

Falun Buddha Fa

Teaching the Fa at the Assistants' Fa Conference in Changchun

(July 26, 1998)

English Translation Version (A)

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I haven't seen you for a long time. Many of you present here, a large proportion of you, have never seen me in person. Yet you have cultivated yourselves well, and I can say that no true cultivator has been left behind. It's the same whether or not you've seen me in person. You won't be treated differently as long as you keep cultivating on this path of cultivation. (*Applause*)

Most of you present here are Assistants, and have made a lot of contributions for Dafa.* You think that the things you do seem pretty simple and are unlike an everyday person's supervisory job, which one gets paid for. You are doing things entirely out of your enthusiasm and your understanding of Dafa. Those things appear to be quite simple and seem to have nothing earth shattering about them. Yet I can tell you that the things that seem mundane on this ordinary human side might be truly dramatic in the realm of your cultivation—a realm that you can't see. (*Applause*) In other words, you shouldn't consider your [Dafa] work so simple. Since you're doing this work you should do it well. High-level beings often tell me that they think your being able to contribute to Dafa here has laid an excellent foundation for your future lives for an incredibly long time in the later historical period. In other words, they envy you since they don't have the opportunity to do these things. The earth wouldn't be able to hold them if all of them were to come. So this work is not so ordinary. At present, not so many things are going to appear too extraordinary or to go too far beyond ordinary humans in the ordinary human society. Things just seem so mundane. Usually, in our cultivation practice, there aren't many dramatic things, and we temper our *xinxing* amidst the various kinds of problems that manifest among everyday people.

As a matter of fact, many of our veteran practitioners in Changchun know that it wasn't easy at all when we first began teaching this Fa* and our exercises in the early days. We went through a difficult period of trials and tribulations before we were able to spread this Fa far and wide and make it known to more people. So our work wasn't at all easy in the beginning. Nevertheless we made it through. And it was here in our Changchun that we took the first step of introducing this Fa to the public. What I taught back then wasn't as profound as what I'm teaching today. I was merely teaching things of a transitional period, one that went from *qigong** to the true Fa. Later on, I gradually, truly unveiled this Fa and allowed more people to get to know it. It was done very systematically, but it didn't resemble the ways in which everyday people's planning and arranging of things in human society unfold. We didn't follow the administrative or managerial methods used in the society of everyday people, nor did we follow any other forms. It seems that everything has come about quite naturally. But it was arranged to be done from the simple to the profound, for imparting such an immense Fa is a serious matter.

Many of you in the audience are veteran practitioners. Think about it, everyone. In the time between when this Fa was first taught and today, you've developed a deep understanding of the Fa through cultivating over this long stretch of time. And there are many people from all walks of life who are cultivating. The more a person's education, the more quickly he understands the Fa. This phenomenon isn't seen in ordinary *qigong* practices. Why not? Because our Fa is the true, righteous Fa. After a long period of cultivation, you have come to realize that this Fa is by no means some theory of the ordinary human society. Even if you searched through all human knowledge—Eastern and Western, ancient and modern—you wouldn't find this. But to best allow you to understand it, we've also related it to modern people's thinking and concepts. That's because everyone has a set of fixed notions that were formed after being in society over a long period of time; this has something to do with a person's work or profession. For example, some people are scientists, some are in the military, some work in the political arena, some are in business, and so on. Everyone has formed a set of fixed notions, whether it's in terms of his own

achievements or his view of the world. You think that truth is supposed to be one way, while the next person believes truth is supposed to be another way. Everyone has his own set of fixed notions.

Many of you were hindered by these fixed notions when you first obtained the Fa, and have thus gone through a gradual process of understanding. Of course, those people who began studying the Fa at a later stage have progressed more quickly, and don't seem to have encountered many obstacles in understanding the Fa. From the very beginning up until a year or two ago, many of you were blocked by your postnatally acquired notions when you were obtaining the Fa. Some people used empirical science to evaluate this Fa; others used dialectical materialism¹ to evaluate this Fa and determine whether it's in agreement with materialist dialectics; and some people used the views that they formed in the business world to evaluate this Fa. In other words, people of different social backgrounds have their own obstacles. In order to break through those obstacles, when I teach this Fa I try my best to be in sync with modern people's concepts and the ways in which they think. Meanwhile, when I'm teaching the Fa, I am eliminating all the factors that prevent you from obtaining the Fa. As you know, when a lot of people read my books for the first time they think I'm talking about science. That's actually not the case. We are using man's current way of thinking to break through and eliminate your notions and allow you to understand. I've done many things along these lines. I arranged it like this, as I saw humankind's present situation. The aim has been to allow you to benefit and obtain the Fa while I teach the Fa, without being affected by your notions. As a result, more and more people have been made able to obtain the Fa during these several years of teaching the Fa.

Assistants and veteran students in the audience: You have done a great number of works that you don't realize are extraordinary, truly extraordinary. They appear to be very ordinary in the society of everyday people. This Fa has been brought forth to the public to allow more people, people from all walks of life, to understand it. If there were no one studying it and no one cultivating, it would amount to nothing. But our Fa has disclosed the truth of the universe, something unspoken since the beginning of heaven and earth. The approach we've adopted in teaching the Fa is to use reasoning and concepts that humans can comprehend in order to break through and eliminate their barriers and to allow them to truly understand the universe's principles. So I knew back when I first brought this Fa to the public that there wouldn't be any problem with people learning it. Yet whether people could truly keep putting cultivation into action involves one question: Can we provide a true environment for real cultivation that enables students to steadily improve over the course of attaining the Fa and cultivating? That's extremely important.

It was only yesterday that I told those in charge of the Changchun assistance centers: "Your most important task is to create for our students a stable cultivation environment that's free of disturbances. This is your greatest responsibility." The same goes for those of you present here: Your greatest responsibility is to ensure that your assistance centers and practice sites are free of disturbances and to lead others in cultivation. Of course, initially those things were done by me. Now *you* do them since you're now a part of Dafa. With this many people it's impossible for me to go everywhere and do them personally. China has over two thousand counties, and each county and city has many practice sites. It's impossible for me, one person, with this physical body, to visit them all. The Fa has been imparted to the public. With the Fa, all of you know what to do and you've done really well. We have no rules or restrictions.

¹ Translator's note: a reference to the Marxist system of thought that posits matter over mind, and that forms the theoretical basis of Communism.

