



The Scripture of the
Founding Master

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Chapter Two Doctrine

1. The Founding Master said, “In the past all the founders of religions have appeared according to their own proper time in order to instruct all sentient beings in how to conduct their lives. However, their core principles in disseminating their teachings differed according to their era and region, just as there are different specialties within the field of medicine. Therefore, Buddhism took the formlessness of all things in the universe as its core principle and taught the truth that is free from arising and ceasing and the principle of retribution and response of cause and effect, elucidating principally the path whereby ignorance is transformed into awakening. Confucianism took the forms of all things in the universe as its core principle and taught the three duties, five relationships, and the four constants of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, and knowledge, elucidating principally the path whereby one cultivates oneself, regulates one’s family, governs one’s country, and realizes peace in the world. Daoism took the Way of the natural universe as its core principle and taught techniques for nourishing the nature, elucidating principally the path of tranquility and nonaction. Although these three paths have core principles that differ from one another, they all have the common goal of rectifying the world and benefiting living beings.

“In the past, however, these three teachings of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism have mainly disseminated their own doctrines, but in the future it will not be enough to deliver the whole world through limited subjects alone. Hence, we have synthesized all these doctrines and established all courses on the basis of combining Cultivation, Inquiry, and Choice into the Il-Won (One Circle), and on the basis of the wholeness of both spirit and flesh and the simultaneous practice of universal principles and human affairs. Whoever practices well in this manner will penetrate not only to the cardinal doctrines of those three teachings, but in addition the doctrines of all religions in the world and all the dharmas under heaven will return to the one mind, so that we are able to attain the great Way that reaches everywhere.”

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2. One of his disciples asked, “What do you mean by ‘the great Way’?” The Founding Master answered, “What can be practiced by all people under heaven is the great Way under heaven. What can be practiced by only a limited group is the small Way. Therefore, our cardinal teaching of Il-Won, along with the Fourfold Grace, the Four Essentials, the Threefold Study, and the Eight Articles, is the great Way under heaven, which must be understood and can be practiced by all people under heaven.”

3. Kwangjŏn asked, “What is the relationship between Il-Won-Sang (One Circle Image) and human beings?” The Founding Master answered, “You have asked about a great truth. In our order, we enshrine Il-Won-Sang in the same way that Buddhists in the past have enshrined buddha images. However, a buddha image manifests the physical form of the Buddha, but Il-Won-Sang manifests the mind-essence of the Buddha. The physical form represents only his human form, but the mind-essence is vast and infinite, combining being and nonbeing and sustaining itself through the three time periods of past, present, and future. Hence, it is the original source of the myriad things in heaven and earth and the realm of samādhi beyond all words and speech. Confucianism calls it the grand ultimate (t’aegŭk) or the ultimate of nonbeing (mugŭk); Daoism calls it nature or the Way (to); Buddhism calls it the pure Dharmakāya Buddha. In principle, however, all of these are different expressions for the same thing, and regardless of which direction or which road one takes, at the ultimate stage they all eventually lead back to the truth of Il-Won. If anything that calls itself a religion does not found itself upon such a truth, then it is a deviant Way. Therefore, our order designated the truth of Il-Won-Sang as the paradigm for relating it to our daily lives, and elucidated also the two gateways of faith and practice.”

4. Kwangjŏn asked again, “How do we practice faith in Il-Won-Sang?” The Founding Master replied, “Take Il-Won-Sang as the object of faith and, believing in its truth, pursue merit and happiness. If we were to specify the content of Il-Won-Sang, it is in fact the Fourfold Grace; if we were to specify the

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content of the Fourfold Grace, it is in fact all things in the universe; and there is nothing among the myriad things in heaven and earth or the dharma realm of empty space that is not the buddha. Thus, regardless of time or place, we must never neglect to maintain a respectful state of mind and should treat the myriad things with the same pure mind and pious attitude we have for the venerable Buddha. We should also exert ourselves to make buddha offerings directly to the myriad things themselves and thereby create merit and happiness in a practical manner. In sum, we are prompting people to transform a partial faith into a well-rounded faith and a superstitious faith into a realistic faith.”

5. Kwangjŏn continued with his questions, “How do we pursue the practice of Il-Won-Sang?” The Founding Master answered, “Our aim is to take Il-Won-Sang as the model of practice, and to develop our character by modeling ourselves wholeheartedly on its truth; and, by awakening to the truth of Il-Won-Sang, to understand without any obstructions the beginning and end and the roots and branches of the myriad things in heaven and earth, the human cycle of birth, old age, sickness, and death, and the principle of the retribution and response of cause and effect. Also as is the case with Il-Won, our minds should have no selfishness, nor be swayed and taken in by cravings and attachments, but instead should nourish the nature that is clear and round. As with Il-Won, in using our minds in all sensory conditions, we should act always in a fair and upright manner, without being drawn in by joy, anger, sorrow, or happiness, or by degrees of remoteness or closeness, intimacy or distance. Therefore, awakening to the principle of Il-Won means to see one’s nature (kyŏnsŏng); guarding the essential nature of Il-Won means to nourish one’s nature (yangsŏng); and to engage in conduct that is well-rounded like Il-Won means to command one’s nature (solsŏng). These are the essential Ways of our practice, namely Cultivating the Spirit, Inquiry into Human Affairs and Universal Principles, and Choice in Action, and they are the equivalent of the three trainings in precepts (śīla), absorption (samādhi), and wisdom (prajñā) taught by the Buddha of the past. Cultivation is both absorption and nourishing one’s nature; Inquiry is both wisdom and seeing one’s nature; Choice is both precepts and commanding one’s nature. If we sincerely follow this practice,

