

First Fa Teaching Given in the United States

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I will sit here so that everyone can see me. (*Applause*)

Many people have hurried here from distant places and drove here early this morning. I know that there are many people here who are doing cultivation now, and I have been thinking about coming to the United States to take a look. For various reasons I didn't have an opportunity to come. This time I am able to meet with you, and this is due to a predestined relationship. Being able to learn this practice also owes to a predestined relationship. (*Applause*) I am planning on giving a speech in Houston in order to meet with more people in the U.S., and so I stopped here on my way, and am meeting with you first. (*Applause*)

Your knowledge of this practice and this Fa may vary, just as your understanding of it does. But whatever the case, because what I am transmitting is a cultivation method of the Buddhist school, I'll use some words from the Buddhist school: being able to obtain it is due to predestined relationship. Right now you don't know how precious it is. When you do come to realize that it's precious, you will feel most fortunate. These principles and the things that can guide everyone's cultivation that I teach have never been talked about in public by anyone over hundreds or thousands of years—actually, over an even longer amount of time. No one in all of history has ever talked about these. When we talk about cultivation, you will think of the numerous cultivators from history in the special setting of China. Actually, those cultivators still exist, and there are a great many cultivators scattered throughout the world. There have always been people doing cultivation in places where few persons go, and they are all quite old. Since they avoid the secular world and don't come into contact with ordinary people, ordinary people don't know about them.

As today's science and technology develop, and when people increasingly emphasize the so-called realities, the real history of man and true things are being progressively cast aside. In modern times, whenever people talk about these things, it always seems like they are talking fairy tales, when in fact they are not. Why it that true religions and many ancient legends have managed to last for thousands of years unabated? There must be reasons. In ordinary human society, there are also many, many phenomena that can't be explained—and we come across them, hear about them, or sense them ourselves—and they cannot be explained with the way of thinking or scientific theories of our day. This is because science is not developed enough, and nor can it reach that high of a plane in its development. Actually, I would say that those things do all exist. It's only that modern people are overly trustful of science, which is not very advanced, and thus cannot break through this dimension with science to see the truth.

Today's science and technology are, even though people think of them as quite developed, in reality found to be lacking when held up against the truth in the universe. People think that computers are so advanced, but however developed they may be, they are actually no match for the human brain; the human brain will always be a mystery to man. In the future, many people will reach the point of unlocking *gong*, enlightenment, or Consummation by studying the Fa and cultivating themselves, and at that point their insight into life, the universe, and matter will penetrate to planes both miniscule and immense.

As you know, when it comes to matter, what happens is that microscopic particles make up a larger layer of particles, and in turn the larger layer of particles makes up an even larger layer of particles, until eventually surface matter is formed. It is similar to how neutrinos lead to quarks, and then to nuclei, and then atoms. The layer of matter that forms a human being's outermost surface—the molecular particles at the surface—is made up of various, more microscopic kinds of matter.

Today's scientists only know about the composition of microscopic particles—the tiny bit that they can see through a microscope. They know about the existence of molecules, the existence of atoms, and so on, down to as far as neutrinos; further down, however, things are apt to be indiscernible to them, even with the help of an instrument. If a microscope with enough power to detect an area of a large diameter were available, and if what could be observed were not a molecular particle or several molecular particles, and if instead it was the *plane* that is composed of microscopic particles [that was being observed], then it would mean that humans have seen into other dimensions. Over the years people haven't managed to break out of this frame of mind, with their attention being centered on observing one or more points of microscopic particles. They have not broken away from the prevailing concept and linked them together so as to see what the entire plane of microscopic particles looks like. *Those* are what we call other dimensions. It's as simple as that. Right now these things can't be broken through; today's technology cannot reach that level.

I just talked about these things using modern man's way of thinking and language, and they are things that human beings have wanted to know and yet were not allowed to know. No one has ever revealed the real truth in the universe to humans, and in the past humans were not allowed to know it. The reason being, according to heaven's laws, humans fell to ordinary human society progressively from the heavens at very high levels. In other words, they dropped down to Earth. In the cultivation community, Darwin's theory of evolution is not recognized because man did not evolve from the ape. Truly, what higher beings have seen is indeed fundamentally different. What empirical science now understands to be true has unnecessarily created many false impressions that human beings do not dare to debunk. People seem to have benefited some practically and gained scientific knowledge as a result of these deficient theories, but in reality these are all destructive to humanity, life, and the universe, and will never bring to beings things that will allow them to ascend. Even so, there are still some people who safeguard their so-called learnedness and knowledge for the sake of being an authority, who guard those things from being overturned, and prevent others from gaining higher insight. So, with some things, human beings know they are wrong, but still safeguard those irrational behaviors with emotion. As for the truth in the universe, people have sealed themselves off from it. Cultivation can enable a person to truly improve, and cultivators are able to see and come into contact with the truths of life and the universe.

Since today's humans are sealed off so tightly by modern science, these truths are to them all "superstition." But even with things that are superstitious, a scientist, or a person with a mind of his own, should investigate things himself to find out why such things are superstitious and why people want to be superstitious. Nowadays almost nobody dares to touch such things, though. I think it may be a lot better in the setting of the U.S., as many people's thinking isn't so restricted here. But all the same, the fetters created by modern empirical science have caused man to seal off his own mind. Thus it is very hard to know what is true about life, the universe, and matter.

A person may see the truth in the universe through cultivation, especially with the Buddha Fa. But now people believe only in modern science, thinking that those things all belong to theology or religion and aren't science. But that is in fact man's only way of coming to understand the universe. As you know, Einstein himself believed in religion in his later years. Many people who are considered quite accomplished in the sciences turned to religion eventually. They discovered that the principles preached in religion are even higher truths. Man's understanding is limited, and when things exceed the limits of this knowledge, science becomes powerless. The Buddha Fa, on the other hand, is able to explain all phenomena in the universe. Those persons discovered that what gods taught is a higher science, and thus they turned to religion.

Of course, I imparted this Fa using the form of *qigong*, but in fact what's included in it is huge. They are things that no one in history has ever talked about, and yet I reveal them. If you are able to earnestly read the book, *Zhuan Falun*, you will find that it is incredibly precious. There are many, many secrets revealed in it, and even just a quick, superficial read through will bring a person remarkable benefits. The person will know in general terms how to be a human being. People who don't want to do cultivation, however, will not see *Zhuan Falun's* inner meaning nor its higher truths. But, what is inside it is simply huge, and can enable a person to cultivate to Consummation.

And it is about more than achieving Consummation—it can allow a being to ascend to even higher realms.

