

## ***IV. let 's Talk About the Five Creeds of Cultivating According to Tao***

### **[FOREWORD]**

The time since you all received Tao has been for some time now, and you understand many things about Tao. So Teacher will now ask you several questions.

1. Is your belief in the Way of Heaven very deep, and do you ever doubt it?
2. Are you always forgiving and gracious to all sentient beings?
3. Do you speak and act righteously and uprightly?
4. Are you peaceful and non-argumentative with your cultivating companions?
5. Do you perform your work without complaint despite hardships and do you devote your full energy to the task at hand?

### **1. We Should Believe Deeply in The Way of Heaven and Never Doubt It.**

Tao is Truth, the never-changing Law of Nature. In the Book of Poems it says, "Eagles fly in the sky, fish jump above the deep water."

God has great and omnipotent ability to govern the world; birds fly in the sky and fish swim in the water, such in the obvious and unchanging Truth.

When Truth manifests itself in the world, nothing else can outweigh its importance. When Truth is hidden, nothing can penetrate its sphere.

To sight an example of Truth covering every corner of the universe - the sun, moon, and the stars; their movements in the heavens are unchanging truth. Can anything cause them to alter them from their natural ways?

As an example of the Truth hidden - there are so many minute things in the world, like ants, grass, sand, and even microscopic germs. Yet in these and everywhere there is boundless vitality, only it is difficult to see it using our naked eyes. Thus the Truth seems hidden; contracted into such small packages.

Mankind and sentient beings all feel love and caring for their families, just like a hen takes care of her chicks. This example explains the unchanging Truth.

Your belief in the Way of Heaven should be deep and never doubtful. God will test you by means of other people, by disagreeable conditions and disasters, by illness and fame, by profits and difficulties. The greatest test of one's faith is to be deserted by one's family members.

The great test of one's belief in Tao is to be homeless and wandering place to place, poor, have an unstable family life, and to have lots of tiresome business to deal with. Great wisdom is always revealed in difficult environments, great benevolence is always revealed in disaster, great courage is revealed in risk.

Throughout one's life, one should understand the concept of fortitude as the

ability to accept adversity in a philosophical manner. Also the concept of happiness should be understood as the ability to remain satisfied and composed.

Thus one should strength his own beliefs. If external forces shake one's belief, that indicates that he is unable to control himself sufficiently. If words from the outside are able to disturb one's mind, that shows that he lacks confidence.

Thus if the forces from without are unable to agitate a person, it is because he has sufficient fundamental belief in himself. And if the power from outside cannot provoke him, it is because his self-cultivation is good enough.

One the road of cultivation you will encounter the disturbance of mind and other adversities, and sometimes it many produce a feeling of repugnance and aversion. One should fight down all these trials with all one's endurance and might.

If one meets suppression from outside sources which may produce thoughts of abandoning Tao, then he should stubbornly resist these things with his full endurance. If one is in an extremely distressed or difficult state which can produce frustration, he should fight it with all his courage. If one is in an extremely exhausted state which can produce some thoughts as to make one act heedlessly and without concern, then he should fight it with respect and carefulness. Only in this way can one walk to the end of the road of Truth, and carry out his undertaking from start to finish.

## **2. Be Forgiving and Gracious to All Sentient Beings**

If someone tries to hurt us, then we repay him with good deeds. If someone treats us with anger, we repay with peace, and if someone treats us with stubbornness, we repay him with patience. If someone treats us with insincerity, we accept it with sincerity. If someone says hurtful words to us, then we respond in a short manner. If someone speaks sarcastic words to us, then we keep silent in turn. If we meet people who try to deceive us, we try to move them with our sincerity. If we meet violent people, we treat them with a peaceful manner, thus causing their violent tendencies to vanish. If we treat all beings with righteousness, then the atmosphere of evil will vanish.

## **3. To Speak and Act With Righteousness and Uprightness**

One should give up gossiping in order to produce fewer evil consequences. One should give up angry words in order to dissolve complaints.

One should give up evil words in order to have a righteous heart. And one should also give up unrestrained words in order to avoid disaster.

People will usually speak in an unrestrained manner when they are angry, and

will speak outrageously when they are elated. Sometimes people will talk about other peoples' bad conduct, but that will not help them to perfect themselves. Furthermore, some people like to call attention to other peoples' errors, but that cannot assist them to be righteous.

Thus the virtuous person would point out in general the wrong conduct that exists in the world, but he would not offend or expose another's bad conduct. To be a virtuous person, one should preach morality to people, and should refrain from revealing the bad conduct of others. He should teach people to conduct themselves according to benevolence and virtues, and not to act according to profits or disadvantages. To be a virtuous person, one should keep the Truth of God, not human desire, in his mind. He should teach and exhort people to do good deeds, not just to make good relationships between people. He should conduct himself according to criterion but not solely according to manmade rule.

Thus a virtuous person's words can be the law of cultivation; his conduct can be the standard for cultivation; and all of his deeds will make the people of the world enjoy following him. He looks dignified from a distance, and close to him one will not feel uncomfortable. We should all realize that all these are the cultivating qualities that a virtuous person should possess.

#### **4. To Be Peaceful and Non-argumentative With One's Cultivating Companions**

Usually, when there are many people in a group, conflict of opinion unavoidably happen. Nevertheless, each person has his own unique qualities. Therefore, if you meet a person who is talented but has a lot of pride, you should tolerate his pride. If meet a person who is pure minded by also dull, then you should endure his dullness.

If you meet a person who is upright but is also bad tempered, then you should tolerate his bad temper. If you meet a person who is chivalrous but impatient, then you should bear his impatience. If you encounter something embarrassing and difficult to deal with, you should face it with composure, calmness and righteousness so that you can resolve the undesirable disputes and disorder. However, if you face such embarrassments and difficulties with anger and a harsh manner, then it will only cause further problem and disputes.

If there are two people trying to accuse each other to the point that neither wins and both are in serious trouble, then it usually greatly benefits both of them if one of them can admit his own fault. If there are two people who stubbornly keep their opinions and criticize each other's mistakes, then it will usually make them happy and help them a lot if one of them can appraise the other mildly.

## **5. To Perform Your Work Without Complaint Despite Hardship and to Devote Your Full Energy to the Task at Hand**

All of you have to think of how to be fully devoted when you are making progress, and must think of how to compensate those faults you made while you were regressing. None of you should neglect your position or your responsibilities, nor shirk off difficult undertakings. Thus the correct attitude that a cultivator of Tao must have is to complete his important responsibilities with all his effort.

For a person to cultivate himself according to Tao, he must emphasize improving and increasing his virtue, not his social position. To perform Tao, one should only attach importance to sincerity and not to one's wealth. It is said that the rise and fall of a nation is the concern of every citizen, thus the rise and fall of the affairs of Tao is every cultivator's responsibilities. This is every cultivator's business, but also all cultivators have to unite and use a lot of effort to perform it.

All of you should realize that sin comes from greed and true greatness is only attained from your sacrifices. It would be a wonderful opportunity to make progress in cultivation if you have the courage to do what is righteous regardless of the consequences.

### **[FUTURE GOALS]**

In a person's life, it is difficult to establish these three things:

Being without worries,

being without the struggle for existence, and

being without suffering the pains of conscience.

It is also difficult to establish these three things in a person's life:

To have restraint, to have regularity or methodicalness, and to have orderliness

These are all your future goals. If you can establish these things for the rest of your life, then I, Teacher, promise you that you will be very happy and healthy.