As you know, when Sakyamuni taught his Dharma, he established over one hundred precepts in order to prevent his disciples from having problems in cultivation. His intent was to have them follow those precepts in cultivation and avoid problems, ensuring that they'd reach Consummation. But today we don't have any rules or restrictions. And why don't we? Because I don't want to use any external forms to control people, as no external forms, commands, or other means can change a person's heart. A person has to change his heart himself. If he himself doesn't want to change, nobody can do it. Laws, decrees, and regulations can only fix what's on the surface, not what's at the core. That's because if a person's heart is not at all touched or changed, he will still do things according to his own notions when no one sees him, for sure. So what's most crucial is the change of a person's heart and the elevation of a person's morality. That is the only way to fundamentally change people, to have humankind become good again, and have cultivators reach Consummation. There's no other way.

We've all worked really hard and done a lot for this undertaking. Because you're cultivators, I can't thank all of you as an everyday person would. You've integrated your [Dafa] work with your own elevation; your work is absolutely inseparable from your cultivation. The troubles, differing opinions, and intense conflicts that you encounter in your work are the best chance to improve your *xinxing*. You Assistants could not improve if you weren't given these opportunities. I think that if everyone went along with you and did whatever you told them, you might lead them astray without even knowing it, right? Of course, none of us will do anything like that. You will improve yourself in the process of your cultivation and your work. In other words, you should integrate your work with your cultivation. I won't say any words of gratitude since you are my disciples. No master would say grateful words to his disciples, so neither will I. (*Applause*)

I am really delighted to see all of you. I've been meeting with some students intermittently, and I see great changes in you. Even those who've practiced for a short period of time have changed greatly. Some of you have undergone quite substantial changes. More than a year has gone by in a flash. Going back to my last talk on Fa in Changchun, it's been several years since I met with a lot of you. Coming back to my hometown this time, I really wanted to see you all. We've always had to be concerned over one thing: Once I show up somewhere, many, many practitioners come to that place. That puts pressure on society in many ways, especially as so many people are learning our Dafa—the total number reaches 100 million if we count both those in China and abroad. Moreover, once people get to know Dafa they become firm about studying the Fa. It's not like some other practices where people practice one day and quit the next.

Our practice is different. We're responsible to those who join us, and enable you to practice cultivation, improve, re-ascend, and reach Consummation. And you can see it. Also, we're responsible to society, and our behavior is upright under all circumstances. [Our practice] is good for society, individuals, and even your domestic or other environments that you might live in. There's no need for me to say much about this—you all know it. That's why this Fa has had such an enormous impact on society, why its effect has been so substantial, and why so many people have come to learn it. If I make an appearance in a certain place, many people will come and it will create different pressures. Some students have asked me, "Teacher, can you come to our town?" It's difficult for me to answer them. If I agree to their requests then I'll have to go there, so it's hard for me to say anything. If I agreed to go, well, local practitioners would spread the word, and before my arrival there would already be a huge gathering. That's likely to happen. And then, when the number of people is large, some departments of the government that don't

know us well or don't understand us would probably deal us some setbacks. That would disrupt our students' cultivation environment, so I don't want to do that sort of thing.

Nonetheless, I [came here] today for the following two reasons. First, we haven't seen each other in over a year and this is my hometown, so let's make it an exception. Besides, I'm only meeting with Assistants. I can only meet with Assistants because there's no place large enough to meet [all] our students. There isn't yet a place in Changchun big enough to hold tens of thousands of people, so we can only do it this way. Second, the fact that I primarily live overseas has probably averted trouble. Those are the two reasons. But no matter where I am, I know your cultivation situation—I know it for each and every one of you. I will look after you as long as you study the Fa and cultivate.

It isn't a problem even if you've bought pirated copies of the books, and that's certain. A book with black ink on white paper doesn't have any effect by itself. Whether it's *Zhuan Falun* or any of our other books, what's really at work is the inner meaning and the true substantive reasons behind the words. Those aren't present in other books. What's more, it doesn't matter whether you have a hand-written copy or a pirated copy: The book will naturally have its inner meanings as long as you study the Fa and cultivate. Buddha Fa is boundless, and its manifest power is just enormous. And this is different from ordinary human conceptions of time and dimensions—completely different. But that said, don't buy those pirated copies in which the typesetting was rearranged. And if you find any, you should help the relevant governmental departments to investigate and track down their source. It's alright if they are printed from photocopies of the original typesetting, as in that case there won't be any content errors.

Today I mainly want to see you. And likewise, lots of people want to see me, so I'll sit a little higher today. (*Applause*) Now that I'm here, I'll take this opportunity to talk about a few things. It's not easy for us to meet up. If any of you in the audience feel the need to ask me questions, you can write them down on slips of paper and pass them forward to me, and I'll answer them. But be brief. You don't need to preface your questions by saying things like, "Teacher, oh how I miss you," or "This Dafa is so great." There's no need for that. Just write down your questions and be to the point. That way I can read them quickly and not waste time while answering your questions.

I'll start by addressing two issues. I've discussed certain issues on different occasions before. Yet sometimes they're more prominent in a few specific regions or in a few specific environments, so [discussing them again] is the same as repeating what was said before. But I can explain them to you again in detail.

The first issue concerns why our Dafa doesn't follow the conventions of grammar. This has become a strong obstacle for intellectuals and those with advanced schooling, especially those who work with writing or literature, or do Chinese language studies, etc., that is, people in those disciplines. Why can't we follow the conventions of ordinary human language when we teach the Fa? As you know, the meaning of a standardized term has been predefined: "This word means precisely XYZ." Moreover, standardized language is limited and unable to describe the immense Fa. In this enormous cosmos, humankind's Earth isn't even a speck of dust in a speck of dust inside yet another speck of dust. That's how puny it is. How could it possibly hold such an immense Fa? How could the Fa of the cosmos possibly be confined by the conventions of human languages? How could It conform to the conventions of human languages? There's absolutely no way.

Our Fa merely employs human language. As to how this language is used to teach Dafa, it's good enough as long as it allows you to understand—that's the purpose. That's why the language

we use doesn't conform to conventions of grammar. In order to teach this Fa today, I don't have anything in my mind that was formed by fixed notions.

The other issue I'd like to address is why terms from the Dao* system are in our Dafa. A few people with religious affiliations attack us, saying: "He mixes things from the Daoist school and the Buddhist school. And then he talks about science." Actually, how could they know that whether it's science, the Dao system, or the Buddha system, they're all just a tiny bit of the tiny bit at the lowest level of this Dafa? Since I'm teaching the Fa to modern people, of course I have to incorporate modern people's concepts in my teachings. You wouldn't be able to understand it if I were to use the language and terms of the heavens, or if we were to invent a lot of new terms. So this is how I have to teach the Fa.

