



Opening Speech



Dharma Master De Yuan

Jing Si Abode

Good day, thank you to each one of you for joining us today. We are very pleased to welcome you to this lecture series on Buddhism.

Before we start, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all the distinguished speakers who have generously help us make this event come together. It would not be possible to do this without you.

Venerable Yin Shun promoted humanistic Buddhism. As his disciple, Dharma Master Cheng Yen received Venerable Yin Shun's instruction of "for Buddha's teachings, for sentient beings" and carried them out through practicing the Dharma in daily life and inspiring people to serve as living bodhisattvas.

The Buddha reminds us again and again in his teachings that the essence of the heart, the Buddha, and living beings are the same. Since everyone has the Buddha nature, everyone should awaken to their Buddha nature. But because living beings are ignorant and have afflictions, they need to engage in spiritual cultivation. The starting point of spiritual cultivation is walking the Bodhisattva Path.

After Dharma Master Cheng Yen was ordained, she had lived in a small wooden cabin. Dharma Master Cheng Yen would recite the Lotus Sutra, prostrating with every word of the sutra to comprehend the essence of it, and carried out the spirit of the Sutra of Innumerable Meanings and the Lotus Sutra by putting compassion in action.

We read sutras in order to learn its spirit. Dharma Master Cheng Yen says, "Sutras show us life's principles, which point us to the right path to walk on." Sutras and the Dharma provide us methods for spiritual cultivation. We need to learn the methods and apply them in life. Sutras do not change with time. Though times change, the principles taught by the



Buddha can be applied to the past, present and beyond.

For a long time, the Dharma was limited to the monastic community. However, Dharma Master Cheng Yen hopes that the Dharma can be extended beyond the temples and into people's hearts. Therefore, she established Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu Chi Foundation and guided her disciples to put the Dharma into action. She promoted the concept of living out the Dharma in daily life and inspire people to serve as living bodhisattvas. Tzu Chi volunteers do not often hold Dharma services nor emphasize on rituals, but they harbor the Dharma in their hearts and carry it out in their daily life.

Dharma Master Cheng Yen says that she felt very courageous for establishing Tzu Chi and moreover fostering inter-faith collaborations to build harmony. If mutual respect and cooperation could be fostered among the various religious group to relieve the suffering of people and living beings, this will be the most beautiful thing in the world.

So as we explore the Dharma through this series, let us remember that the sutras show us life's principles, which points us to the right path to walk on, and what we need to do is to make progress on the path and never stop. The Bodhi Path is broad, straight, and easy to walk on. If we set our direction, focus on spiritual cultivation with a pure heart, and walk diligently, we are doing the right thing.

So, a very warm welcome to each one of you, I give you my best wishes for a successful event. May everyone be well and safe. May there be no disaster in this world.

Thank you.