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then regardless of whether we are educated or not, intelligent or not, male or female, old or young, we will all be able to attain buddhahood.”

6. He asked further, “Then, are such truths, awesome powers, and methods of practice contained in the shape of the Il-Won-Sang diagram itself?” The Founding Master replied, “That circular image is a model for teaching the true Il-Won. It is like pointing at the moon with your finger: your finger is not the real moon. In the same way, a practitioner must discover the true Il-Won through the model of Il-Won-Sang, guard Il-Won’s true nature and practice Il-Won’s perfect mind. Then, the truth of Il-Won-Sang and our lives will mesh perfectly.”

7. The Founding Master said, “The truth of Il-Won is epitomized by voidness (kong), completeness (won), and rightness (chǒng). With regard to nourishing one’s nature, voidness means to contemplate the realm that transcends being and nonbeing; completeness means that state of mind in which thoughts neither come nor go; rightness means that the mind remains impartial. With regard to seeing one’s nature, voidness means to know the realm where the pathways of words and speech are eradicated and the realm that does not involve mental activity, owing to exhaustive knowledge of the truth of Il-Won; completeness means that state in which the extent of one’s knowledge is vast and unobstructed; rightness means to observe correctly and to adjudicate correctly all things, owing to precise understanding. With regard to commanding one’s nature, voidness means to engage in the practice of no-thought in all matters; completeness means to engage in the practice of nonattachment in all matters; rightness means to engage in the practice of the Middle Way in all matters.”

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8. The Founding Master said, “The reason that practitioners seek to awaken to sublime truth is in order to apply that truth in their real lives; for, if one cannot apply it, or if one just leaves it unutilized, it will be useless. Now, let me talk about applying the Il-Won-Sang, the Dharmakāya Buddha, in our everyday lives. First, each time you encounter the Il-Won-Sang, you will take it as a hwadu for seeing the nature and attaining buddhahood. Second, you will take it as a model in order to keep on practicing consummately in your ordinary lives, like Il-Won-Sang. Third, you will take it as an object that you keep on believing based on truth, knowing that all things in the universe have the actual authority to bestow directly transgressions and merits. Those of you who have understood this truth will venerate Il-Won-Sang each time you encounter it, as if it were a portrait of your parents.”

9. A person inquired, “Which buddha does your honored order worship as its original teacher?” The Founding Master replied, “We worship Śākyamuni Buddha as our original teacher.” The person asked again, “If Śākyamuni Buddha is your original teacher, why do you not enshrine an image of him but instead enshrine Il-Won-Sang?” The Founding Master replied again, “With an image of Śākyamuni Buddha, it is difficult to elucidate and teach a realistic understanding of the evidence of bestowed transgressions and merits. However, Il-Won-Sang represents the pure Dharmakāya Buddha. Heaven and earth, parents, and our fellow beings are all transformation bodies of the Dharmakāya Buddha; laws as well are bestowed by the Dharmakāya Buddha. We can easily expound and teach the evidence that heaven and earth, parents, fellow beings, and laws bestow transgressions and merits on us. Therefore, we enshrine Il-Won-Sang as our object of faith.” The person then asked, “If this is the case, then aren’t you only paying lip service to worshipping Śākyamuni Buddha as the original teacher and in fact not showing him any particular propriety?” The Founding Master answered, “Even though we do not enshrine a statue of the Buddha in our dharma halls, we nevertheless direct our regular adherents’ faith so that they have sincere respect for the Buddha. At the same time, the true worship of the Buddha lies in eternally transmitting and developing the Buddha’s dharma lineage and his work by respectfully receiving his fundamental spirit

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and so engaging in practices ourselves when we employ our six sense organs. This is what we emphasize. For how could worship of the Buddha be limited only to the act of enshrining and regularly bowing before his image?”

10. The person asked again, “To enshrine Il-Won-Sang in order realistically to interpret and teach the sources of transgressions and merits is probably most appropriate for the wise in this intellectually advanced age. However, in any age, inevitably the wise are few and the ignorant many. Wouldn’t it be more beneficial, then, to enshrine an image of the Buddha in order to foster the faith of the ignorant masses?” The Founding Master replied, “I think that once the evidence that the Dharmakāya Buddha, the Fourfold Grace, bestows transgressions and merits on us is explicitly presented, it will be easy even for the ignorant to believe and understand. But for those whose faith cannot be aroused without a buddha image, it will also be good for them to be delivered by going to a place where an image is enshrined. Then, both those who have faith in an image, as well as those who have faith in Il-Won-Sang, can be delivered.”