But why are there terms from the Dao system? Actually, I've talked about this on different occasions. Our Dafa goes far beyond the realm of the Buddha system. I'm teaching the Fa of the cosmos, with the Buddha system as the basis. No matter how vast this Dafa is, I am not within it, while all of you beings are within it. In other words, the Fa has created all beings, as well as the environment for your existence and the forms of your existence. So within the scope of this Dafa—that is, within the entire cosmos—of course the Buddha system isn't the only system. Of course there are Buddhas and Daos, and then there are various kinds of Gods that you can't know about yet, all kinds of Gods.

The cosmos is so vast and the Fa I'm teaching is so immense, so of course things of the Dao system and things of Gods are part of it. You actually haven't realized that things of Western religions are also included. [They're included] because the people I deal with today aren't just Chinese people or one single ethnicity, but many, many ethnicities. And I have to bring all deviated matter and lives up to the standards of their most primordial, most original and best stage. That's why I am doing things this way. In other words, although I'm teaching the Buddha Fa, I am in fact teaching the Fa of the cosmos from a Buddha's perspective. Since the appearance I've created for myself is that of a Buddha, it isn't wrong for me to call It Buddha Fa.

I have to be responsible to you. I can't take all of you to the Falun Paradise of the Buddha system or to the paradises of other Buddhas. You're all thinking the same thing: "Teacher, I only want to go to your paradise." What you're thinking isn't wrong. But I can tell you that I only look at your heart. If you use ordinary human concepts to think about Gods, or if you use ordinary human ways of thinking to understand Gods, you will never figure things out. If today you were to have the thinking of a God, all of your concepts would change. If in the past you had your own paradises, if you came here from different levels to obtain this Fa, if you were Daos or Gods, then you should return to your original places. I often tell you that you have no idea who you were or what you were about in the past. You should just focus on cultivation and should just assimilate yourself to this Dafa. In other words, no matter who you were—be it a Buddha, Dao, or God—you have to assimilate to this Dafa of the cosmos before you can return. I assure you that you will be completely satisfied with what's in store for you in the future. Not only will you be perfectly satisfied, but also what you'll attain is more than you could imagine. I will give you a better environment, one that's even better than the original one. These things are beyond your imagination. (*Applause*) The things I've said are to explain why we've used terms from other religions—that's the reason.

Now about religion, I think it's a human concept and is named as such by humans. The concept of religion is rather ambiguous, as it doesn't have a fixed definition. When Sakyamuni was teaching his Fa, he didn't say his was a religion. Nor did Jesus say his was Christianity, or St. Mary that hers was Catholicism. Actually, they had their own ways of referring to

themselves, and they had their own names for referring to their disciples, but those absolutely weren't the concepts used by humans. Gods don't acknowledge religions. That's why nowadays many religious people can't succeed in cultivation in their religions. In fact, they might not truly want to cultivate, and merely feel that [the religion] is good. What they safeguard are their religions, not Buddhas. Buddhas only look at one's heart, just as Gods only look at one's heart. If you can't truly cultivate yourself in a religion, then it amounts to nothing. The most we can say is that you've converted to a religion or that you've become a monk or nun, but it doesn't mean you are Buddha's disciple. Buddha only looks at one's heart. Becoming a monk or a nun is only a form through which you express your reverence towards Buddha. Only by fundamentally transforming yourself can you become a true follower of Buddha. If your heart doesn't become that of a monk or nun, or if your heart isn't converted to the religion, then it's useless. Of course, you might say, "But my heart is really devout..." What you're devoted to is the religion and your intention-filled formalities, not cultivation. That won't achieve anything.

So about this issue, what I'm mainly saying is that this Fa is so immense it encompasses all cultivation ways and all beings in the cosmos. The number of Daoist terms I've mentioned is actually quite few. Not many upright religions have been passed down on Earth, so I can only talk about these few. In fact, there are many, many cultivation ways in the cosmos, though only several exist in human society.

Since I just wanted to meet with you, I didn't intend to talk more. As far as things related to cultivation are concerned, it doesn't matter whether or not you see me: You are able to cultivate just the same—it's not a problem. But you always want to see me, so I've used this opportunity to meet with you. I didn't prepare anything more to discuss with you. I feel that it's not easy for us to meet. As I said earlier, you can pass your questions up to me on slips of paper. You can begin passing up the questions now. I'll answer the ones that need to be answered.

Question: In regards to the two articles "Digging Out the Roots" and "For Whom do You Exist," there are two different interpretations at our practice site. One is that it is correct to take action to safeguard Dafa; the other is that we should focus on cultivation, since practitioners' elevating themselves in cultivation is the ultimate act of safeguarding the Fa.

Teacher: Let me tell you the following. After I wrote those two essays, some people were able to read them with the mind of a cultivator, while some read them with an ordinary human mind. Some people had done wrong but wouldn't admit it. Even after reading what I wrote, they still wouldn't admit it and tried to use ordinary human thinking² to defend themselves. We also have students who look in the Fa for certain words of mine to help them argue when they have a dispute among themselves. You are all taking Dafa out of context by using an ordinary human mind. You haven't tried to understand the Fa from the perspective of the Fa. If you had changed the angle you were viewing it from you wouldn't have acted like that. Any problem you encounter is related to your own mind. The essay "Digging Out the Roots" was written because of the incident in Beijing. Many of you probably know about that. I don't want to talk about the incident itself.

Question: Since Sakyamuni came from the sixth-layer universe, why wasn't he able to see the boundary of the small universe?

² Translator's note: the Chinese term here (and in some other places), *xin*, could also be translated as "attachments," "thoughts," "intentions," "feelings," etc.

Teacher: That isn't something you can comprehend with the logic of ordinary human thinking. In fact, Sakyamuni didn't just come from the sixth-layer universe. Instead, he came from an extraordinarily high realm. If he had come to the human world with things at a level that high, it would have been impossible. And since people at that time could only comprehend limited principles of the Fa, Sakyamuni taught Arhat Fa. What's left today is no more than that. But at that time, he did teach many Fa principles at higher levels, although none of them have been passed down. During a forty-plus year period of teaching the Fa he did teach the Fa within "The Big Four." These things have nothing to do with your cultivation. Let me tell you, don't worry about who a person is or where he came from. Some of you in the audience came from very high levels too, but you can't see anything, not even things beyond humans. For cultivators, as well as individuals who teach the Fa, it has to be this way, and there have to be restrictions in order for them to stay on this earth. Let me tell you that if my mind didn't contain any ordinary human thoughts, I couldn't stay here either. Before beginning this undertaking, I pieced together a human mind so that I could stay among humans to teach you the Fa this way. Many things are beyond your comprehension.