As people know, cultivation is different from just keeping fit. If I wanted to impart a practice to you that was only to keep fit, I wouldn't have taught a Fa that is so huge. I did that precisely because I wanted you all to obtain this Fa, precisely to impart to you this universe's truths, and precisely to enable you to cultivate and improve yourselves such that you reach higher levels and are able to ascend. If, during the course of cultivation, you manage to do what I described, then this book will guide you in achieving this goal. But people who don't want to cultivate will not see all this. Why can't they? Usually when a person reads the book the first time, he will find that it teaches the principles of how to be a good person. When he reads it a second time, it won't be the same; at that point he will see that it's a book about cultivation. When he reads it a third time—when you are truly able to read it three times in a row—he probably won't want to put the book down thereafter. He will pick it up and read it whenever he has time, and see that it is a divine book.

You may have noticed that the grammar and the linguistic structure in the book, seen in light of literary conventions, are not quite standard. Since today's standardized language cannot contain meaning that's very deep, I broke away from it and didn't teach using perfectly standardized modern grammar. What's more, I used a good amount of local dialect, because the standardized language, or standardized terms, lack the ability to explain some things as much. There are also many religious terms, and there are folk terms from ancient China that have to do with cultivation. So, I taught this Dafa by using the most common and popular language, the plainest and simplest language. Those who are educated and those who aren't can both understand it, and they can both do cultivation. But what is contained in it is very, very profound.

You should know that this is about cultivation. If I had taught people *qigong* for keeping fit, it would have been fine to just teach how *qigong* adjusts one's breathing and calms the mind. Using those methods will serve the purpose of getting well and keeping fit. But if a person is to cultivate toward higher levels, those things are of no use, for they can't guide people's cultivation toward higher levels. It's like going to school. If you want to go to college, you will need to have had experience in elementary school, junior high school, and senior high school as a foundation. You use junior high school's textbooks to study in junior high school; when you go to senior high school, you use senior high school's textbooks; and when you finally go to college, you study a college curriculum. If you were to use elementary school textbooks in college you would still be an elementary school student. That's because you wouldn't have learned college things, and when you have not learned higher Fa, you can't cultivate upward. This means that for your cultivation to be guided toward higher levels, there need to be higher principles serving as cultivation guidance.

Zhuan Falun has inner meanings of such a high level, but they aren't apparent to someone looking at the surface of this book. With the same sentence, only when you read it after you have improved will you find that the sentence has a different meaning from before, and that is the meaning at another level. It's definitely like that. No other book can achieve this, because none is a book of cultivation and they are limited to ordinary human theories. This Fa, however, goes well beyond ordinary human theories, and thus its inner meanings are huge. It's about cultivation, after all. What the Buddhist school calls "starting cultivation from the stage of everyday people," I here call "In-Triple-World-Law practice," which is also called cultivation of the human body. During this stage, improvements of many, many facets of the person have to take place. In the past, it seems that much of what was written in cultivation books dealt with cultivation of the body, and, although they were vague, they did address these things.

If the book were able to provide guidance only for your In-Triple-World-Law practice, you wouldn't be able to cultivate beyond the Three Realms. So the book must contain principles about cultivation of the human body as well as principles of various levels of the Three Realms, reaching all the way to the principles beyond the Three Realms. A cultivator can cultivate to a certain level only with the guidance of that level's principles, and only when there are even higher principles as guidance can you cultivate to even higher levels. In other words, there must be principles beyond the Three Realms before you can cultivate to levels outside of the Three Realms. It's similar to what

I said about going to school. If it didn't have inner meanings that vast, you wouldn't be able to cultivate whatsoever—that's what I meant. The Fa that I am imparting today is different from what other *qigong* masters teach, as those *qigong* masters are teaching people merely things having to do with healing and keeping fit. Here I am not saying that other *qigong* masters' levels are not high, or that they're not good, etc. That's not my intention. I am saying that nobody has ever done something like this. I know that I am the only one doing this now. You have read the book and many people already know what I am doing. Be it in China or the whole world, there is no one doing this, for this is no small matter. This is to take people to higher levels, so once it commences, the issues involved are going to be enormous.

Imparting an Upright Law is hard to do. As you know, Jesus was nailed to a cross for imparting an Upright Law back then. Shakyamuni, seeing no better alternative, took the path of nirvana, meanwhile. In ordinary human society, there are many, many conventional notions, and various human forces—including religious forces and a great many other elements—and they have formed their respective environments. The elements contained there have a positive side as well as a negative side, and the negative side is an evil force. In human society, every positive thing contains things that are negative, and those negative things may harm people, suppress people, attack people, and suppress people using political power or various means. So, imparting an Upright Law is most difficult. Ironically, when bad people transmit wicked practices nobody bothers them.

In the eyes of a Buddha, all beings are suffering. Jesus said that you should love not only your friends, but also your enemies. They are compassionate toward all beings, since they save the world's people. Then as a cultivator, if in your personal cultivation you are unable to love ordinary people who have once been against you, you will not become a Buddha. That's the truth, because cultivators need to be compassionate. Being compassionate means casting aside all past history and grievances had with ordinary people, and it means not getting attached to anything associated with everyday people, not seeking the fame or gain of ordinary people, and letting go of human attachments. It means taking everything associated with ordinary people lightly as you go about cultivating, and that is how you will be able to free yourself of it.

Of course, the requirements being discussed here might be a bit higher than usual since what I am imparting is not the average kind of *qigong* practice found among ordinary people. It is real cultivation, though it can't be separated from *qigong*. Why is that? Because at a high level *qigong* is cultivation, for sure. It's just that those *qigong* practices being spread in society are all at the lowest level of cultivation—where the goal is having a healthy body and being rid of illness, and nothing more than that. What I am doing is immensely challenging, so it's not as if someone just came up with this idea on the spur of the moment and then was able to do it.

When I said it was very hard, I was telling you that it was hard for me to impart this and hard for you to obtain it. Many of you sitting here have predestined relationships, and probably strong ones, at that. Some people may think that nothing happening here is out of the ordinary. [You might be thinking,] “I just happened to see this book,” “I just happened to learn about this Fa,” “I just happened to know that there are people doing this practice,” or “It was just natural to start learning it after a friend introduced me to it.” Since this ordinary human society is in a state of delusion, it's not as if a divine being will suddenly fly over head and tell you to come learn this Fa. It is not going to be like that, as that would dispel the delusion in ordinary human society. With delusion dispelled, there would be no enlightenment, and cultivation would thus become hard to do. This is why much of what people come across seems by chance, when in fact those things might not necessarily be random.

When I spoke to students in China, I said that many people don't realize it. That is, you may feel that, just like anything else in your normal life, you just happened to attend this class, but in all likelihood you went through hardships in order to obtain this Fa over the course of several, or even a dozen, or dozens of previous lives (*applause*). It's just that you haven't realized it. Some people had lost their lives so that they could obtain this Fa. As you go about cultivating, I earnestly and kindly teach the virtue of goodness to you and provide guidance, for I know who you were in

history and I know you have sacrificed a lot to obtain it today. I would be letting you down if I didn't teach you this way.

