty-nine universities, two regional and medical universities, twenty-four junior high schools and three primary schools. Each year he has donated over two hundred thousand dollars US to fund the scholarships.

From this allocation, we can see that the Normal Universities, which train teachers, have been the primary beneficiaries of the Hwa Dzan and Filial Piety-Honesty Scholarships. The Master totally agrees with the statement from the *Book of Rites*, "Education is most essential in building a nation and governing its people". He believes that education is crucial for a country to prosper. The development of education plays a leading role in advancing civilization, stabilizing society and improving the quality of living. The high level of quality and virtue of teachers plays an important role in the success of the above.

Unfortunately, today in modern society, we are losing our traditional values. We need once again to emphasize the importance of education, in teaching traditional values so that our children will be proud of their culture, their heritage and their country. Through education, people will gradually broaden their minds, develop their tolerance of others, carry on and adapt for the modern world, the best qualities of both their heritage and those of other countries. In

this way, the future of our people and country will be bright and full of expectation. Teachers are the bridge from the past to the present and from the west to the east. To accomplish this, we need support from government and industrial leaders as well as from society.

Nurturing Buddhist Successors through Lectures

The Importance of Buddhist Successors

The president of the Buddhist Association of China, Mr. Pu-Chu Zhao made a simple but eloquent appeal at the 1991 Shanghai Conference of Chinese Buddhist Education. “It is of paramount importance for the future of Chinese Buddhism that first, we train Buddhist successors. Second, we train Buddhist successors. Third, we train Buddhist successors.” His sincere, enthusiastic and honest speech deeply moved the audience.

After his talk, thoughts and plans to bring his ideas to fruition preoccupied Buddhists throughout China. The ensuing enthusiasm to carry out his appeal resulted in the establishment of many new Buddhist colleges, which shot up like proverbial bamboo shoots after the rain. The colleges trained Buddhist successors in the management of way places and as teachers and lectures, who were then sent to way places throughout China. These new gifted successors guarantee a bright future for Chinese Buddhism and are credited to Mr. Zhao’s appeal.

It has long been Master’s deep-felt hope that someday he will be able to return to China to help in the education of his fellow countrymen.

Unfortunately, due to various reasons, this wish cannot be fulfilled at this time and so he continues to lecture abroad.

In 1985, he immigrated to the United States and during the time that he lived there, his made achievements in race relations and in his work towards creating peace and promoting morality. This won him awards in 1995 from the city of Dallas and the State of Texas as an Honorary Citizen.

The Creation of Classes to Train Lecturers

Master was invited to give Dharma talks in Hong Kong in 1977 and in Singapore in 1987. Consequently, giving Dharma talks every year in these two locations has enabled him to develop many strong affinities. In May of 1995, the Singapore Buddhist Lodge and the Amitabha Buddhist Society extended a warm and sincere invitation to Master to give Dharma talks, as well as to hold classes to train future lecturers. When he learned that all the venerables in the first class were from his native country, he was overjoyed, for his long held wish to train lecturers from China had come true.

After completion of the first class and with the encouragement and support of Master Chin Kung, the nine venerables all happily returned to China. Word of the success of this training class generated much interest in China. As a result when the second class was announced, there were many more applications than spaces available. Master Chin Kung and Mr. Bock-Guan Lee, president of the Amitabha Buddhist Society of Singapore agreed to increase the number of openings and announced that they would accept applications on a first-come-first-served basis. Thus, in 1996, the second class was increased to thirty venerables from different cities and provinces throughout China.

Subsequently, the third and fourth classes were begun in September of 1997 and March of 1998.

In total, the classes have trained more than seventy venerables and lay people from China, the U.S., Thailand, the Philippines and Malaysia. They have either returned to their way places or have been invited to give Dharma talks at other way places. The success in training new lecturers to help propagate the Buddha's teachings has undoubtedly helped to instill renewed spirit into Chinese Buddhism.