11. The person asked again, “What is the relationship between Il-Won-Sang and Śākyamuni Buddha?” The Founding Master answered, “The Il-Won is the source of all truth, and Śākyamuni Buddha is the teacher who awakened to the truth and then taught it to us. Even though this world may have a wonderful truth, that truth would be of no use to us if there were not a person who discovered and taught it. Even if Śākyamuni Buddha had come to this world, if there were not this truth of Il-Won-Sang, he could not have become Śākyamuni Buddha, and would have had no material to teach for forty-nine years. Thus, we designate Il-Won-Sang, the Dharmakāya Buddha, as the symbol of truth and Śākyamuni Buddha as our original teacher, and worship together the dharmakāya tathāgata and the rūpakāya tathāgata. However, that is an explanation given from the perspective of the distinction between Il-Won-Sang and Śākyamuni Buddha. From the perspective of the truth that is beyond all distinctions, you must understand the indivisibility of Il-Won-Sang and Śākyamuni Buddha.”

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12. One of his disciples asked, “What is the difference between worshipping the buddha image and worshipping Il-Won-Sang?” The Founding Master answered, “Worshipping the buddha image has meaning only as his descendant disciples’ commemoration of and reverence for the Buddha’s character. But the meaning of worshipping Il-Won-Sang is indeed wide and great. Rather than revering the Buddha’s character alone as the object of faith, we revere and have faith in all things in the universe as if they were the buddha, and seek in them the origins of our transgressions and merits, suffering and happiness. Also, we take Il-Won-Sang as the model for our practice, and aim to develop character that is as perfect as Il-Won-Sang. This generally is the difference.”

13. The Founding Master said, “Worshipping the buddha image was sometimes necessary for success in edification, but that will not be the case from here on out. Since people have worshiped the buddha image for several thousand years, nowadays there must be some who have gradually become disillusioned with its potency. If people become disillusioned, they will dismiss what is only an expediency, without understanding the principle of the unsurpassed, great path and will no longer have faith. How would this not be an obstacle to edification? I also am afraid that there will be more than a few people who will enshrine the revered buddha images as a means to seek their own personal livelihoods. How would this not be regrettable? Therefore, we have decided to revere Il-Won-Sang, the Dharmakāya Buddha.”

14. The Founding Master continued, “This is an age in which the population of the whole world is gradually entering a period of maturity and developing knowledge and perspective. Anyone encountering sensory conditions involving suffering and happiness may understand about receiving transgressions and merits. Having this understanding, they will seek the origin of transgressions and merits and, in seeking that origin, their meaning will become clear. Once that meaning has become clear, they will have right belief. If people discover and worship an object of faith that is easy to understand realistically, then both the wise and the foolish will be able to settle their minds and

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find their true destinies (ansim immyōng). Rather than relying as in the past on others to perform their buddha offerings for them, they will now mostly have to perform their own. The procedures for making these buddha offerings will have to be mastered by all the adherents; our doctrines and institutions will comprise the main principles of these procedures. Even after mastering the procedures and correctly making buddha offerings, there will be differences in the results, for only when one continues with utmost sincerity appropriate to the circumstances will there be success. Therefore, creating merits according to causes and conditions, or becoming rich and noble or poor and disadvantaged, all depends on how well one has made buddha offerings throughout one's many lifetimes. People who have much merit and much wisdom will certainly have all their vows and wishes fulfilled whatever these may be, for, having awakened to the principle of Il-Won-Sang, the Dharmakāya Buddha, they revere as the buddha the myriad things in heaven and earth, as well as the dharma realm of empty space, and make buddha offerings with a clear understanding of the time limit required and an awareness of the sources of transgressions and merits. Hence, our aim is to worship Il-Won-Sang, the Dharmakāya Buddha, so that we may worship not only the buddha image as the buddha, but also the myriad things in heaven and earth as well as the dharma realm of empty space."

15. Once, while the Founding Master was residing at Pongnae hermitage, an old couple was passing by and commented that their daughter-in-law was so ill-tempered and unfilial that they were on their way to Silsang monastery to make a buddha offering about the situation. Upon hearing their problem, the Founding Master said to them, "How is it that you know to make a buddha offering to the buddha image but not to the living buddha?" The old couple asked, "Where is the living buddha?" The Founding Master replied, "The daughter-in-law who lives at your home is the living buddha. Since she is the one with the prerogative to be either filial or unfilial, why don't you try making an offering to her, first?" They asked, "How should we make such an offering?" The Founding Master answered, "With the money you were going to use for the buddha offering, buy her a gift she would appreciate and treat her with the same

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respect you would the Buddha. Then, depending on how sincere you are, the effect of your buddha offering will appear.” When the couple returned home, they did as they were told and ultimately, in a few months, she indeed became a filial daughter-in-law. The old couple returned to the Founding Master and thanked him over and over again, and the Founding Master said to his disciples sitting beside him, “This is a pragmatic buddha offering that directly targets the specific object of transgression and merit.”