Of course, what I said sounds hard to figure out, and it's profound. Actually when a human lives in the world, he is only able to know about what happens within the few decades in this available dimension, just that little bit. But a person's life does not perish with his death. Even if he goes to Hell—even the eighteenth level of Hell—that is still not the end. A being that has committed major sins will fall to even lower places, where he is to be eliminated and destroyed. When a human being passes away, only the physical body that is made up of the layer of molecules will slough off, whereas the real life will leave the body the instant that human body dies. People are scared before they die, but I can tell you that there is nothing to be afraid of, in fact. People are terrified [of death] as long as they have a human mind. The human mind is constituted by flesh cells, and once it stops functioning, the person will instantly feel as though he has been born anew or as though he has been freed—there is a sense of excitement. Moreover, the body feels light, and unencumbered by the flesh body, and so the person's thinking is completely unblocked. All of what the person did in his life will seem as if it were done only a minute ago. Every detail will be right before the eyes, and not a single minor thing will be forgotten, for the person's mind is completely freed. At that moment he will know who he really is, and know whether the things he did in life were good or bad. It will be as if he were awakening from sleep.

Of course, what I just said is probably something you have never heard of, but it is the truth. I know much when it comes to these things, and there is much I have seen. One thing in particular is, sometimes as I was watching doctors in a hospital trying to save a patient, I observed that the patient had already died while people went about trying to save him. The soul of that patient had already exited the body and left. Since the two space-times are different in concept—the speed of time and the structure of dimensions are different from those on the human side—once [the being] is freed from the human body, what took place in his life seems as if it had just transpired. It feels like a short nap was just finished. And that is how a Buddha looks at a human being. Humans are in delusion and confused, and a human life is short and transient.

I have imparted this Fa to you all, and whatever the case, you have the predestined relationship to have obtained it. Here's what I think: since you have obtained it, you might as well use your spare time to read through the book after you finish your workday. Read it more, everyone, and see if it's not as I described. If it's not, you can stop learning it. But, if you read it through in real earnest, without my needing to say anything more, you won't put it down, for you will have seen the higher truths in it and you will want to keep on reading it. It exceeds human knowledge. Everyone has Buddha nature, and as long as you keep reading it you won't want to give it up or set it aside again.

When I taught this Fa, I probably did it using the way of thinking people have in mainland China, and the book was compiled that way, too. Although it differs from the way of thinking or looking at things that Americans or people of other nations have, and although outwardly the thought structure and how deeply one may be able to comprehend what was written are different, during cultivation the inner meanings of the Fa principles are the same. People from any region, from any country, or of any ethnicity can learn it, so it's the same as long as you read it. Don't dwell on these things as you learn it. I think you can accept all of this since this undertaking didn't start after merely a couple days of preparation. The preparation stretches back to long ago in the past.

You already know that when something comes about in ordinary human society, it's not accidental, but rather the result of changes in celestial affairs. If preparations for this were not made as human history progressed, this thing would definitely not have appeared as a part of history. As you know, there exist countless higher beings. The Buddhist school teaches that Buddhas are everywhere—the number is incredible. And moreover, there are gods with form and gods that are formless, and they permeate the universe. Counted among them are a great many microscopic substances that exist in ordinary human society. Human beings call them trace elements, or the various elements in air, and that is the part man is allowed to know. There are also substances that

are more microscopic, and even more microscopic, which are unknown to human beings. These omnipresent substances which fill the vast universe are all higher beings with Buddha nature, and they are all watching human beings, looking at them, and observing them. That is why nothing in human society is accidental.

The introduction to the public of this Dafa has roused Heaven and Earth. At present this is not apparent in ordinary human society, but that is how it is in other dimensions. No one in history has ever taught the real truth of the universe to human beings—never. You know, people such as Laozi, Shakyamuni, Jesus, and the like taught only the portion of the universe's Fa-principles that they came to see, affirm, and enlighten to. They taught only what they had come to know, whereas the Fa of the universe is boundless. There are countless Buddhas who are higher than Tathagata status, and the Fa they have seen are much larger as well. There are also huge, formless beings that far exceed the level of Buddha, and they have Buddha nature too. The universe is not as small as people in religions have believed it to be. Human understandings are confined to merely this human society. People believe that the insights of religions are vast, but in the eyes of higher gods they are quite insignificant.

The principles I have been teaching are probably even larger, and I have passed them on to human beings—truly a first in history. This undertaking of mine is done with a human form and human language. I am doing the biggest thing, and doing so using the lowest form of cultivation. At present, there aren't as many people learning Dafa in the U.S. and other places as in mainland China due to differences in language and setting. Most of the people learning it in mainland China are truly doing cultivation; more than 10 million people are doing the exercises every day and cultivating themselves; with those who practice it on and off counted in, the number could reach tens of millions; and the number of persons in mainland China who know about this practice that I'm teaching is in the hundreds of millions—everyone seems to know about it when it's mentioned. But I don't want this practice to become political, and I will not allow it to enter politics. Once a cultivation way gets involved in politics, it becomes a wicked one. We are purely spreading this among the people through word of mouth. We have not used media such as formal newspapers, and we haven't even done much publicity work. What has happened is that when someone who is cultivating feels good about it, he or she invites others to come learn it. When one person feels it's good, he will recommend it to his family. Everyone knows that if someone doesn't think much of it, he won't tell his family to come and learn it. When the family finds it to be good, they will encourage *their* relatives and friends to come learn it. And that's how it spreads among people. Another thing is, I started teaching this at the lowest level, and gradually progressed to higher levels, which took me two years. Then I took another two years to really teach the Great Law (*Dafa*). So it was a total of four years, and in China almost every household now knows about it. It has had quite an impact overseas too, for even though people haven't taken up cultivation yet, many have heard about it. The impact in Southeast Asia is probably larger than in the U.S., and many nations have established assistance centers, Falun Dafa Associations, Falun Dafa Societies, and so on. We are seeing a trend of rapid growth.

Here I want to tell you something. In the words of Shakyamuni, right now is the Period of Dharma's End, a time when [the Dharma] can no longer measure up. This means that there is no Fa anymore. Shakyamuni said that his Dharma would not be able to save people after the Period of Dharma's End commenced. Of course, many monks can't succeed at cultivation because they no longer know how to cultivate; they can no longer comprehend the scriptures, or grasp the real meaning of the scriptures. So it is very hard to cultivate now. Today there are many people learning [Dafa]. I can tell you that no phenomenon that appears in human society is accidental. So many persons are coming to learn it. It wouldn't be that way were it not for a certain cosmic arrangement, right? I am telling you that there is definitely a reason for it.