Opening the Class for the *Hua Yan (Flower Adornment) Sutra*

In 1998, Mr. Bock-Guan Lee invited Master Chin Kung to lecture on the *Flower Adornment Sutra* at the Singapore Buddhist Lodge. When Master accepted the invitation, practitioners around the world were overjoyed. The Buddhist Lodge commissioned the Architecture Department of Tong-Ji University of Shanghai to design two copper towers, to cast them in China and ship them to the Lodge in Singapore, where they are now positioned. The two towers are the highest copper towers in the world and serve to memorialize the lectures on the *Flower Adornment Sutra*, which is recognized as the comprehensive expression of all Buddhist Sutras, the perfect, complete teaching. This lecture series will take five to ten years. This in-depth explanation has not been completed for two hundred years.

Currently, there are twelve venerables in the *Flower Adornment* studies class. Most of them have attended earlier training classes for lecturers. Now their time is spent listening to Dharma talks, discussing and writing explanatory notes on the sutra, writing and giving Dharma talks, writing articles for the

Buddhist Educational Journal, studying English and learning to use computers.

Establishing the Buddhist Educational College

In the latter part of 1998, Master Chin Kung and Mr. Bock-Guan Lee formally drew up plans for the establishment of the Buddhist Educational College, the first of its kind in Singapore. At this time, all paper work has been completed and submitted to the Ministry of Education, Singapore for final approval. The mission of the college is “To learn to be a good teacher and a role model for all”. There will be three levels of courses.

The first year is devoted to preparatory classes, the next three years to degree classes and the final three to post-graduate classes. The course principles, content and teaching methods will be very different from the usual Buddhist college. Students will study one sutra, unit by unit. Upon completion of one course unit, with the approval from the teacher, students proceed to the next course unit.

This method concentrates on one sutra, enabling students to do in-depth research and study on their primary sutra. Classes on other sutras can be audited. Once the primary sutra is selected, it cannot be changed. Unlike classes where the teachers explains everything, with this system, the students study the course materials, write drafts, give talks, listen to comments from fellow students and amend their drafts.

Initially, talks are given solely to an audience of classmates. Once the drafts are amended with comments from those classmates, the students will then present their formal talks to the public. Upon completion of each course unit, the teacher will grade the students’ work to determine if they are ready to

proceed to the next course unit.

It is the hope of Master Chin Kung that this traditional Chinese method of teaching will train a new generation of lecturers who are well-accomplished in cultivation, well-versed in the teachings, adept at conveying the meaning within the teachings, as well as being a role model for other Buddhist colleges. The best way to accomplish this goal today is to study other languages and cultures and to become proficient in applying modern technology to bring the education of Buddhism to people around the world.

Promoting Mutual Understanding through Sincerity

Multi-Faith, Multi-Culture

"Our world has many diverse races, cultures, and religions." Master Chin Kung has advocated the importance of harmonious interaction among these different groups for many years. He has explained that, "Only by broadening our minds, with our every thought for others, and for all beings throughout the universe, and always bearing in mind that we are responsible voluntary social educators, will our viewpoints be expanded, and our every rising thought be truly sincere and proper.

Even with the slightest thought of selfishness or discrimination, we will not be in accordance with the Buddha's teaching, nor will our aspirations of multicultural, multirace and multireligion be possible." Furthermore, "A truly awakened person understands that all beings are oneself, that the whole universe is one's hometown, that the universe and oneself is a perfect entity."

Understanding this, enlightened beings have given rise to the unconditional compassion and kindness. These are the core of the Buddha's teachings. These are the expectation that Master Chin Kung has for all his students.

True Sincerity is the Starting Point for Interchange

With the development of society, recent advances in technology, and a constant improvement in the standard of living, it is inevitable that we interchange and interact with different people, groups, religions and countries. Confrontation and physical force are not the ways to solve our problems. So how can we best interact with others?