16. Kim Yöngsin asked, “Are there other methods of buddha offerings besides making a pragmatic buddha offering to the specific object of the Fourfold Grace?” The Founding Master replied, “There are two methods of making buddha offerings. One is the pragmatic buddha offering that is offered directly to the specific object of the Fourfold Grace. The second is the buddha offering to Truth, which is made to the Dharmakāya Buddha via the formless dharma realm of empty space. You must apply appropriately these two types of buddha offerings according to the proper time, place, and situation and, if you continue exerting sincere effort until you are successful, there then will be no wishes that are not fulfilled sooner or later.” She asked again, “How does one make a buddha offering to Truth?” The Founding Master answered, “After cleansing your body and mind and making a vow before the Dharmakāya Buddha, remove all distracting thoughts and single-mindedly offer up your sincerity by either entering samādhi, reciting the Buddha’s name, chanting a sūtra, or intoning a mantra, and so forth. Then, you will ultimately fulfill your vow and, at the same time, that awesome power will appear and you will attain the ability to deliver sentient beings who have fallen into unwholesome destinies and to subdue hundreds and thousands of evil Māras. For this to occur, however, every bone in your body must ache with toil and your sincerity must pierce heaven itself.”

17. One of his disciples asked about the principle about a response that comes from mental affirmation (simgo). The Founding Master answered, “As for the response that comes from mental affirmation, the confessor gains an unimaginable power in a natural and spontaneous manner, which is in accordance with the sincerity of the person making the mental affirmation. It is difficult to

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prove this in words. But, for example, at the time that one does not have the strength to remove unwholesome mental states that constantly arise, if one offers up mental affirmations sincerely, then those mental states will cease of themselves and wholesome mental states will return. If, due to the force of one's past habits, a person is unable to stop committing wrongful acts even when the person tries not to, one will naturally repent and lift oneself by offering mental affirmations and sincerely pledging to do good in the future. These are but a few obvious pieces of evidence of the response to mental affirmation. Such past legends as 'a filial son who found bamboo shoots in winter' and 'red bamboo shoots growing from the spot where a loyal subject shed blood,' as well as the miracle in our own order of 'the seal of blood from the bare fingers of the nine disciples,' have all come in response to mental affirmation. Bear in mind, however, the great response and awesome power will ultimately appear only when one continuously and wholeheartedly carries out one's vow, without violating any vows already made; you must especially keep this point in mind. If in this manner you gain firm power of mind, you will even be able to seize infinite heavenly authority and display awesome power that is like that of heaven and earth."

18. The Founding Master said, "The Threefold Study, which is our essential Way of practice, is the most necessary dharma for cultivating spirit and creating well- rounded character; this is a dharma that cannot be neglected even for a moment. It is, for example, no different than the three requisites of clothing, food, and shelter for the body. When our physical body is born into this world, we need something to eat, something to wear, and a home in which to live, and if even one element is missing, we will have difficulty sustaining our lives. For our spirit, we need the power from Cultivation, Inquiry, and Choice, and if even one element is deficient, nothing will work out satisfactorily. Therefore, from the perspective of the wholeness of spirit and flesh, I say that the six great principles are comprised of the three physical requisites of clothing, food, and shelter and the three spiritual requisites of the one mind, knowledge, and implementation. These six great principles, being in symbiotic relationship with each other, together form a single life source for ourselves.

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However, ordinary people recognize only the importance of the three physical principles and forget how crucial the three spiritual principles are. What ignorance! In actuality, one should realize the fact that when one cultivates the three spiritual principles well, the three physical principles will naturally follow. This is the dharma of acting with knowledge of the roots and branches.”

19. The Founding Master said, “The lives of ordinary people are concerned with working hard to find clothing, food, and shelter, but not with seeking out the principle by which that clothing, food, and shelter appears. This is really a shame. If one needs the physical body’s clothing, food, and shelter, isn’t it even more the case that one requires the power of the spiritual requisites of the one mind, knowledge, and implementation that control the physical life? Only as a person cultivates these three powers will clothing, food, and shelter also be well received in kind. In this wise, one will become a person whose character is well-rounded. When a person knows the foundation of one’s mind and uses it as one wishes, one will be able to put into practice the right Way also in procuring clothing, food, and shelter. One will be liberated from the cycle of birth, old age, sickness, and death, and attain the path to eternal life; and, by understanding the principle of cause and effect, one will seek wisdom and merit. This is the true and eternal road for procuring clothing, food, and shelter. Therefore, the three principles of the spirit are the foundation for the physical requisites of clothing, food, and shelter.”