Humankind is held to the law of mutual generation and mutual inhibition; where there is the good there is the evil. So mirroring our rise is the surge in crooked practices and the large number of fake *qigong* practices in today's society. On the surface, it is money and fame that drive people to do those things, but in actuality many of them are incarnations of sinister demons here to bring disorder to the world. Shakyamuni said that when he was imparting his Dharma he saw that human

society had “five vices.” In fact, today’s society is much more complicated than in those times: it has fully “ten vices,” and wicked religions abound.

I’d like to make it clear that we are most definitely not forming some organized religion here. If you want to come and learn our practice, you may come, and if you don’t want to learn it, you may leave—it’s all voluntary. Suppose we coerced you into learning it, and we imposed it on you, and made you learn it; and once you started learning it, suppose you weren’t allowed to leave and had to stay with us. Well, as you can surmise, that would be doing something evil. If a practice is an upright one, it has to be that the person wants to learn it of his own accord. If you forced someone to cultivate, could he do it? He definitely wouldn’t be doing true cultivation. A person can cultivate only when he truly wants to do so. So, forcing someone to stay would be pointless. We don’t go about things that way. If you want to learn it, you learn it. And if you learn it, I will take responsibility for you. Regardless of your predestination, if you want to learn it, I will take responsibility for you. If you don’t want to learn it, then you’re free to go about whatever it is that pleases you.

My purpose of spreading this Fa is to give everyone these wonderful things and the good news. Many of you are indeed predestined and should obtain this Fa; you have been waiting to obtain this Fa. With humanity having arrived at such tremendously chaotic times, the morality of the entire society is declining. Many persons have said that disaster is imminent. While I can tell you that at present there is nothing like that, this downward trend has put mankind in peril. How so? Let’s think about it: what has become of the people in today’s society? Degenerate phenomena are so many that they simply can’t be counted. A human being—why is he referred to as a human being? If people are to live in the world, they have to live by mankind’s moral standards and norms, and only then can you be called a human being. Otherwise, you can’t be considered a human being. It’s not as if you’re a human being just on account of having a head and limbs. Monkeys have limbs too, and there are many living entities in other dimensions that are similar to human beings but that cannot be called human. It is because human beings have standards for conduct and morality as well as moral norms that they are human. If humans abandon the norms for human morality—that is, abandon the moral standards set for humans—and become like animals, then Heaven will not regard humans as human, but instead as beasts. When that time comes mankind will face some terrifying prospects.

Why would there be terrifying prospects? Think about it: this is the human dimension, and gods created Earth specifically for human beings, not beasts. So if that’s the case, although we might see many a bad person daring to act far out of line at present, there’s a good chance what is in store for them is utter extinction. There are many kind persons and many who are better than average out there who are nevertheless sliding downward, too. At present, even when a person can’t manage to take up cultivation, when I teach this truth to him, he will wake up and realize what humanity has become, with the result that he won’t slide further and bring horrible consequences upon himself.

Once I get talking I tend to go on for a while, for I have always wanted to tell you these truths. Since I am going to Houston for a meeting, I just wanted to meet with you here and make a few brief remarks, take the opportunity to see you (*applause*), and tell you again that this Fa truly is precious. I’m teaching it to you without asking anything in return. This is the genuine Fa whose preciousness is beyond compare and that for hundreds or even thousands of years human beings have wanted to know and yet no one would teach to them. It is the nature of human beings that when you are seeking precious things, if you obtain just a little bit, even just one sentence, you will treasure it most carefully. You won’t forget it your whole life. But when something more precious comes your way, or even when I give it to you on a platter, you [might actually overlook it because you] felt it came so easily—and because of that, some people might not treasure it. Humans do have the propensity of not treasuring things that came easily. However, I can tell you that there is no other way [of teaching you this Fa]. I would not have everyone travel everywhere to look for me. I can only give you all these things and let everyone know and let more people know, connecting once again the predestined relationships. I can only do it this way, and it is up to you whether you cherish it or not, as you do have the predestination that it takes. People have analytical abilities, so

you can judge for yourself whether the principles here are good. I think that Buddha nature is present in each and every person, so you should arrive at your own understanding. (*Applause*)

Some of you seem to have traveled a very long way, and no one wants to leave.

Student: Teacher, can we take pictures?

Teacher: Yes, you may.

Student: Can we ask questions?

Teacher: Let's do it as follows. We can't take too long, but I will give you another half hour. I will answer some of your questions. I have a condition, though: only raise questions that are representative and that really have puzzled you. Don't raise questions for which the answer can be found by reading the book. I say this because there are so many people here. If each of you were to raise a question, even two hours wouldn't be enough to answer them all. Is that all right?

Student: May I ask a question?

Teacher: Sure, sure.

Student: I have read Teacher's book and am studying the Fa. I have told many of my friends and relatives about it. Their concern is that, many of them used to be Buddhist believers. And of course, many friends were Christians, too. They are concerned that if they start learning Falun Gong now, can they still chant the sutras or go to church as they used to?

Teacher: All right, I will explain. What you are asking is if persons of other faiths can learn Falun Gong and whether there will be any interference. I have actually explained these things in my book, so I might as well discuss them again.

Cultivating Buddhahood, you know, is not like what everyday people think of when they think of acquiring some sort of knowledge. Cultivating Buddhahood is a really serious thing. Nothing in the world is as serious, nor as magnificent. There are different schools of cultivation, and the principle of no second cultivation way is important in Buddhism, as it is for us. I just said that cultivation is no easy thing for Buddhism in the Period of Dharma's End. Why is that so? At this time people cannot understand the scriptures' true message. A major problem in particular is that the explanations in modern Buddhist dictionaries are not consistent with what Shakyamuni taught in his day. For instance, the principle of no second cultivation way that Buddha Shakyamuni taught means that practices should not be mingled as a person goes about his cultivation, that two or more things shouldn't be cultivated at the same time. Let's say you are learning Zen. Then you shouldn't learn Pure Land. If you are learning Pure Land, then you shouldn't learn Tiantai or Huayan. And if you are learning Huayan, then you shouldn't learn Tiantai, nor Zen or Tantrism.