Question: Does a speech impediment affect the work of an Assistant?

Teacher: A speech impediment might be major or minor. If you stutter slightly or your tongue has a minor disability, or even if your ability to express yourself is somewhat weak, none of these things affect your work. But as more and more people are learning Dafa today, the social status of those in society we come into contact with is higher and higher. Then in my opinion, it wouldn't be appropriate if all of us spoke in a garrulous manner. And people with more education or knowledge would indeed be affected when they first started learning the Fa. So I'd like to suggest that if an Assistant has an impediment, he should find someone who has a deep understanding of the Fa and more learning (though being more learned doesn't equate to a deep understanding of the Fa) to assist him. That person should have a high-level understanding of the Fa and have studied the Fa for at least some time; and he should have passed some tests and be unwavering. You could ask such a person to be your helper, or you could swap places with him since your being an Assistant isn't for the purpose of merely doing such work; rather, it's for cultivation. If someone says that he has to be an Assistant and that no one can remove him from that position, then I think that attachment has to be eliminated sooner or later. It will happen eventually. You should remember that you didn't come here to be an Assistant. You came here to do cultivation. I don't think a minor speech impediment is a problem.

Question: When we return through cultivation, will we be able to go beyond our original levels?

Teacher: You are again thinking with your human mind about divine things. In the future, when you become aware of everything, you'll feel ashamed of the question you're asking. Don't worry about those things. Dafa has created the best of everything for you. You should just focus on cultivation. Actually, more of you are concerned about getting home, rather than being far away from home. To Gods these things are totally different from your concepts. It's not like what you think.

Question: Besides the Falun Paradise, how many paradises are there at higher levels?

Teacher: Your thinking should focus on cultivation! I can tell you that there are too many to count. Can you count the total number of molecules in your body? All bodies within the Three

Realms are called “human bodies.” The human body is made up of microscopic particles that constitute a plane of larger particles, and then the larger plane of particles forms yet another plane of even larger particles. “Human body” is a general term used within the Three Realms. You don’t even know how many particles there are in the Three Realms alone! They’re countless. No matter which level you reach in cultivation, not one of you in the audience will ever know how many paradises there are in the cosmos. That’s absolutely true.

Question: I’ve been practicing for a few years. I often fall asleep during the meditation. This has always bothered me.

Teacher: You all know about enduring hardship. Yet you haven’t realized that your sleepiness, too, is a demon tormenting you and trying to stop you from cultivating! Isn’t this when your willpower should take control? I don’t believe that if you keep your eyes open you’ll still fall asleep! Open your eyes during the exercises if you can’t control it. You have to pass this hurdle.

Question: If a child refuses to listen when being disciplined, and if he continues to be stubborn, is it correct to let him have his way?

Teacher: Not exactly. Parents are committing a crime when they indulge their children. You can’t say the degree of depravity today’s human society has sunk to has nothing to do with you, generation after generation. Let me tell you that you have to discipline your children. I’ve noticed that the society in the United States has been so restricted by its laws that people can’t discipline their children; disciplining children is almost like breaking the law. Children are thus being indulged and spoiled. Those children don’t even know the most basic things about human behavior, let alone manners. What bunch of humans are being shaped for the future?! But let me tell you this: China has the kind of tradition where you must discipline and educate your children. You can’t indulge them. You may spank or scold them. We say that cultivators shouldn’t get angry, but you *can* discipline children. If you’re in a good mood and you spank them with a smile, they’ll still feel the pain. The purpose is to teach the child a lesson, to tell him not to do bad things. Educating children isn’t wrong. You can just think about it this way: “I’m not doing this because I’m attached to my own things; it’s doing a good deed for society and for the future humankind.” But if you’re overly attached to it you’ll go to the other extreme. What I mean is that it’s not a problem to discipline children, but you should do so sensibly.

Question: Do we exist for the truth of Buddha Fa?

Teacher: The subject of this question is quite profound. During cultivation, some of the thoughts people have are correct. To be exact, Buddha Fa has created living environments for living beings and has given human beings life. That’s the relationship. Living beings can only exist for the way of living in their realms. If you’re a Great Enlightened Being who’s capable of taking care of many things below your level, then perhaps you exist for more beings. That’s the relationship.

Question: As soon as I start reading Zhuan Falun I feel sleepy...

Teacher: If this question is raised by one of our Assistants, then I think you should stop serving as an Assistant and let other people do the job for now. It would be better for you to study the Fa and make more progress before resuming your assistance work. Since you feel sleepy as soon as you start reading *Zhuan Falun*, you might not have finished reading the book

even once. How could you do your assistance work? “Assisting” means you are supposed to assist—but how can you assist others? What we’re imparting here is the Fa. The exercises are an auxiliary means for reaching Consummation. No matter how accurate your movements are, you can’t succeed at cultivation without the Fa. The Fa is the most crucial thing. Becoming sleepy when reading is the same as getting sleepy during the meditation, which I talked about earlier.

Question: Why is some people’s thought karma always so strong? And why does it always recur after a period of time?

Teacher: This is a common phenomenon. Let me tell you, I see that you’re truly doing well in cultivation, especially the veteran practitioners, I’m really happy to see you. But you may have the same problems, and from time to time some bad things might still come up in your thoughts. Occasionally your thoughts may even have awful things, and those bad things might get worse and worse. I’ll tell you why that is. During your cultivation, as you know, we’re transforming you from the microscopic level, from the formation of your existence. So the part of you that’s been transformed has reached the standard and can’t be called human anymore. Then that part can’t follow when your human part does something. If it did, it would be the same as a God doing something bad, and it would be the same as his having fallen. That absolutely wouldn’t be allowed. That’s why as you continually cultivate, the parts of you that constantly get assimilated to the Fa are being separated. Similar to the annual rings of a tree, in cultivation you are expanding ring-by-ring, outward towards the bark. The tree bark is your outer surface. So you cultivate yourself from the part that’s been fully cultivated and expand outward until the surface is finally reached. The part that you’ve fully cultivated is divine, and the part yet to be fully cultivated is human.

I start from the microscopic level of your existence; that is, I start transforming you from the innermost part of your being. The changes on the surface are thus pretty insignificant. But to cultivate, you have to restrain yourself all the way to the end. However, until changes take place on the surface, ordinary human thoughts will continue to occur in your mind, and at times they might be quite bad. But you *can* suppress them. That is your self-restraining part that’s taking effect, whereas in the past you couldn’t suppress them. They exist at very deep levels, so you couldn’t suppress them. Although you now find bad thoughts popping up in your mind, you can suppress them and control your behavior and thoughts in cultivation. This is a state only in Dafa cultivation.