Master has considered this question for many years. It would seem that it is very complicated and requires much consideration. Surprisingly, Master gives a very simple and straightforward answer, "True Sincerity" . We can use true sincerity and equality of mind to successfully interact with all others, "Do unto others as you would have done unto you". In this way, all problems can easily be resolved. It would seem to be very simple and easy to do. But as soon as we try, we will discover that it is not as easy as we thought. Master Chin Kung's solution is "Education". The use of which can resolve all our differences.

Seeking the Common Ground while Respecting the Differences

In Queensland, Australia, Mr. Uri Themal, the Executive Director of Multicultural Affairs, Queensland, presides over the monthly meetings of the

MultiFaith Forum. Leaders from different racial groups, religions and academia meet to exchange ideas on creating a harmonious, prosperous and fulfilling society. Master Chin Kung was invited to address the conference and share his opinions and hopes regarding the current issue. The group discusses the issue, comes up with possible solutions and submits their recommendations to the government.

As Master Chin Kung has expressed every culture, religion and group possesses commendable qualities. And although we come from different backgrounds, we share many similarities. If we use these as a starting point to seek the common ground and lay aside our differences, we will then be able to appreciate each other's good points. In this way we will sincerely respect each other and no longer wish to interfere with the internal affairs of others or to solve problems by the use of force. In this way, conflicts will naturally dissolve, wars will no longer be fought and our society will be peaceful and prosperous.

With these causes, Master Chin Kung's heartfelt wish is to establish a multicultural university, or at least a multicultural department in every university to nurture and train professionals to propagate multicultural teachings and thus to promote social stability and world peace.

Respecting and Upholding Traditions

Master Chin Kung has often said that the unique qualities of different cultures, groups and religions, are like the various parts of our body, each with its own character and function. For example, our heads and hands each have their own individual characteristics and functions. We cannot use our hands to think, or our heads to do what our hands are designed to do.

Different religions and cultures have their own unique and valued qualities of truth, virtue and beauty. The truth, virtue and beauty of one do not diminish those of another. We cannot force any one to accept our culture, our way of living or principles. We must not hold the prejudice that our ways are superior to others, that others should abandon their ways for ours. Each group possesses its own qualities of excellence, its own traditions. The unique features and good points of people can only be expressed through their traditional cultures. Therefore, each of us needs to preserve, honor, and pass on to future generations our individual traditions of excellence.

Our goal is to attain the mind of sincerity, purity, equality, compassion and awakening. Only with this mind will we be able to solve all problems. They cannot be solved by physical force, by war. They are solved with gentleness and loving-kindness towards all other beings, animate and inanimate. It is in our best interest to be rid of the desire to control, for it will only result in our committing further transgressions, thus increasing our negative karma.

No one can truly control another. History provides us with many examples of countries that tried to use force to control another. When we observe history, we see many governments who have tried to impose their systems, values, forms of government on others without considering the other country's history, cultures and traditions, only wanting to control those countries. "The government that follows a just cause gains great support and unjust ones gain little." If the cause is unjust, even if the people follow, they cannot sustain control of others for a long time. They are doomed to fail. No one can truly control another. Those who try will pay a huge cost for their attempt.

In this world, there are two kinds of people. Those who do not know their traditions, their backgrounds, try to control others, not knowing that they are doomed. The second kind do know their traditions, backgrounds and history,

and know the former will fail. They understand that to discard their own system or to have another forced upon them cannot be sustained.

Master Chin Kung tells us that, “The Chinese people have learned from five thousand years of history. Some non-Chinese cannot understand the Chinese culture with its unique features, cannot understand its wisdom that has been passed down from one generation to another. Our traditions and cultures are special, as are those of other countries. We need to value the differences of these cultures. We need to safeguard our culture as well as to respect those of others and to praise the truth, virtues and beauty of all races and cultures. Then we will understand that the diversity of all our cultures is magnificent and beautiful”.