Why is that? Nowadays people don't understand. As long as it's a Buddha they will worship him, and as long as it's a Buddha they won't care which discipline he is from and will go worship the whole lot. This is a primary reason monks can't succeed at cultivation today. In truth, each Buddha presides over his own paradise, and each paradise has one Tathagata. For instance, the Medicine

Buddha presides over the Lapis Lazuli Paradise; Flower Garland Paradise has its Flower Garland Tathagata; the Lotus Paradise has a Lotus Tathagata; and the Paradise of Ultimate Bliss has the Tathagata Buddha Amitabha, and so on. Each Tathagata Buddha has his own set of cultivation methods, and the basic points of each one's Buddha principles are derived from the Fa principles of the universe. And yet each Tathagata's understanding and cultivation method are different. Why is that? As you might know, the abilities Buddhas have vary, with each Buddha being different. This Buddha has this ability and that Buddha that one, but they are all in the same realm; it's only that their abilities differ. It resembles going to college. You are a college student, and so is he. You are a science major, while he majors in the humanities, another person majors in agriculture, and still another in astronomy. Each is different. They're all college students, and yet what they learn and the knowledge they gain are different. I'm just making a simple analogy.

Now if a human being wants to go to a certain paradise, Buddhism once upon a time required that you make a vow to go there. For instance, one might say, "I want to go to the Pure Land's Paradise, I wish to cultivate to where Buddha Amitabha is and become one of the Buddha's beings under him," or maybe the person aspires to become a Bodhisattva or an Arhat through cultivation. Then after you have made that vow, you cultivate in just his school, you read just Amitabha's sutra, and chant only Amitabha's name. And you would be forbidden from reading any other sutras. It's called "no second cultivation way." If you want to go to the Flower Garland Paradise, then you should read no sutras but the Flower Garland Sutra. Human beings think that all the teachings are still Buddhist principles and are all good for people, but that's just what human beings think. If you don't mind this closely, things will be fouled up. A single volume of scripture will contain all of the principles that a cultivator needs, spanning from the lowest of levels to the highest. It's merely human thinking that considers it good to cultivate a mix of them.

Human society has been sealed off, and all the righteous gods who were once responsible for saving people no longer look after man. They no longer look after man because they consider today's humans too substandard and thus they don't want them or want to save them anymore. I just said something. Namely, that it has been very hard for me to impart this Fa, and that many Gods and Buddhas have tried to prevent me from doing so. They think today's people are unsalvageable and should not be kept. Human beings don't realize this and still feel they're having a good time going about their lives. Human beings don't know what a vast difference there is between the morality of persons present and past. Nor do people know what a great difference there is between Heaven and Earth, how Gods and Buddhas regard humans, how pure it is in Heaven, or how spectacular and magnificent Buddhas are!

The discrepancy between human beings and divine beings is truly vast. The sky appears clear to those in the human world, but that's because human beings see things with eyes that are comprised of substances from this place. If humans had the ability to look at humankind from higher dimensions, they would discover that human society, with its rolling, dark waves of massive karma, is terribly filthy. So Gods and Buddhas do not view human beings the way people imagine it. People are offered salvation because Gods and Buddhas are compassionate toward human beings. It's not as if when you praise Buddha, Buddha will take you [into paradise]. And it's not as if Gods and Buddhas will grant whatever you wish. The fact is, be it a God or Buddha, they place little importance in form when it comes to cultivation. No matter how sizeable a religion may become, it still doesn't amount to cultivation. I too am imparting a practice for human beings, and it is not done to spread a religion. Gods and Buddhas don't recognize religion per se, just human beings.

People always say, "The religion I believe in is so good." It seems that the person is upholding Buddha, or upholding Jesus and the Lord. It's not like that, though. The more enthusiastic he is about that religion itself, the more attached he gets; and the more attached he is, the further away he is from God. The religion is but a cultivation form that was established by human beings. No matter how complete or perfect a religion may be, it's doesn't equate to a human being's having cultivated perfectly. When humans focus their minds on these things, Buddhas and Gods feel quite bad upon seeing it. Buddhas don't look at the forms you adopt in the human world. Maybe you have gone through conversion or baptism, but if your mind is still human what difference does it make? Buddhas don't look at those things; they look only at whether you are truly cultivating yourself. If

you haven't converted or been baptized, and you don't even burn incense or chant the Buddha's name, yet you hold yourself to the standards set forth by Gods and Buddhas and diligently go about true cultivation, then upon seeing you they couldn't be happier. You don't have to even ask, and they will constantly protect you and look after you, helping you to cultivate. Isn't that the idea? (*Applause*)

People say, "I can't give up Buddhist books," "I can't give up the Bible," or "I can't give up chanting incantations." What cannot be given up is the religion, not Buddha. Think carefully and take a look. That's the case with religious believers, is it not? Why can't people give those up? Dig for the root cause in your mind and see how you are looking at this issue deep down inside. With some things, what appears to be true on the surface is not the case. Only truly cultivating yourself constitutes truly believing in Gods or Buddhas. And that is how Buddhas look at it; they don't care about how well a religion is run. As you know, many people in history have succeeded at cultivation, but they were not necessarily persons with religious affiliations. Many people of great virtue do not cultivate in religions. They hold themselves to strict standards and set their minds upon being good people. And when they are able to do so persistently and over a long period of time, and become ever better, Buddhas will take care of them and they will achieve Consummation.

The principle I am teaching is, bottom line, about asking you to be a good person, to be an even better person, and to be a good person who transcends the ordinary man. When you are able to do that, you will be a higher being, and when you elevate further you will be a being in an even higher realm. So, if a person such as this does not go ascend to a heavenly paradise, could he remain on Earth? A human being is selfish and competitive, and he fights for fame and gain. This means that the human beings on Earth are different from you. That is the truth. If you talk to those people [with religious affiliations] along these lines, then it doesn't matter what religion it is, once gods abandon it, it becomes merely a social form among ordinary people and a job of ordinary society. [Their religious affiliation] actually doesn't have any effect on true cultivation. However, there is an issue of being serious about cultivation involved here. Focusing on one cultivation way is real cultivation. If a person wants to learn [our Dafa], he may. Tell him that although [being of a different religion] does not interfere [with cultivating in Dafa], there is an issue of seriousness about cultivation. Tell him that [his religious affiliation] doesn't have an effect and that he will understand things after he reads the book. (*Applause*)

Student: In addition to the five exercises you have taught us, I see that there is a set of mudra, the mudra that you perform.