20. The Founding Master addressed the congregation in a meditation hall, “In traditional monasteries, the Yōmbul school did nothing but recite the Buddha’s name; the Kyo (Doctrine) school did nothing but read sūtras, the Sōn school did nothing but sit in meditation; the Yul (Vinaya) school did nothing but keep the precepts. Within the single buddhadharma, they argued and criticized each other, but everything they taught was but one subject within the three trainings in precepts, absorption, and wisdom. We develop these subjects together and pursue each at its proper time: every day at dawn we sit in meditation, and during the day and night we participate in various sessions involving scriptures, lectures, conversations, cases for questioning, the principle of

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the nature, diaries, and reciting the Buddha's name. By training alike in each of these various courses, anyone who makes an effort in this manner will be able to obtain results that are many times greater than those deriving from traditional training."

21. The Founding Master continued, "Even though the subjects of the Threefold Study are different when we learn them from the scriptures, they have in actual practice a close connection to one another, like the three tines of a pitchfork. Cultivation must also be combined with Inquiry and Choice; Inquiry must also be combined with Cultivation and Choice; Choice must also be combined with Cultivation and Inquiry. Hence, developing together the Threefold Study involves combining each of these powers so that you will advance without delay in your practice. Also, the reason we gather together as a congregation in a meditation hall and exchange views regarding practice is to have our wisdom honed and to gain greater knowledge and perspective, without having to make excessive effort."

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22. The Founding Master said, “Practitioners must maintain the suitable measure of the Threefold Study in facing the thousands of sensory conditions. If we were to give a simile for the Threefold Study, it is like the compass or helmsman in sailing a ship: if there were no compass or helmsman, that ship would not be able to sail across the sea; so too would it be difficult for people to lead a good life in this world if they lack the suitable measure of the Threefold Study.”

23. The Founding Master continued, “My method of edification, to give a simile, could either start from the branches and leaves of a tree to reach the roots or start from the roots to reach the branches and leaves. This is because I make the dharma available according to a person’s faculties.”

24. Song Tosŏng asked the Founding Master, “In the past when I read the scriptures of ancient sages or listened to explanations about their meaning, I was merely reading them over and memorizing them; I did not actually comprehend the true meaning of the Way and its power. After I met you, Great Master, human affairs and universal principles gradually became clear. However, in retrospect, what I have learned from you is the same words and explanations I had read and heard in the past. How is it that I feel like I understand them anew?” The Founding Master answered, “The ancient scriptures are like ready-to-wear clothing, which is difficult to fit everyone’s body, but what is transmitted by the mouth and received by the mind is like wearing individually tailored clothing, which fits each person’s body perfectly. How could the practice of cultivating the foundation of the mind according to dharmas that fit each individual’s faculties and situations be compared to practicing according to those set scriptures?”

25. A Christian pastor said to the Founding Master, “Since time immemorial, all religions without exception have talked about precepts. But it seems to me that these instead oppressed the innocent inherent nature of human beings and restrained their free spirit, thus creating many obstacles to edification.” The Founding Master said, “What makes you think that way?”

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The pastor said, “There are some people in this world who for no particular reason reject religions because they do not understand their truths, but many hesitate to enter a faith even while sensing the sacredness of those doctrines because in their hearts they feel uncomfortable about precepts. Wouldn’t this type of person have been open to deliverance were it not for precepts?” The Founding Master said, “You only know to lament the fact that such people may not be open to deliverance; but haven’t you considered the grave consequences in other areas? We have thirty precepts and, since none can be eliminated, I have people keep them all. However, we prescribe precepts to individuals in stages according to their level. Whoever enters our order for the first time will have some difficulties severing their old secular habits; for them we prescribe ten precepts that can easily be observed. Then, at the next two stages we prescribe ten more each. After a practitioner masters all thirty precepts, we don’t prescribe any more, but leave it to the person’s discretion, because a person who has achieved that level will know in advance what is appropriate and inappropriate and behave accordingly. However, people who have not reached this level cannot be left alone without any precepts; for, how can a neophyte be treated the same as a knowledgeable practitioner? There are far more ignorant people in this world, but what you just advocated is only appropriate for one in a thousand; but how can we prescribe a dharma that is appropriate only for a few and neglect the rest? Furthermore, if we lived by ourselves, it wouldn’t matter if we just did as we pleased. But in the world we face a web of various kinds of laws and are widely watched by the general public; so, if we indulge in wrongful conduct, where will we hide? Therefore, I conclude that when a person goes out into the world, one should be cautious of every step as if treading on thin ice, so as not to deviate from the human Way. Thus, I cannot help but prescribe precepts to practitioners.”