Visiting the Muslim Missionary Society of Singapore

At the end of last year, for the first time, Master Chin Kung, Mr. Lee and over sixty venerables and lay people from the Singapore Buddhist Lodge and the Amitabha Buddhist Society visited the charitable organization of the Muslim Missionary Society of Singapore. Monetary gifts, as well as gift baskets were given to the residents of the society’s home for the aged and children’s home, and grants were presented to fifty Malay students in Singapore.

Local newspapers, the Lian He Zao Bao, the Xin Min Daily and the Straits Times all covered the visit. Several weeks after the news coverage and interviews, the visit was still in the minds of Singaporeans, for they and their government highly value the harmonious interchange between the two different ethnic groups. Consequently, Master Chin Kung and Mr. Lee plan to visit

Christians, Hindus and other religious groups, in the hope of strengthening inter-religious interchange, in supporting social stability and harmony, as well as setting an example that others may follow.

Benefiting Society through Compassion

Compassion: the Basic Teaching of Buddhism

There is no doubt that Buddhism is an education, with each thought to give rise to compassion and promote peace. Master Chin Kung teaches people to increase their tolerance, to broaden their minds to be compassionate towards all living beings, not only family and friends but also strangers and enemies, animals, plants and all inanimate objects. This boundless loving-kindness and compassion are the very heart of practitioners' belief, understanding and practice. It is the driving force based on the understanding that we all share the same root and are all one entity.

The Buddha explained the Law of Cause and Effect, that our every thought, word and action has a consequence. Our current situation and everything that happens to us, arise from the causes that we planted in our past lives. Understanding this will ensure that we will treat others with kindness and sincerity, knowing that our current thoughts, speech and actions are the causes of our future consequences. Therefore, we will value all the affinities we meet daily.

There is an old saying in Buddhism "For two people to be able to take the same bus on the same day, they need to have developed affinities over many

past lives". With our friends and family members, we must have developed affinities for thousands of years to be able to be so close in this lifetime. This proverb explains the truth to guide us to give no thought to personal gain or loss and not to be concerned over trivialities. All people and beings have been our past parents and are future Buddhas. Understanding this, we will interact with people gently and joyfully, for we have known and loved them in previous lives. It is a rare opportunity to encounter them again. We need to value it and not spend our time worrying over small matters. They simply are not important.

When we accomplish this level of knowledge, we will be able to cut off our selfishness and attain the level of "All is one, one is all". This is the primary step toward compassion and is what the Buddha taught us to do. There are three basic steps for us to take to develop compassion for others. First, we can give of our own wealth or our labor to help others through their difficult times. Second, we can introduce the Buddha's teachings to others and help them to gain the benefits from Buddhism. Third and last, we can explain to them why they are currently suffering and how they can transcend this suffering and thus create happy lives. This is how we develop true compassion. This is what Master Chin Kung has exemplified for many years, to benefit all sentient beings and to set an example for all of us.

Forty Years of Teaching: the Compassion to
Benefit Sentient Beings.

For forty years, Master Chin Kung has been propagating the Buddha's teachings, encouraging others to face life with a positive attitude and to greet the future with confidence and hope. Virtually every successful person has

faced obstacles and adversities that few others know about.

Nowadays, people just see his success and achievements. Very few know the loneliness and hardships he endured in the early years of his practice by following the road less taken. He firmly believed that the basic responsibility of monks and nuns is to pass on the proper teachings of the Buddha and not just to conduct religious rites and ceremonies. He was often misunderstood and slandered. It was the time to temper himself, to see through to the true reality, to let go of all attachments and to attain the great freedom of understanding and awakening.

Today, we only see that Master is welcomed with flowers, applause and support wherever he goes. Audiences await his arrival with anticipation, sincerity and respect as he approaches the stage to give his lecture. Who would know that behind the composed smile and calm appearance lies the heavy burden of responsibility, the weight of consideration for sentient beings as he exerts himself to propagate the Buddha's teachings. Master Chin Kung is unceasingly aware of the suffering of sentient beings and preoccupied with thoughts of how to help them to transcend the cycle of birth and death. He feels great sorrow for the state of the universe and empathizes with the sufferings of all beings.