Teacher: First I will tell you what *mudra* are. *Mudra* can be thought of as the language of Buddhas, a form of expression, for when Buddhas are expressing something and don't wish to use language, they perform *mudra*. Thought is used to communicate between one Buddha and another as well. When you have seen my Law Bodies or seen Buddhas or Bodhisattvas in your dreams, when they spoke to you, they didn't use their mouths at times. But you could hear sound from them. That is communication via thought. In modern terms it's called stereoscopic transmission of thought. *Mudra* are often used when Fa is taught to many Bodhisattvas and Arhats. It is not sign language like that of human beings. It is more sacred and pure than that, and powerful. It is the language of Buddhas, so when *mudra* are performed they carry energy and power, and what a Buddha expresses is, to all beings below him, Fa. But *mudra* are like spoken words, and words can be combined in various ways to express various ideas. Any one issue can be explained from different angles, so they are not set or standardized. However, there are set *mudra* used specifically for exercises; that is, when hands are joined to form a set gesture, which is called a set *mudra*. For example, the lotus *mudra* and the set *mudra* we use when doing the exercises—these are set *mudra*. The *mudra* used with movement are different from the set ones. The *mudra* I performed while doing the exercises on the videotape are for your knowing side to see in advance of your doing the exercises, as well as for the beings in other dimensions. So there is no need for you to learn them. Those of you who later on cultivate into Buddhas will know how to do them. (*Applause*)

Student: Teacher Li, is it true that you can implant Falun for all of us today? (Applause)

Teacher: I will tell you, as long as you are sincere about cultivation—that is, whether you have come here or you are reading the book on your own—you will all get one. I also want to say: make sure you cherish the book. You may not realize it now, but what the book teaches are all Buddha principles. All cultivation levels are encompassed by the book. Actually, what guides your cultivation is none other than Buddha Fa. As you go about cultivating yourself, Buddhas and Gods will help you. Think about it, then: who are those who reside at each level of the heavens? Aren't they Gods and Buddhas? Aren't they higher Buddhas, even higher Buddhas, and still higher Buddhas? That is why I've told you that every word in the book represents layers upon layers of countless Buddhas, ending with my Law Bodies and having Falun manifest at the different levels as well. Why do some people feel good as soon as they pick up the book and give it a read? Why is their karma being eliminated as soon as they read it? And why are their ailments gone as soon as they read it? Of course, as you cultivate it's not as if your karma will be fully eliminated all at once; the first time it can't all be removed for you, that would be too much. [What happens is,] one additional portion is removed when your realm of thought ascends to a higher level, and it is done this way for the sake of your improvement through cultivation. So the power of this Fa is enormous. So think about it: is there a need for me to install Falun in person? As long as you are sincere in learning Dafa and want to cultivate, you will gain one, whoever you may be. Dafa is being transmitted all throughout the world. I couldn't possibly meet with everyone around the world. In China only the students who attended my classes saw me; the majority never have. Would your cultivation work without the things I give you, such as the Falun? No, it wouldn't. That is why I have put my power into this book. As long as someone does cultivation, he will, once he begins reading the book, get everything that's needed in cultivation.

Right now there are many students looking everywhere for me, but I do not want to see them. There is a reason for my not wanting to see them, namely, I want them to stay where they are and steadily, solidly, cultivate themselves. When some students see me they get excited, and that serves as interference to their cultivation. I want them to cultivate with calm minds. My just transmitting the Fa doesn't do the job: you have to obtain the Fa, and also have time to read it, and cultivate yourselves in a solid fashion. That's why I try to meet with my students less often. If the situation were that the Fa I taught couldn't take care of you without my seeing you in person, then I would have done this in vain. So, as long as you read the book, and as long as you truly cultivate, you will gain everything that you are supposed to in this practice. That's guaranteed. *(Applause)*

For thousands of years Buddha Shakyamuni's disciples have cultivated themselves via the sutras, and done so without having seen their master, right? A Fa will provide everything needed to those who truly do cultivation. Usually when I install Falun for you I don't allow you to see it. That is meant to remove the attachment wherein you won't learn a practice until you are given something.

Student: Teacher Li, you said that there are genuine and sham qigong practices. How do we distinguish the genuine ones from the fake?

Teacher: There are genuine and sham *qigong* practices, and it's really hard for ordinary people to tell them apart, for the criteria that today's people judge good from bad with are different from before. When a person truly cultivates, he will slowly come to tell them apart. You can take a look at what the person is teaching. [You might see that] the things he teaches are not upright principles, or ostensibly he asks people to do good things but deep down inside he's after money and thus deceives people. Buddha Fa cultivation is serious, and it can never get mixed up in making money. *(Applause)* Most anything in the world can be used by human beings to make money, with the exception of Buddha Fa, which absolutely cannot be. Moreover, some people's motive is fame, and ordinary people are always attached to fame and gain. Sham *qigong* masters lead people down a deviant path, and they cannot save people. They instead ruin people.

In fact, their sins are by no means small. If a person with a high-caliber underlying base, who has come to obtain the Fa, is ruined by him, just imagine what a huge sin that is. For money and wealth he does something that bad. “Making money” is no excuse for crimes like that. When *qigong* was at its peak in China, the general body of *qigong* masters was for the most part spreading *qigong* free of charge. It’s the sham ones that have since come about that are wrecking things. There were many *qigong* masters who were excellent when they first went public. In each case it was the assistant soul that was cultivating, with the human side having no awareness of it. Over time the person’s attachment to fame and gain would develop. Before they went public, their masters oversaw them, and along with this was the restraining effect of their assistant souls. But, once they became active in society, their human side would prove vulnerable to the temptations of worldly fame and gain. And as soon as they came to desire such things, they would fall. So they would have no *gong*, and thus even they—*qigong* masters—would fall ill.

Student: I wish to ask Teacher: If we, the students, achieve Consummation, where will we go?

Teacher: I have a Falun Paradise. There are a great many heavenly paradises, and I can talk about them with you. Many people sitting here seem to be very well educated, in human terms, so I will talk with you briefly about the concept of the universe.

What humans know is only this one dimension, and it is not as simple as how Buddhism’s followers understand it. When Buddha Shakyamuni was in this world he validated and enlightened to many truths from the fundamental Fa of the universe. People at that time didn’t document them, and nor did the sutras collect and record them. So they were not left behind for the world’s people. It wasn’t until five hundred years after Shakyamuni left the world that people compiled the sutras. As you might imagine, with it being five hundred years later it was quite difficult for people to recall accurately what Shakyamuni said back in his day, and those are the sutras that are with us today. They are in fact altogether different from what Buddha Shakyamuni originally said, though they do contain some Buddhist principles and can, thus, make it possible to cultivate. [What they contain] are just the few things that human beings were allowed to know in the past, and the beings in this dimension are supposed to know only that much.

The universe is not as small as how the Buddhist sutras portray it, nor is it as simple as what Daoists cultivators in the past have suggested. What Shakyamuni taught back then was Arhat Fa, and Arhat Fa is the lowest of all attainment statuses. Of course, he taught higher things too, but very little is left. Buddha Shakyamuni also said something in his day, namely: Tathagata Buddhas number as many as the grains of sand in the Ganges River, and each Tathagata Buddha presides over a paradise. Even that scope he was describing is huge to a human being. But actually, you know, molecules are made up of microscopic particles, and humans live between molecules and planets. In fact, the Milky Way is a particle in the universe, and the expanse comprised of numerous milky ways has a boundary and shell as well. And that is the universe human beings speak of. But in reality, this is but a small universe. What lies beyond this small universe? Modern science dares not even think about it, and human beings haven’t even a concept for it. Nor was the universe born out of a big bang.