26. When the Founding Master was visiting the Pusan region, a few followers paid a visit and said, “We have the utmost respect for the Great Master’s dharma, but since we make our livelihood by fishing, we are constantly breaking the first precept. We are ashamed and discouraged about this.” The Founding Master replied, “Don’t worry! A person’s occupation is difficult to

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change overnight. Even if you break one precept out of thirty but earnestly keep the other twenty-nine, you will still be able to contribute immeasurable merit to society through your twenty-nine good deeds. Just because you are unable to observe one, why would you have yourself fall into the abyss of transgression and suffering by not observing the other twenty-nine that you could keep? Moreover, if you are able to observe the twenty-nine precepts well, then a way for you to observe the remaining one will naturally appear. With such faith, keep going with your practice without being discouraged.”

27. The Founding Master came to a Sŏn session and said, “Yi Inŭihwa has now had such a great arousal of the mind that she neglects her private business in order to attend dharma meetings and join Sŏn sessions. Instead of giving her an award for her devoted faith, I would like to allot this hour to her. Ask any questions you may have.” Inŭihwa asked, “If someone asks me what we teach and learn in our order, how should I reply?” The Founding Master answered, “Buddhism originally teaches one to awaken and know for oneself the principle of ‘all things are created by the mind,’ and you may answer that we teach and learn the same principle. Once we know it, we will also discover the principles of ‘neither arising nor ceasing’ and ‘the retribution and response of cause and effect.’” She asked again, “After we have learned this principle, how should we practice?” The Founding Master answered, “We keep our minds free from disturbances, delusions, or wrong-doings when facing sensory conditions.”

28. The Founding Master asked Kim Yŏngsin, “What is the most indispensable thing for a person living in the secular world?” Yŏngsin answered, “I think things related to clothing, food, and shelter are most indispensable.” The Founding Master again asked, “Which is the most indispensable of the subjects you have learned at school?” Yŏngsin replied, “The subject of moral cultivation was the most indispensable.” The Founding Master answered, “You are right. For the life of the flesh, clothing, food, and shelter are important things, but for practice, moral cultivation is important. This is why clothing, food, and shelter, as well as moral cultivation become the foundation for both

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life and practice. However, the subject of moral cultivation that is now taught at school is insufficient as a method of moral cultivation. Unless it is a religion that advocates practice in cultivating the mind, one will not be able to find moral cultivation's full worth. Thus, you should constantly bear in mind that practicing the study of the Way is central to all studies and the foundation of all practice.”



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29. The Founding Master asked the congregation at a meditation hall, “If someone were to ask you what you are learning here, how would you answer?” A member of the congregation said, “I would answer that we are learning the ‘three great powers.’” Another member said, “I would answer that we are learning the ‘essential Way of human life.’” After hearing conflicting answers from several other people, the Founding Master said, “Although all your answers are applicable, I will elaborate a bit, so listen carefully! As a rule, whatever answer one gives should be appropriate to the questioner’s character and attitude at the time, but to answer in general terms, I would say that I am teaching about the dharma of the mind’s functioning. To answer more specifically, I teach the knowledgeable how to use knowledge; the powerful how to use power; the wealthy how to use wealth; the resentful how to live a life of gratitude; those who lack merit how to make merit; those who live a life dependent on other-power to rely on self-power; the reluctant to learn how to learn; those reluctant to teach how to teach; those lacking public spirit how to be motivated to have public spirit. In brief, I teach others to make the most of all their talents, material wealth, and surroundings, in accordance with the right Way.”

30. The Founding Master continued, “In today’s world, as material civilization has developed, the knowledge and skills of scholars, farmers, artisans, and merchants have made great advances; the implements of life have become much fancier, and people’s eyes and minds have been seduced by these flashy products. In contrast, the human spirit, which should be making use of those material things, has become so weak that it cannot but be enslaved by the material, rather than master of it. This is truly a disturbing situation. No matter how good a material thing in this world might be, if the mind that makes use of it is not upright, that thing will instead be abused. No matter how great the knowledge and fine the skill of a person, if the mind that makes use of them is not upright, they will instead be used to harm the public. No matter how good one’s surroundings, if the mind that makes use of them is not upright, they will instead be used to promote transgressive actions. No matter how dazzling all of external civilization under heaven, whether it makes the world better or worse depends solely upon how well the dharma of applying the mind is managed.

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If we make use of our minds rightly, then all of civilization will become instrumental in helping to construct a paradise; but if we do not, then all of civilization will instead become like supplying weapons to thieves. Therefore, you all must rouse yourselves now, and diligently learn the dharma of using the mind, which is the master of all dharmas. Become the pilot of your own mind, who in thousands of sensory conditions always uses everything wholesomely by considering the benefit to both oneself and others. Accordingly, you must exert yourselves in both aspects of the material and the spiritual in order to construct a single truly civilized world, by disseminating to others the method of piloting the mind.”