To ensure that you can cultivate free of that interference, the part that’s been fully cultivated has to be separated. But to ensure that you can cultivate among everyday people, things on the surface will only weaken more and more. For example, let’s say the part of you that’s been fully cultivated consists of one hundred layers: then only one layer can be changed at the surface. This is just to illustrate the point that in proportion, the change on the surface is very small. The purpose is to allow you to cultivate among everyday people. If everything were removed and you didn’t have any ordinary human notions or thoughts, you would no longer be an ordinary human on the surface, and you couldn’t cultivate among everyday people.

I’d like to tell you this: If you didn’t have an ordinary human mind, you would know what others were thinking, and various sorts of things would disturb you. There’s a motive behind what people contemplate, as well as behind their every move, every expression, and most subtle actions. Also, some people have really awful thoughts, and contemplate how to get others. Some people think about all kinds of bad things, like thieves’ and whores’ acts. There’s no way you could stay in this world. That’s how badly messed up it has gotten. We’ve adopted this form of

cultivation practice, which is the fastest, so that you can cultivate here. We don't allow the part of you that's been fully cultivated to be touched; we separate it. As you continually cultivate, keep reading the book, and constantly improve your perception and understanding, it's being continually expanded. In other words, it's getting closer and closer to the surface. You will Consummate once the surface layer is transformed. So don't be intimidated by still having bad thoughts in your mind. But beware: If you think, "Now that Teacher has explained it, I understand. It's to ensure that I can cultivate among everyday people. Okay, I'll let them be," then your indulging them is the same as not cultivating. That's how it works.

Question: Teacher, would you please explain what "supernatural techniques" are?

Teacher: Supernatural techniques vary from religion to religion and from one cultivation form to another. And there are different supernatural techniques at different levels. Generally speaking, they are different methods used in cultivation practices or for demonstrations. They're just that kind of thing. They include healing, subduing demons, etc. What do you want to learn those for? What you've learned already encompasses everything; it's only that it can't be revealed to you. What's most important for you at present is to make yourself ascend and return quickly.

Question: Can the Three Realms be understood as the realms of Gods, humans, and ghosts?

Teacher: I've talked about the Three Realms on various occasions. We've also covered this in our books. The Three Realms is the domain composed of these three main parts: the Desire Realm, the Form Realm, and the Formless Realm. Beings within the Three Realms aren't allowed to leave at will. Beings outside the Three Realms, no matter how powerful they are, aren't allowed to enter at will. This is the place where all substances related to humans exist. Of course, humans in the world, gods, and ghosts are also in it. Although these beings are there, it's not like what you think. The Three Realms is a domain designated by the heavens. Beings that fall into the Three Realms aren't allowed to return to the heavens, and can't leave the Three Realms again; the exception, of course, is those who do cultivation. Not everyone who does cultivation is able to leave. Many cultivators aren't able to get out, and can only stay on the earth or stay at various levels within the Three Realms. Beings outside the Three Realms aren't allowed to enter at will. That's how this place is. It's an unusual place. As Gods see it, this is the filthiest place.

Question: While studying the Fa, some people always feel sleepy.

Teacher: You fall asleep while studying the Fa, you fall asleep while reading the book, you also fall asleep while doing the exercises. You haven't even broken through the beginning stage yet. It's about willpower! As you know, during your cultivation, not only will all elements that constitute your humanness try to stop you from breaking away from being a human, but also everything that constitutes the human environment won't let you leave. You have to break through everything and overcome all kinds of ordeals. The biggest manifestation is the suffering they create for you. Suffering comes in different forms, and sleepiness is one of them. Those people who aren't able to cultivate or who aren't diligent don't realize that this is a form of hardship. You are unable to attain the Fa—it doesn't let you study the Fa—and yet you aren't even aware that it's an ordeal. Unless your heart isn't with the Fa or you don't want to cultivate, why not overcome it? Strengthen your willpower. If a person could become a Buddha simply by

overcoming sleepiness, I'd say it would be too easy. How will you cultivate yourself if you can't even pass a small hurdle like this one?

Question: Time for cultivation is very limited. If from now on I go all out to be diligent, will I still be able to return home with you?

Teacher: Don't worry about that. And don't think about it. As long as you still have time for cultivation, you should cultivate yourself diligently and with vigor. As for whether or not you can return home, you do have the opportunity; at least you're sitting here today and have seen me in person, right? You still have an opportunity. (*Enthusiastic applause*) You still have a chance as long as this undertaking as a whole hasn't concluded. Seize the day. How to make the best use of your time is what you should think about.

*Question: Are there any disciples who Consummate without taking their benti?**

Teacher: Of course there are those who Consummate without taking their *benti*. I just said that not everyone will go to the Falun Paradise. Those who are going to the Falun Paradise will take their bodies with them. In this cosmos, 99.9 percent of the numerous cultivation ways in the past and heavenly paradises in different cosmic bodies didn't need bodies. Not everyone thinks so favorably about having a flesh body. Many heavenly paradises absolutely will not let you bring a body when you return there. If you took your body along, you would be disrupting the Fa there, you'd be disrupting the Fa at that level, the Fa that you've understood and enlightened to within the Dafa of the cosmos. Sakyamuni's teaching of "Precept, Samadhi, Wisdom," for example, is a manifestation that comes from the Dafa of the cosmos. It's a self-contained system—Precept, Samadhi, Wisdom—enlightened to by Sakyamuni. Not everyone will need to take a flesh body along. Only those who go to the Falun Paradise need to take bodies with them.

Another point is that some people say that they want to take their flesh bodies along. This is no more than an ordinary human thought that conveys ordinary humans' fear of death, "Wouldn't it be wonderful to take everything with me and not die!" Regardless of whether you'll take your body or not, we'll let you see at the end that you've reached Consummation—a magnificent scene. (*Enthusiastic Applause*) When our Dafa finishes this undertaking, [the glory] won't have been matched by that of any religion at its height. But don't just be excited—you have to cultivate to the point of Consummation.

Question: Is the inability to sit in the full-lotus position related to the person's xinxing level? Can such a person reach Consummation?*

Teacher: I know that many people who weren't even able to sit in the half-lotus position eventually managed to sit in the full-lotus position. But I'm not saying that you have to sit in the full-lotus position right after you leave today. As long as you put your heart into doing it, it's fine. Yet it's also possible that some people have more karma in this respect, but it will all be eliminated and transformed. Nothing in this world is more serious than cultivation. You're willing to endure so much hardship to make money, you're willing to endure so much hardship for other matters—can't you endure a little hardship for your cultivation? If you, a person with a body full of karma, want to become a Buddha and reach Consummation through cultivation—is there anything more serious than that? With what kind of mindset should you approach it? Isn't this the issue? As for how you manage to [sit full-lotus] during cultivation, we aren't demanding that you do that right from the outset. You can do it gradually—that's not a problem.