At extremely distant places beyond this small universe are celestial systems identical to the small universe. Gods and Buddhas have levels, and Buddhas at lower levels are unable to see those at higher levels. In the eyes of Gods and Buddhas at even higher levels this is still a very small scope. It’s not possible for human beings to explore it. Humans know about the speed of light, but the speed of light is not the fastest. Light is constrained by time and space, and time and space are themselves comprised of matter from the universe. Everything in a dimension, including light, is matter, and every kind of matter has energy. Everyone lives in this molecular-layer dimension. Be it air, wood, water, metal, soil, or rock, everything is comprised of particles at this molecular layer. In this dimension human beings aren’t able to sense the radioactive energy from molecules because humans are themselves made up of molecules. But molecules have energy too, in fact. The light in the human dimension also has this layer of particles as its surface. What I am saying is, different

dimensions have their different lights, and the kinds of matter that comprise the light in different dimensions are different, too. And because of differences in time and space, the speeds of lights in them are different. So, let's look further down: atoms have energy, nuclei's energy is stronger, neutrons are even stronger, and with electrons, quarks, and neutrinos, the next layer is stronger than the previous layer in terms of radiation and energy. The further down the particle is, the stronger the energy and radiation are. Down at the level of the original matter, the force is so powerful to a human being that no words can describe it. But then of course, human beings could never comprehend original matter.

I have been talking about these things so as to tell you that this universe is not as shallow as humans understand it to be. How many universes of different sizes are there in the universe? The number is unquantifiable. However, when it's described within a small system of universe, it can be put this way: around three thousand small universes constitute a second-layer-universe of a slightly larger size, and about the same number of second-layer-universes constitutes a third-layer-universe. In this manner it goes on and on, endlessly, at least as human beings would see it. So how large are "the heavens" (*tian*)? I can tell you that humans will never discover how large the celestial system ultimately is. Even Tathagata Buddhas can't tell. It is simply too huge. It's nothing like how man has conceptualized it with his knowledge.

Think about the words I just said. What does the little bit of knowledge that human beings have mastered amount to? It is kids' stuff, and besides, modern empirical science has led human beings completely astray. Empirical science has created many false impressions. People might not be able to see this at present. Let me give you an example. About the universe I just discussed, modern empirical science believes that it was created by a "big bang." Isn't that a false impression that it has created for you? People all believe it. Empirical science believes that man was created by evolution, and the theory of evolution teaches that man evolved from the ape. It's not like that whatsoever. Isn't it leading you down the wrong path? Man's perception of matter is actually wrong too—even his knowledge of basic things is all wrong. Moreover, humans, living in delusion, have been completely sealed off by such knowledge. They are being sealed off ever more tightly, and so much so that people have hardly any space left. And the truth of this universe has been completely covered up by [this kind of knowledge]. Under such circumstances—think about it, everyone—if one wants to talk about the truth of the universe, will this science accept it? This science has formed an environment, and it is sure to resist. That is why when things at higher levels are mentioned, it will say you have blind faith. That's how things work.

Many people have thus formed a fixed notion. If people of previous generations set forth certain laws and doctrines, such as Einstein's theory of relativity, people then regard them as the pinnacle of science. People's thinking in later generations is then confined within these things, and if someone dares to think higher or intends to go beyond them in his research, immediately there will be people who say, "Can you really surpass Einstein?" Why is that? The existing physical environment of modern empirical science is restraining people. If a truly accomplished scientist exceeds the insights of previous generations, he will find that although the previous generations' insights are true and correct within their domain, once someone surpasses them he will discover that they are not true per se, and in fact serve to limit people. A truly accomplished person who thinks for himself will dare to break through them. You will have truly accomplished something when you break through the conventions set by others. (*Applause*)

Student: We plan to arrange your scriptures chronologically. Is that all right?

Teacher: Yes, that's fine. The word "scripture" (*jingwen*) doesn't have any special meaning. The original meaning of the term scripture had to do with writings that are studied and read often. Writings that are frequently consulted are called "scriptures."

Student: A leopard suddenly appeared while I was in meditation. What was that leopard?

Teacher: Since you wanted to do the meditation, it sought to interfere with you. Don't be afraid of it—nothing can harm you. (*Applause*) Since I did commence this undertaking, I am able to be responsible for cultivators. You can count on it. There are so many people learning, and no one has had problems. But there is one thing: you must regard yourself as a practitioner. It won't work if you have fear, for fear is a human attachment that should be removed.

Student: Teacher Li, we read in the book China Falun Gong that the first exercise should be done three times, so thereafter we do each three times. But why aren't the up-and-down hand movements and Falun Heavenly Circuit done three times [instead of nine]?

Teacher: I would say that this practice is very flexible. If you have time you can do more, and if you don't you can do less. If you are busy today and have time for only one of the exercises, then that's fine. When you don't have time or if you have time for only one movement, then just do that one movement. And when you have more time you can do it more times. But you should come to a stop each time you finish nine repetitions, and that means you should not do it in succession. This way is better. This cultivation that I have taught is different from other cultivation methods. With other cultivation ways, when you do the exercises the practice is on, and when you don't do them it stops and things aren't activated anymore. In our practice the practitioner is being refined twenty-four hours a day, and it is called "Fa refines the practitioner." What do you do the exercises for, then? You are strengthening the mechanisms that I placed in you. Why have I said that the movements should follow the mechanisms? While doing the exercises, the energy in your hands will increase, and the practitioner is strengthening the mechanisms. The stronger the mechanisms become through such strengthening, the more powerful they are. Thus they will serve to automatically guide your movements.

Student: What is the best way of studying the Fa? To just read the book, or copy it [by hand] as we read it, or just copy the book?

Teacher: In mainland China there are many people who memorize the book, and there are many who copy it out. There are also those who can't manage to memorize it, and so they just read it often. All of the approaches are fine. Persons who have memorized the book find that whenever they run into problems they immediately recall the Fa. And that means they aren't apt to handle things wrong. Copying also serves to deepen one's understanding. The purpose of reading often is likewise to deepen one's understanding and bring about constant improvement.

Student: Teacher, we feel that it doesn't seem right for us to call you "Teacher." "Teacher" seems to be too common of a term, so my thinking is that perhaps you asked us to call you "Teacher" because of circumstances in mainland China. So here we will greet you with, "Hello, Master." Those of us who have a background in Buddhism feel that Master is above us, so it should not be "Teacher."

Teacher: Thank you. Actually, whatever you call me is fine—be it Teacher, Master, or my name. They are all fine.