31. The Founding Master said, “A flawless world will emerge when, inwardly, by advancing spiritual civilization, we have developed study of the Way and, outwardly, by advancing material civilization, we have developed study of science, and so we enjoy the wholeness of both spirit and flesh and the completeness of the inward and outward. However, if, as is the case today, we are partial to material civilization and ignore spiritual civilization, then like a careless child playing with a knife, we will not know when we may meet with danger; we would be like a mentally handicapped person who is in perfect physical health. On the other hand, a world with only an advanced spiritual civilization but no material civilization is like a physically handicapped person in perfect mental health. How can we call it a complete world if one of the aspects is inadequate? Hence, only in an age that has developed both inward and outward civilization will there emerge a flawless world of peace and comfort.”

32. The Founding Master said, “Worldly people receive such infinite convenience and profit in their lives through the dual benefits of material civilization and moral culture that we cannot but be grateful for the many inventors and exemplary teachers. However, material civilization mainly provides comforts for our physical lives; its results manifest quickly, but its merit is limited. Moral culture disciplines people’s minds, which are by nature formless; its results are slow, but its merit is unlimited. How can its awesome power to deliver all sentient beings and to cure the world be compared to that of material civi-

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lization? How can its radiance be limited to this world alone? It is a great regret that people of our time know to seek the obvious material civilization, but even to this day very few seek the formless moral culture.”

33. The Founding Master said, “In the past, the Buddha taught his disciples who had left the household life strictly to refrain from wearing nice clothes, eating good food, living in comfortable dwellings, and enjoying worldly pleasures; and if greed for such worldly pleasures were to arise, he urged them to take pleasure only in keeping their minds and bodies calm and tranquil. I, however, teach you to take up appropriate work and pursue it diligently, to enjoy clothing, food, and shelter in due measure, and occasionally to engage in recreation to recuperate from fatigue. In this age when human knowledge has advanced and living standards have improved, how can we disseminate our teachings with only a limited dharma? The perfectly interfused buddhadharma must be applied widely to the individual, family, society, nation, and world. This is the core principle of my dharma.”

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34. The Founding Master addressed the congregation at a meditation hall in Yŏngsan, “Even though it is said that the world today is an age marked by an unprecedentedly developed civilization that did not exist before, we should not become intoxicated by the externally dazzling and convenient material civilization, but must consider well the corresponding defects and future consequences. In today’s world, the farther civilization advances externally, the deeper the source of illness becomes internally, so that we will soon fall into a terminal state unless we do something about it. This cannot but deeply worry people who are concerned about the morality of the world. What kind of illnesses, then, has the world today caught? First is the illness of money. People who have come to feel that they first must have money in order to achieve all the pleasures and desires of human life consider money to be more important than integrity and honor. For this reason, all our moral sensibilities have degenerated and our friendships have declined. This is indeed a serious illness. Second is the illness of resentment. Each individual, family, society, and nation does not acknowledge its own faults, but only looks for those of others. They are unaware of the grace they have received from others and remember only what they have done for others, and thus have endless conflicts, both great and small, deriving from their hatred and resentment. This is indeed a serious illness. Third is the illness of dependency. This illness is more serious in this country [Korea] because of the harmful effect of several hundreds years of bookish enfeeblement. The children of wealthy families tended to pass their days idly, without doing any work, and if a person happened to have a rich relative or friend, one would try to depend on that person, leading to a situation in which ten people were living off of one person’s wealth. This is indeed a serious illness. Fourth is the illness of a reluctance to learn. Ninety percent of a person’s character is formed through what they have learned. Like a bee collecting honey, one must humbly learn the knowledge one requires regardless of the other person’s social class or field. Many people in this world, however, lose the chance to learn because of their conceit. This is indeed a serious illness. Fifth is the illness of a reluctance to teach. No matter how much knowledge a person may have, if he does not know how to apply his knowledge or to transmit his knowledge to the next generation, it would be no different than not hav-

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ing that knowledge. There are many people in this world who, if they gain a little knowledge, become conceited and arrogant and do not deign to associate with people of lesser knowledge. This is indeed a serious illness. Sixth is the illness of a lack of public spirit. Over many thousands of years in the past, the notion of selfishness has hardened in people's minds like a mountain of silver or a wall of iron, and it is rare to find people to begin with who work for the benefit of the greater public. Even those who, because of their attraction to temporary fame, start out professing to work for the public ultimately fail and abandon their work because of their selfishness. Therefore, all public service institutions and organizations are becoming impoverished. This is indeed a serious illness."

35. The Founding Master continued, "Now, in order to cure these illnesses, we must first of all promote the study of the Way, that is: the Way of being content with one's lot in life; the Way of discovering grace at its very source; the Way of leading a life of self-power; the Way of learning; the Way of teaching; and the Way of leading a life of public benefit. Through such teaching, each person internally should come to look into oneself and to treat one's own diseased states of mind, while externally striving also to examine and to treat the diseased world in accordance with the saying 'He who is sick first is the doctor.' The great prescriptions for curing the great illnesses of the world today are in fact our Fourfold Grace and Four Essentials, which are the essential Way of human life, and the Threefold Study and Eight Articles, which are the essential Way of practice. If this dharma becomes widely disseminated throughout the world, the planet will naturally be a world that is free from all defects, the people will all become buddhas and bodhisattvas, and men and women, young and old, will all enjoy paradisiacal life in an unimaginable heavenly realm."