Question: Some students say that the essay “Digging Out the Roots” refers to digging out the roots of one’s notions, and that “For Whom do You Exist?” is saying that we exist for the Fa. Are they right?

Teacher: Don’t dig into the semantics of it. What I want you to understand is the inner meaning and the things that you can comprehend in cultivation. You shouldn’t dig into the surface meaning of the words. I was just saying that if there were no inner meaning behind the words, then this book would be no different from other books that have only words in black ink on white paper. Because there is Fa in the book, if you set aside your attachments and read the book without any notions, your understanding—no matter how much or how little it is—is sure to be correct. If you read the book while holding on to any notions that you can’t let go of, or while looking for excuses or justification to cover up where you’re wrong, if you read the book with that mindset, then you’ll see nothing. If you let go of your specific aims when you read the book, you will understand everything. No matter how much or how little you understand, your understanding won’t be off-track. But if you read the book with any attachments that you can’t let go of, then you’ll see nothing at all, and you will only be able to delve into the surface meaning of the words and argue with each other. Read with a calm mind; I guarantee you will become aware of what you’re supposed to know.

The things I wrote in the recent period were written vaguely. I purposely wrote them that way. I didn’t want to create greater obstacles in your cultivation. The more explicitly I expound, the bigger the troubles and obstacles you will encounter. Thus, certain things are meant for you to enlighten to yourselves. It’s never the case that my explaining things explicitly makes your journey of cultivation a smooth one. While the challenges you have in enlightening to things become smaller, the tests you encounter and have a hard time passing become bigger. Don’t think that hearing more is a good thing. The Fa has actually been left to you in its entirety. What remains to be seen is in what state of mind you cultivate in.

Question: What should I do to make the assistance center become an environment for true cultivation?

Teacher: There are no special stipulations for this. We don’t have any rules or restrictions. But as far as assistance centers are concerned, I have expressed some of my opinions about the qualities of Assistants in some of my short essays (what you call “scriptures”), so you may read those as references. If you want to improve the environment of your assistance center so that it reaches a certain level, it won’t do if the students can’t keep up. And you can’t restrict what they do with any rules or constraints. Superficial restrictions can’t change people’s hearts—that’s all fake. Since we have new students joining us every day, your site’s overall realm will never reach a godly state. Your assistance centers will always be a place where humans are cultivating. But at the same time you’re different from humans. This is because the part of you that’s been fully cultivated—the part that has become a God—has been separated. That’s why your work is really tough, and the minds of the people you’re confronted with are complicated. This is for sure. That’s why you can cultivate. Do things according to the Fa and search inside yourselves first when problems arise, and then look at the cause of the problem. I think you’ll be able to handle things well that way.

Question: How can we elevate our understanding from a perceptual one to a rational one?

Teacher: There are no forms manifest among everyday people for doing so. It’s unlike the way you learn some other theory. When you elevate your understanding to a rational one, you’ll

find that you've come to that understanding without knowing it. But before long your understanding will fade away. That's because the part of you that understands has reached that standard and is separated once you develop that understanding. Then, immediately afterwards, you feel that you no longer understand. That's why you have to study the Fa often, to study the Fa constantly. Some of you are able to memorize the Fa. Why is it that after some time you forget even the parts you'd memorized really well? Because the part of you that memorized the book really well became fully cultivated and was moved over. What's left is the part that still doesn't understand, so you still need to keep studying the Fa.

Question: Do practitioners whose Chinese isn't very good have to study the Chinese version of Zhuan Falun in order to improve?

Teacher: That is no longer a problem. We now have translations in many languages. If a person could only improve by studying the Chinese version, we wouldn't have needed to translate the book into English, Italian, Russian, Korean, etc. In other words, you can improve just the same reading non-Chinese versions, and Consummate just the same. And, there's no difference at all if you put just as much heart into it. No difference. What's translated is only words on the surface, whereas what makes the difference is the meaning behind the words.

Question: I'm determined to succeed in cultivation. Does this count as an attachment?

Teacher: If you're determined to cultivate to Consummation, that doesn't count as an attachment. What has emerged is your original nature at its best. But if you're thinking about it every day—"I want to achieve Consummation"—and thinking about it with whatever you do, then I'd say *it is* an attachment. As long as you have that wish, that's enough. What's left is for you to buckle down and cultivate! If your mind is preoccupied by the thought of Consummation, how much will that take away from the things you would have cultivated? Wouldn't that be an attachment?

Question: Having read your scripture "A Dialogue with Time," some students have become obsessed with time. How should we view this tendency?

Teacher: From the questions raised just now, I can tell that if some students really saw a deity-like figure coming to lead them away to cultivate, they would indeed follow him. Isn't that dangerous? Is that a minor problem? Let me tell you that any enormous matter in the cosmic body is a god. Humankind thinks that time is a concept. The sun rises, night falls, day breaks, the clock ticks, matter transforms, fruit rots quickly in hot weather, rice spoils, crops grow, the four seasons alternate, and everything seems to be an expression of time. People think it's a concept. But in fact, I can tell you that the occurrence of all those things is controlled by Time himself. He is a God. Even things such as sunrise, sunset, and the speed of Earth orbiting the sun are products of Time. But Time is extremely complex. Different dimensions have different times. A larger environment has the time of a larger environment, and in even larger environments there are also various independent times of smaller scales. In other words, there are extremely complicated factors. We normally refer to this as space-time. The concept of time varies in different dimensions.

What I said about a planet being 150 thousand light-years away, as today's people and scientists believe, is only a human concept that I used to explain something to you. In fact, those things people say are all wrong. Different planets have their own fields surrounding them and have their own times. And there are different environments in the space between different

planets and our Earth. Time also varies in different environments. In this dimension in which Earth and other visible planets exist, if you calculate [the distance] by using our current measurement of time, it's not accurate at all. Moving from one planet to another, the speed of travel doesn't remain constant. Rather, different expanses have different time fields, or space-times, as they can be called. The initial speed it travels at is very high, "swoosh." But it becomes slower and slower as it approaches Earth. That's how it works. And when it enters different time fields, it might suddenly become fast or slow, continually changing speeds as it goes. Today's science can't comprehend a lot of things. Time controls a lot of things. Isn't he a God?

Question: During group study, the Assistants and students of some study groups talk about things that seem irrelevant.