It was after he moved to Taipei that due to a change of circumstances, he was at a loss and unsure of where to go next. It was at this critical time that he was kindly invited by Ms. Yin Han and her husband to live in their home. In order to continue with his propagation of Buddhism and with Mr. Bing-Nan Lee's approval, he accepted their generous offer and lived with them for seventeen years. This decision resulted in gossip and the ensuing censure from the majority of people.

It is most admirable that not only did Ms. Yin Han tolerate the rumors

without complaint but became even more attentive and considerate in her care for Master and more dedicated in her support of Buddhism. This dedication was not directed toward Master personally but stemmed from her realization and understanding of the importance of the Buddha's teachings. From this understanding arose her sincere respect for Buddhism, her support for talented Dharma masters and her heartfelt sense of responsibility for the welfare of other people.

Her primary purpose was to protect the proper teachings and ensure their continuation for future generations. "Everybody has the responsibility to do this, if I do not, who will?" She used every possible means to find places for Master to lecture. She borrowed or rented space, regardless of size, then cajoled and encouraged everyone she could to come and listen to the talks. Under thirty years of her dedication and support, Master was able to devote all his efforts and time to propagating Buddhism around the world.

Master Chin Kung says that like a seedling, he was selected by Mr. Dong-Mei Fang, planted by Living Buddha Master Zhang Jia, cultivated by Mr. Bing-Nan Lee and cared for by Mrs. Yin Han. Having fulfilled her role in assisting Master to attain achievement, Ms. Yin Han was escorted by Buddha Amitabha to the Western Pure Land on March 5, 1997. From her example, we have witnessed the inconceivable merits and benefits accrued from protecting and supporting the proper teachings. This in turn greatly builds our confidence in our belief, understanding and practice, and re-enforces our conviction.

Many people meet, listen to Master and agree that he is a very good lecturer and then simply continue with their daily lives. It takes someone who has sincerely practiced over infinite lifetimes and developed the profound wisdom to truly recognize a person with great potential, to do all that is necessary to help, support and nurture that person in the face of great adversity.

There is good in this world, there is evil. The good supports the true teachings; the evil tries to destroy them. Ms. Yin Han, who fought against injustice all her life, remembered and recognized that goodness when she saw it and was able to overcome overwhelming odds. For this, Master Chin Kung will forever remember her kindness and that of all those who made his achievements possible. To repay that kindness, he earnestly exhorts others to follow, to hold on tight, to not let go and to do everything possible to be born into the Western Pure Land to become a Buddha in one lifetime.

Normally when people reach an advanced age, they either step back from their working lives to strengthen and enjoy family ties, or they give up on life and listlessly wait for life to end. However, Master Chin Kung, now in his seventies, is energetically continuing his life-long work of taking on the responsibility of helping sentient beings awaken and transcend the cycle of birth and death. Master has spent a lifetime excelling as a role model for all.

In November of 1998, Master had a severe cold and was advised to rest. He prepared earlier than usual to give his talk and waited for the attendants to arrive to escort him into the lecture hall. During this time, he continued with his regular schedule of daily morning talks and two-hour lectures. Regardless of swollen eyes and bouts of severe coughing, Master gave the talks in his usual moving and uplifting manner. During the longer lectures when the coughing became worse, he continued to radiate a cheerful appearance. All were deeply moved and a respectful hush fell over the audience. Since then, his students have been loath to ask to be excused due to illness and have endeavored even more to emulate Master Chin Kung.