36. The Founding Master said, "Religion and government are just like a family's loving mother and strict father. Religion is that dharma which, basing itself on the Way and its virtue, teaches the mind of human being so that people will be prevented from committing transgressions and will accumulate merit. Government is that dharma which, basing itself on laws, examines the results

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of a matter and then metes out rewards and punishments. If a loving mother fulfills the Way of a loving mother and a strict father fulfills the Way of a strict father, and the parents both illumine their respective Ways, then their sons and daughters will perforce be happy. On the other hand, if the parents do not illumine their respective Ways, then their children will be miserable. Just as their children's happiness or misery depends on how well or how poorly the parents act, so does all people's happiness or misery on what we make of religion and government. Isn't our responsibility great indeed, we who seek to deliver all sentient beings and to cure the world? Thus we must first understand fully our doctrines; then, after understanding them, we must disseminate those doctrines widely throughout the world. Only when all beings are living in a paradise under good governance and virtuous rule that are based on the true Way and its virtue may we say that we have fulfilled our responsibilities."

37. The Founding Master addressed the congregation at a Sŏn session's closing ceremony, "During the three months of this Sŏn-retreat, I have taught you the dharma of commanding the wind. Do you understand the meaning of 'wind'? Typically, southeast and northwest winds blow over heaven and earth, and the wind of the Way and its virtue and the wind of laws blow in the secular world. The Way and its virtue is the southeast wind and laws are the northwest wind. These two winds are the main principles that together regulate our world. The northwest wind is under the charge of officials, who preside over rewards and punishments, and the southeast wind is under the charge of religion, which presides over edification. Thus, you must learn well the method of bringing forth the southeast wind, and practice widely the Way of mutual lifegiving and reciprocal harmony in heaven and earth. Then, what is the method to make the southeast wind blow? The teachings of all the buddhas and sages since time immemorial, as well as our own doctrines, are the method that makes the southeast wind blow. The various courses you have gone through during this Sŏn-retreat are also training in this method. When you return to your own homes, what kind of wind will you make blow? Just as all living beings that have suffered greatly in the dismal atmosphere of the severe winter all revive with the arrival of the gentle breezes of the southeast wind, so too will all afflicted with fear

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attain peace, those afflicted with resentment will feel gratitude, those living in mutual harm will come to enjoy mutual lifegiving, those enmeshed in the trap of transgressions will attain liberation, and those who have fallen into degradation will be rehabilitated. Then, how splendid would that be if they find harmony in every place and situation, whether in the family, society, nation, or world? This is the original intent of my teaching and the path on which you should practice. However, the influence of the southeast wind does not occur through mere preaching or verbal explication. You must make it manifest in your actual practice by first having it blow deep in your minds, harmonizing the mind and harmonizing the pneuma. Thus, you must become commanders of the southeast wind wherever you go, by studying and applying widely all the doctrines you have learned during this Sön-retreat.”

38. The Founding Master said, “The way religion and government steer the world can be compared to the two wheels of a carriage: if the two wheels are completely worn out, or even if one wheel has some defect or the driver’s driving skills are poor, then the carriage will not run smoothly. In such a case, how can it be driven well and made to perform its proper function? There are two methods. One is to service the carriage often so it won’t break down or be completely worn out. The other is for the driver to know the terrain well so that he can drive safely. In the same way, if religion and government are to steer the world well, they should guard against becoming damaged or corrupt in the course of time and their leaders should apply laws and govern appropriately in accordance with the level of people’s understanding.”

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39. The Founding Master asked, “Now that we have opened a religious order, how can we correct all the abuses of the past and edify the world well with our new religion?” Pak Taewan replied, “Since all accomplishments start with what is close at hand, we must improve our own minds if we seek to improve the world.” Song Man’gyōng replied, “Since our doctrines and institutions have already been established in accordance with the age, if we merely practice in accordance with our doctrines and institutions, the world will naturally be improved.” Cho Songgwang replied, “Even though I do not fully understand the profound intent of the Great Master, I believe that your dharma is so utterly perfect and impartial that all of humanity will be improved spontaneously in accordance with the cycle of great fortune (taeun) of the world.” The Founding Master responded, “What each of you has said is true. If people want to improve the world, they must first improve their own minds; and if they want to improve their own minds, there must be some dharma for doing so. Since we already have a dharma and you all understand the principles of our practice, you must exert more effort to actualize in your practice what we have discussed in this exchange today. If each religion is improved, then the people’s minds will be improved; and if people’s minds are improved, then governance in this nation and the world will be improved. Religion and government may address different areas, but at bottom they are inextricably related, together influencing good and evil in the world.”