Why do I instruct you to address me however you wish? Because today's society has been fouled up by those who are crooked. Some call themselves Buddhas, some call themselves living Buddhas, some call themselves Grand Master, and some call themselves the head of the religion. But aren't they all seeking fame and profit? I say that you may refer to me however you wish. There's nothing wrong with calling me "Teacher." I don't want any of these titles, I don't seek such things. But of

course, if you, as my student, want to show respect to me and feel that your teacher is really saving you and helping you, and for that reason you want to address me in a certain way, then that's up to you. I feel fine about being called "Teacher."

Student: There is another thing and that is, just now Teacher mentioned, "Don't do it for money." This made me feel that this is a real Buddha. Of course, Teacher didn't say in the book that he is a Buddha, but I feel that when we practiced Buddhism we never encountered an enlightened master such as this who really could provide guidance. So I said to others, "Where can you find someone who won't charge you money and yet will teach you cultivation and eliminate karma for you? Have you ever seen someone like that?" Why am I talking about this now? It's because I feel that our Teacher is a mentor who has truly come to guide our cultivation, so I don't care about what I learned in the past. I assume many among those present here are members of the Buddhist faith, there are many lay Buddhists, as well as those who study other things. But I think that, starting from today we should treat our enlightened master as the real Teacher who guides our cultivation, and we should not do other things. Of course, though, I don't dare to speak for others, but at least I think that, since Teacher has come here today, these words feel like things I had wished to express for years and today finally did.

I have wanted to cultivate toward high levels all my life, but could never find [a suitable practice]. I studied Tantric Buddhism and some qigong practices. I even officially became a disciple to a grandmaster. But thereafter I felt I was still myself and didn't feel a thing. After I heard Teacher's Fa, however, [I can say that] Teacher's Fa is Buddha Fa. When I went to watch the video lectures the first day, Teacher said "as long as you truly cultivate..." so I said to the TV set, "I want to truly cultivate," but I hoped that Teacher would come to the U.S. because all of us present here had been hoping that Teacher would come. So I hope that Teacher will further enlighten us and give us further hints as to what we need to pay attention to here in San Francisco. This is my sincere request. (Applause)

There are many lay Buddhists, and they have a hard time letting go of their practice's things. So we have an obligation to help them. But there is a question I want to ask Teacher directly, and that is: there is this person who used to be a Buddhist and who has read the sutras and worshipped Buddha for many years. He said that whenever he read the sutras (the Buddhist sutras from earlier times) a fragrant smell would come forth, but when he read Falun Gong's book there would be a strange smell. Teacher is here today, and since I can neither sense nor see anything, I ask Teacher to shed some light on this.

Teacher: All right. The reality is, in the Period of Dharma's End the real Buddhas no longer take care of things in the world. But many animals that have gained subtle powers have climbed onto Buddha statues and had people worship and enshrine them. They do some trivial favors for people or help them out a little. Once the person really wants to cultivate, those things interfere. For instance, some people say that doing a certain practice generates a fragrance, but actually, that smell is emitted by weasels. Smell is different in the two dimensions: it is fragrant on this side, but is stench on the other. Truths are inverted in the human world, and so is everything else. What is fragrant to human beings is actually noxious to a Buddha. It wants to keep you from learning Dafa, so it deliberately interferes by emitting that kind of odor.

Here's what I think. Our students in San Francisco shouldn't set their sights on San Francisco alone, but rather, the entire U.S. As to how to do cultivation, just stick to this form. I am doing what I am doing so that the way will be left to future generations and they will do things this way. Were my wish otherwise, I would have [taught the Fa] in a temple and become a monk. But my being a monk wouldn't work. Religions can no longer enable people to obtain the Fa on a broader scale. I have adopted this form for people to cultivate, so you should keep going about it this way. It's not like once someone takes up my practice he is subject to all sorts of rules and regulations. That's no good. If someone wants to learn, he needs to be allowed a process of coming to comprehend it. If someone knows that it is good, tell him to just read the book. When his awareness is improved, he

will automatically and conscientiously handle things better. Things are relatively easier for lay Buddhists in this sense. Monks are in the most pitiable situation, as they are completely blocked by the forms of religion, such that they aren't able to encounter the Fa, nor do they dare to touch it.

Student: Teacher, I have two questions. The first question is: Owing to predestined relationship Teacher has come here and met with us. Teacher said that he has a predestined relationship with us. Then, what does Teacher think of our level—that is, we as a group of students? Can this group of students succeed in the practice and achieve Consummation?

Teacher: I'm telling you, everyone sitting here—children included—that as long as you can manage to cultivate, the path that I arrange for you will lead ultimately to Consummation. *(Applause)* But don't be happy prematurely. With cultivation, the Master introduces you to the practice, while doing cultivation depends on you the individual. I have made arrangements for you, I can protect you, strengthen you, and transform *gong* for your ascendance to every new level. But when it comes to cultivating your mind, that is up to you, yourself. When it comes to your mind, as you run into trouble and face tests, whether you can endure and make it are totally up to you. Of course, when you really can't make it, I will give you hints. At that point, my only concern is that your thinking may have become too extreme to awaken, no matter how I try to give you hints, and thus a dilemma is created. I can tell you that when you fail to pass a test, and you hear things that grate on your ears, that is really my Law Body making use of unpleasant words to rouse you and tell you something. It's hard to pass a test, but once you are through it and look back, you will see that that test was really nothing and it's baffling why you were so attached to it at that time. When you truly make it past, your *xinxing* will improve and your karma will be eliminated—guaranteed. If the trouble you meet with is caused by others, others will give you virtue. So I am telling you that suffering is not a bad thing. Humans are the only ones who think that suffering is a bad thing, that a life of suffering is not a happy one. Yet for a cultivator, suffering will not only eliminate karma, but also raise one's level and lead to Consummation. If you say you just want to be happy among humans beings, and that you don't want to suffer one bit, practicing in comfort, then you won't have your karma eliminated, you won't improve your *xinxing*, and you won't achieve Consummation. That's the idea.

Though I've said what I have, and the Fa principles have been spelled out, when it comes to suffering, it's still possible that you won't be able to endure it. I told everyone a truth before. Why do Buddhas have so many blessings? They truly have both fortune and longevity. That is precisely because however much he suffered, that's how much he gets to enjoy as blessings. Today if I asked all of you sitting here to go through that much suffering, none of you would be able to achieve Consummation. At a fundamental level, as long as you can truly persist in cultivation, Master will help you eliminate more of your karma. What I said earlier still stands: you might have suffered over the course of many lifetimes so that you could obtain this Fa. Many people truly have come to obtain the Fa, and so their suffering began a long time ago. What are you still lacking in today? The only thing that you lack in is getting rid of your human attachments. The suffering I speak of is mainly the hardship that goes with ridding yourself of attachments.