Teacher: When we study the Fa, we should focus on Fa-study. Don't comment on the Fa Itself—that would be the same as your letting our students define the Fa. You can talk about your own shortcomings from the perspective of the Fa. Or you can say, "Oh, I've realized how I fare with something." That's fine. But I need to point out that I don't encourage you to do that sort of thing too often. What I'd most like to see is that you frequently read *Zhuan Falun* or any other Dafa book, and read from cover to cover. Go read the books, and if there's a word you don't understand, someone can explain the surface meaning of the word. As for the meanings behind the words, you aren't able to explain those. Everyone will have his own understanding. You might understand it one way, while he might understand it another. And maybe you then start to quarrel with each other. Please make sure you don't do that kind of thing.

My writings usually contain many inner meanings at numerous and grand levels, and they have a broad scope. So you couldn't possibly explain them. You can explain what you understand, but others might not agree. They can explain what they've understood at their levels, but you might disagree. Everyone has his own understanding, and understandings differ from person to person due to differences in levels. As long as you keep your mind calm, and read the book and study the Fa without any notions, even if you feel that you don't understand, it's guaranteed your understanding won't be off track. However much you understand and however much you know is actually the way it's supposed to be. It's unrealistic to ask a new student to understand everything in Dafa as soon as he begins to practice.

Question: In your essay "For Whom do You Exist?" do you mean that we exist for the truth of the cosmos or for the original nature of purity and innocence?

Teacher: You're digging into words again. I'm telling you that you should exist for yourself! (Applause) If you don't want to cultivate or Consummate, does it matter for whom you exist? Your cultivation and your Consummation—aren't those for your own liberation? Actually, what I was saying was to tell you that being steadfast and not affected by any interference during the course of cultivation is being responsible to yourself, right? You should be responsible to yourself! Don't be driven by or live for those who interfere with you. That's what I meant.

Question: When we're doing the standing exercises at the practice site to Teacher's exercise music tape, some people do the meditation. Is that alright?

Teacher: I think it's best we all perform the same exercise together. Since you exercise as a group, it's best you all do the same exercise together. If you say you want to do the meditation by yourself because you've already done the standing ones, that's fine, too. We're not so strict that you have to do it a certain way. However, since you're all doing the exercises together, I

think it's best that you all do the same exercises together. You'll see that the more synchronized your movements are, the bigger the field and the stronger the power, and your hands will float right along.

Question: When we study the Fa, does it have the same effect whether we read aloud or silently?

Teacher: There's no big difference. There's only a difference in terms of what people are accustomed to. Some people feel that they can't remember the content if they read it aloud. Others say that only by reading aloud can they remember well. It's only a difference in what they're used to. Either way should work depending on your situation.

Question: Some people think that reading from cover to cover means everyone reading aloud together. Is that understanding limited?

Teacher: Reading from cover to cover doesn't mean reading aloud. And it doesn't mean reading in a low voice. Nor does it mean reading silently. You can do it any way you like, whatever way you feel comfortable with. You can go by whatever you're comfortable with when you read the book.

Question: Are atoms the coarsest particles at the surface of a Buddha-body?

Teacher: I've used human terms in teaching the Fa. Are those exactly the same atoms as ours? No. What it requires isn't the tangible surface matter of any substance from our dimension, but rather, the equivalent matter in their dimensions, which is much more powerful.

Question: When a person dies, the layer of the largest molecules is shed. Then are the bodies in other dimensions still composed of molecules, but not the largest ones?

Teacher: Since human beings go through transmigration and reincarnation in the Three Realms, all bodies inside the Three Realms are called human bodies, and all molecules inside the Three Realms are called molecules, only they have different sizes and thus form different dimensions. But that isn't entirely the case.

Question: Where there are Buddhas, there are demons. Is that still true at extremely high levels?

Teacher: There are no more demons at extremely high levels. But there still exist the antitheses of different kinds of lives. This universe is so vast that it's beyond your imagination. And it's not something you can picture with a human mind.

Question: To get rid of jealousy, is it necessary to change a person's introverted character?

Teacher: Being introverted is a matter of personality, whereas jealousy has no direct relation to personality. "I'm an introverted person. I don't really like to talk, and I don't get jealous of others"—aren't there a lot of people like that?

Question: We don't organize any activities so as to not affect students' cultivation, spreading the Fa, and Fa-study. Is that out of fear?

Teacher: It's best if all of our students can cultivate solidly. But sometimes, the group activities we put together, the group exercise sessions, or the Fa conferences, they're arranged to be part of your cultivation. It's not wrong if the fundamental consideration is to protect the

cultivation environment of Dafa from being harmed. If what's in your mind is indeed fear, then it has to do with your *xinxing*.

Question: Will a single-armed person have any negative impact on Dafa if he does the exercises at the practice site?

Teacher: No, he won't. It shouldn't matter.

Question: My colleagues compete to pursue degrees, and it consumes too much time. I don't want to pursue a graduate degree.

Teacher: I'd say your thinking is a little too extreme, for I've told you to maximally conform in your cultivation to the way of everyday people. Whether it's a degree or your effort to accomplish something, that's apt to help you understand the Fa better. It might also benefit you in terms of spreading the Fa and understanding the Fa in the future. And it has bearing on your personal life down the road. As long as our cultivation hasn't ended, you should maximally conform to the way of everyday people while you cultivate—it isn't wrong for you to do that. As a matter of fact, your graduate study or your studying for a certain degree won't be affected because you study the Fa. Pursuing a graduate degree absolutely won't affect your studying the Fa. It depends on how you balance the two. There shouldn't be a problem. Many of you have handled these things this way, and a lot of students in school have done it this way. In fact, many of our practitioners who have advanced knowledge understand the Fa quickly and are relatively open-minded, because I'm accommodating modern people's thinking in teaching the Fa. I do see a difference in people whose education level is slightly lower. If none of you went to graduate school, people would say that Falun Dafa was stifling talent in the society of everyday people. You don't want to bring any losses to our Fa, do you? Don't do things that way; there are various reasons for this. Do things like I tell you to. As long as you haven't Consummated, keep doing what you're supposed to do.

Question: What does the more microscopic matter you mentioned in "A Dialogue with Time" refer to?

Teacher: What I was referring to is something you're not capable of knowing at present. I was referring to different and greater Gods. This cosmos is so vast. It's impossible to describe the enormous matter using human concepts. How do you talk about it if, after exhausting all of what human language is capable of, you still can't describe it? Even when you've cultivated to Consummation, you'll still be unable to know anything beyond your level. The greatness of the Attainment Status you enlighten to will determine the greatness of your wisdom. That's what you will have attained through cultivation, and it's determined by your level.