Monetary and Material Donations to Help Disaster Victims

In July of 1998, the eyes of people around the world were riveted to the coverage on the massive floods of the Changjiang, Songhuajiang and Nen rivers. Thousands of citizens and military personnel working together, stood shoulder to shoulder in chest-deep water using their bodies to form human walls in the attempt to save disaster victims and their property from the hundred-year flood. Master Chin Kung was consumed with worry as he learned more and more of the plight of the victims because he felt their suffering was his. If the people in China, with all their differences, could unite in the face of this great adversity, how could he, being Chinese himself, not help as well?

In mid-August, Master Chin Kung, Mr. Bock-Guan Lee, the Singapore Buddhist Lodge and the Amitabha Buddhist Society sponsored drives to raise money for the flooded disaster areas in China. In just a few weeks, donations of S\$150,000 had been received. The donations were given to the Chinese Embassy of Singapore, which immediately arranged for the funds to be distributed to the flood victims. However, donations continued to be received and in a matter of weeks another S\$500,000 had been received.

The funds were donated over the following weeks by Master Chin Kung and Mr. Lee. The Ambassador Plenipotentiary, Mrs. Bao-Liu Chen and the First Secretary, Mr. An-Hai Peng, as well as staff members of the Chinese Embassy personally visited the Singapore Buddhist Lodge to accept the donation. The First Secretary also visited the Amitabha Buddhist Society to extend appreciation on behalf of the Ambassador and of the flood victims.

Then in October, Master received further information that the almost decimated areas were now entering the severe winter season and the victims who had lost homes, clothing, everything in the flood, now could not even receive winter clothing due to shortages. So, Master again appealed to the

public to practice compassion and giving and to help the victims surmount the seemingly endless privations. With this urgent appeal funds were quickly raised to make a hundred thousand sets of winter clothes.

Master wisely entrusted Ms. Yu-Jing Cui, a Chinese businessperson, who owned a heavy-duty equipment-manufacturing factory, to assume responsibility for the production and distribution of the clothing. Not only did Ms. Cui perform her almost impossible work admirably but also she had the great generosity to donate \$100 Chinese yuan and a sack of flour to virtually every disaster victim she met with. Master Chin Kung felt deeply gratified when he heard that some of the victims most pressing needs had been met. These compassionate actions of Master Chin Kung not only solved some of the material needs of the victims but also inspired their hope to rebuild all that they had lost.

Rebuilding Schools and Instilling Hope in the Disaster Area

The flooding of the Songhuajiang and Nen rivers had submerged vast areas of farmland and crops, many houses and schools had been greatly damaged and others completely destroyed. Master Chin Kung felt that the Chinese government had done a great deal to help the two hundred million people who were affected by the floods. As to the rebuilding of the schools, he would do his best to help in any way he could. He knows that schools are the ideal place to instill hope and are the cradle of knowledge for modern civilization and social development. While some of the rebuilding could wait, that of the schools could not. Thus, the work to rebuild primary and high schools was of the utmost importance to Master.

Under his personal guidance, the project for donating funds for ten Compassionate Light High Schools and twenty Filial Piety-Honesty Primary Schools has been proceeding rapidly. Soon, due to his infinite compassion, we will see the newly built schools open, one by one, in the vast land of northeast China.

Long-Term Assistance for Master Chin Kung Native Country, China

Master Chin Kung's assistance to China began in 1980 and usually took the form of monetary donations, books, dictionaries, etc. From 1989 to 1995, Master donated eight hundred sets of the *Great Buddhist Canon* to way places, Buddhist colleges and Buddhist societies for laypeople. In 1991, east China suffered a severe flood. Master did his best to help and under his inspiration, the Hwa Dzan Buddhist Library and the Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation donated US\$ 250,000 to help the victims. In 1992, The Buddhist Culture Educational Foundation of China was established and Master donated US\$ 40,000 to them.

In 1993, Master sponsored Nanjing Jinling Publishing Place and the Shanghai Buddhist Bookstore to print and freely distribute ten thousand sets of the *Buddhist Terminology Dictionary* to all the Buddhist colleges throughout China. In the same year, he also donated thirty-three of the five hundred volume sets of the *Essence of Complete Library in Four Divisions*, to Beijing Library, Shanghai Library and to some of the universities in China.

In 1994, he donated S\$ 60,000 to help underwrite a project to set up libraries in thousands of villages in China. In 1997, Master visited his hometown, which he had left fifty years before. He sent one hundred 586

computers to Lujiang High School. In the following year, he donated \$600,000 Chinese yuan to the newly established library at Lujiang High School.

Being Born into the Pure Land through Concentration on One Method

Practicing Filial Piety and Repaying Kindness:
the Foundation of Pure Land Cultivation

In the *Visualization Sutra*, The Buddha taught us three basic requirements, the Three Conditions, to be born into the Western Pure Land. The First Condition includes being filial and respectful toward parents, teachers and elders, being compassionate and not killing any living being and practicing the Ten Good Conducts. Master has always taught that Buddhism is an education and it is based on the foundation of filial piety. How can we trust the sincerity of people if they do not respect and nurture their parents? How would they be able to respect sentient beings if they are not able to respect their teachers?

Filial piety does not just mean taking care of our parents physical needs, but also fulfilling their aspirations. It is also the basis for Chinese tradition. We need to expand from this foundation by respecting and nurturing not only our parents, but also all parents. If we can respect all sentient beings throughout the universe because they are our past parents, protect our environment and value all affinities and conditions then we practice filial piety to perfection.

In Confucianism, filial piety is limited to our family, group or country. In Buddhism, filial piety is expanded to include all the infinite beings in the

universe. The reason why every Buddhist practitioner generates the Four Great Vows daily is this expansive, inexhaustible broadmindedness. The first Vow, “Sentient Beings are innumerable, I vow to help them all” is the infinite extension of filial piety. It is showing that the repaying the great kindness of Buddhism is the development of filial piety of Confucianism.

In Pure Land cultivation we practice filial piety to our parents and teachers and repay the four kinds of kindness for our parents and teachers, country, sentient beings and Buddhas as do all other Buddhist methods. This is why Buddhism was so quickly and enthusiastically accepted when it first came to China. It is perfect and complete in its principles and teachings. Its profound wisdom towards all forms of life, reverence for teachers and their teachings, practice of filial piety, and appreciation for and the repayment of the kindness of others is the primary element for its having flourished in China.

Concentrating on One Method:
the Simple and Direct Path to Achievement

Early in his extensive study of Buddhism, Master Chin Kung initially read works on the basic principles and essential teachings of the Tian-Tai, Hua-Yen, Consciousness Only, Three-discourse methods, etc. He was most fortunate to meet good teachers who were very learned, virtuous and of high reputation, so he was able to quickly build a strong foundation in the teachings. He explains that, “While under the guidance of Professor Dong-Mei Fang, I learned that studying and practicing Buddhism is the greatest enjoyment for humankind. From Living Buddha Master Zhang-Jia, I realized the true meaning of seeing through and letting go.”

Next, Master studied under Mr. Bing-Nan Lee. When Mr. Lee asked him to let go all that he had learned in the past and start afresh, he complied. After ten years of following Mr. Lee's teachings, Master gained appreciation for the fact that we can attain perfect complete awakening through learning any one sutra, practicing any one of the eighty-four thousand methods. However, it is crucial that beginners choose the one sutra and method that is most suitable for them and concentrate solely on it continuously for many years. Only through this concentrated focus, can we deepen our concentration and uncover our innate wisdom. With this patience and diligence, we will attain achievement, in either worldly teachings or the Buddha's teachings.

As the creation of the Buddhist Educational College takes shape, so does the curriculum that is designed to follow the wishes of Master Chin Kung. He firmly believes that in our modern society only the Chinese traditional teaching method, as taught by Mr. Lee, is suitable for the education of Buddhist successors. Thus from the beginning of the project, the college, its principles, goals and course design all follow Master's philosophy.

This Chinese traditional teaching method is to focus and delve deeply into one subject. Master feels that this traditional method is more effective than the one currently used by Buddhist colleges and today's universities. He explains that, "The goal of a Buddhist College is totally different from that of modern universities. For example, the goal of a medical school is to train doctors; the goal of a law school is to train lawyers, while the goal of a Buddhist college is to learn to be Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. The system of management and curriculum of modern education are simply not suitable for Buddhist education."

If we adopt the modern educational system, we will not only waste money and manpower, but more importantly, we will cause people to lose this

opportunity to attain enlightenment, which would be a grave mistake. Therefore, Master advocates that Buddhist colleges should adopt the traditional teaching system of unit-by-unit. Only by following this method, as did all the past patriarchs, will we attain achievement.

Why is the Buddhist educational system ineffective today? Because we have discarded our past to adopt what is popular today, discarded our traditions. The traditional system taught students to develop their concentration but the modern system only teaches students to accumulate information and does virtually nothing to teach them to develop concentration. In short, we get caught up in details and forget the goal, do not see the forest for the trees. How can we hope to achieve?

Practicing Pure Land Buddhism: the Most Suitable Method for Our Modern Society and Level of Awakening

The Buddha told us that in the Dharma Proper Age, people would achieve practicing precept observation, during the Dharma Semblance Age, people would achieve practicing meditation and that during the Dharma Ending Age, people would achieve practicing Pure Land Buddhism. Knowing this, Mr. Bing-Nan Lee devoted his life to the practice and teaching of the Pure Land method.

At the peak of his teaching career, approximately two hundred thousand Pure Land practitioners were following the teachings of Mr. Lee. His style of teaching was very flexible and creative as he guided people according to their level of understanding. Highly respected, he was a role model for all as his life reflected what he taught.

Under Mr. Lee's guidance, Master realized that the Pure Land method was the most suited to our time and subsequently dedicated his life to propagating the Pure Land method. He understands that a Buddhist scholar, may be widely read in the teachings and seem to know everything but be unable to solve the fundamental problems of birth, old age, sickness, and death, unable to help all sentient beings transcend reincarnation. Now that we are in the Dharma Ending Age, the Pure Land method is the most suitable to attain achievement in one lifetime and the best way to help all beings.

Today, many people are searching for answers, for the understanding of why we are born, why we live and why we die. Whether in the West or the East, our standard of living is improving, we are accumulating more luxuries but our lives are becoming more frantic as we succumb to stress and despondency. The Buddha teaches us to use sincerity, purity, equality, awakening and compassion to solve our spiritual and mental problems, which are caused by afflictions. He teaches us that, in essence, there is no difference between the Buddha and us, that we all possess the same Buddha nature, that we are all equal.

Some schools of Buddhism are very profound and difficult to understand and thus to practice. In the west, the Zen and Tibetan methods have been well accepted but are more difficult to attain achievement in due to the shortage of highly qualified masters and the obstacles practitioners may encounter.

However, the Pure Land School is both easy and safe to practice. It can be practiced anywhere, anytime. The only requirements for Pure Land practitioners are unwavering belief, sincere vows and diligent cultivation. We can chant "Amitufo" silently or aloud, while sitting, standing, walking or lying down. In our constantly changing times, if we can maintain sincerity of mind, a compassionate heart, the unwavering vow to transcend the cycle of birth and death, the patience to practice over several years and the diligence to see

through to the true reality and to let go of attachments; we will achieve. We can then be born into the Western Pure Land carrying over our existing karma.

From ancient times till now, sages and patriarchs have said that the Pure Land method is the most difficult to believe, but the easiest to practice. Therefore, Master Chin Kung urges us to truly cultivate, to sincerely chant “Amitufo” without doubt, without intermingling with other methods or thoughts, without interruption, to be constantly mindful of Buddha Amitufo and vow to be born into the Pure Land, to become a Buddha in this lifetime.