Question: What will the future be for people who don't practice Falun Buddha Fa but who have good xinxing in daily life?

Teacher: They'll continue reincarnating on the sixfold-path of reincarnation. Would you say something different could happen? However good their *xinxing* may be, that's only relative to ordinary human standards, isn't it? When compared to the Fa's criteria it might not be good.

Question: I sometimes see both good and bad things through my Third Eye (tianmu). I'm not able to attend group study or exercises. I'm very distressed for not being able to pass this hurdle.

Teacher: Don't let your mind be affected when you see things, whether they be good or

bad—your mind is affected, after all. It's alright to see what you see, but don't think about it and don't follow those things. Treat it just like watching a movie. Would it affect your practice, then? I don't think so. If anything is to affect your practice, it will be because your mind is affected as you try to distinguish the good ones so that you can follow them and try to distinguish the bad ones so that you don't follow them. It's not good for you to follow anyone. No matter how good they are, it's still not good for you to follow them. None of them can guide you to Consummation. Let me tell you: In this world there is no God saving people here. When such an immense Fa is being spread here, whoever comes to interfere will fall, as it's the same as disrupting the Dafa of the cosmos. No matter how mighty a God, Buddha, or Dao they are, they will have to drop down.

Humankind started to become warped a long time ago. Humankind's behavior, humankind's science, and everything of today's humankind isn't what humans are supposed to have. If this Fa weren't being taught, perhaps today's human beings would have disappeared long ago. There is formation, settlement, and destruction in the cosmos. You might not accept that there are catastrophes, but everyone, including today's scientists, has seen the explosion of numerous planets in the universe. Can't the earth explode too? Why would it have to be only other planets that explode? Of course, this sort of thing absolutely won't happen to our earth. I'm simply explaining this principle.

Question: In the arrangement order of atoms to form molecules as mentioned in Lectures in the United States and Lecture in Sydney, are there 200 thousand or 2 million atoms? Which is correct?

Teacher: Both are correct. Even 20 million still isn't wrong. Human thinking tends to look at things one-dimensionally. There are numerous layers of molecules. Since the things that modern science has come to understand are in a general sense, I've used modern science's terms when discussing them. If you have to pin down a number, you can take 200 thousand. Yet it's not accurate. Molecules alone have many layers, and the particles are of various sizes.

Question: Regarding the matter of displaying and worshipping Buddha statues, some people say that the statues have Master's Law Bodies (fashen) on them, while others say that they have the Law Body of the Buddha of the statue.

Teacher: I just said that not a single Buddha is saving people here. What could the statues have? Some Buddha statues are seen to have the Law Bodies of the original Buddhas, but that's extremely rare. Moreover, it's only the statues in the ancient temples that can have the Law Bodies of the original Buddhas. In going about this undertaking, I completed my work up there before coming back to handle this dimension of humankind and the Three Realms. As a result, while I'm doing this, those who are confined here can't get out. Those who aren't confined here don't have any Law Bodies. But the ones confined here don't get involved in things, and they don't do anything. When they see that you have cultivated well, perhaps they can't help saying a few words to you. But they absolutely won't get involved in any of your business.

Question: Some people have said that the great Buddha Statue of the Heavenly Altar has Master's Law Body on it and therefore it represents Master.

Teacher: When I first went to Hong Kong, I found that there was no Buddha on that Buddha statue and that the objective of consecration (*kaiguang*) hadn't been achieved. However, it did have some messy things residing on it, so I cleaned them out. Since I cleaned up the statue, my

Law Body then took over. That's what happened. So many people worship it—how could their worshipping those messy things be tolerated?! Besides, the statue is in the image of a Buddha. That's why I took care of it.

Question: Upon reaching Beyond-Triple-World-Law, does one's body still have the symptoms of sickness karma?

Teacher: No. But the bodies of our cultivators today are quite messed up internally. Yet they're all being adjusted. In any righteous cultivation way, once a person goes beyond the Three Realms, the condition of having sickness karma no longer appears in his body—absolutely not. But before he achieves his Attainment Status he will still have conflicts with others and *xinxing* frictions in the ordinary human society, all the way until he Consummates.

Question: In the incident in Beijing and other similar ones, what about those steadfast cultivators who did actual cultivation?

Teacher: “What about those steadfast cultivators who did actual cultivation?” What do you mean by that? It seems that none of us understand what you mean. Do you mean that you didn't participate in it, and that you “steadfastly did actual cultivation”? It sounds like you're trying to find excuses and justifications for missing an opportunity to reach Consummation. You're being crafty even with me. I couldn't have explained the principles any more clearly. Every incident, every occurrence of such magnitude, is the best test and best opportunity for students to make that best step toward Consummation. Some of us were able to step forward. Some felt that they [did the right thing by] not making a move for the sake of actual cultivation. If Consummation is at hand and you still won't move, I wonder what you would move for. You don't really want to achieve Consummation and only want to cultivate. What are you cultivating for? Aren't you cultivating for Consummation? You're actually looking for excuses for yourself, trying to find excuses for another attachment of yours. That's not doing actual cultivation and remaining unaffected. In all the situations of your everyday life, are you truly performing as someone who does actual cultivation and remaining so unaffected?

Question: I saw you in a park and you looked very serious at that time. I still feel unsettled inside. I'm afraid to see you and yet I want to see you very much.

Teacher: I don't think I appear serious often. When I was in Germany, France, and at the experience-sharing conference in Europe, I made a point of saying this: “As long as you can learn and cultivate, no matter what mistakes you've made, I will save you.” I said that I had opened a huge door. Actually, the door I've opened is so wide that there's no longer a door. I only look at people's hearts and minds. Don't think too much. I'll never have a feeling of gratitude or resentment toward any human. Whether you say I'm good or bad, it won't affect my mind—that's why I can know your minds. If you want to cultivate and you really can, I will be responsible to you.

Question: What does it take for a new student to count as having a history of mental disorder or a family history of mental disorder?

Teacher: Hasn't the hospital given a diagnosis regarding this? [It involves] abnormal behavior, muddle-headedness, and not knowing who one is. Our Fa is given to a person to save his Main Spirit (*zhu yuanshen*). If a person doesn't even know who he is, who would I be giving the Fa to? For exactly this reason there's no way to save him.

Question: While studying the Fa and performing the exercises, I have things in my mind that resist the Fa. They're postnatally acquired notions. Will they affect me in the future?

Teacher: Will they affect you in the future? Aren't they already affecting you? You have realized that those are postnatally acquired notions and are not you. You yourself know that the Fa is good; why doesn't your mind fend off those notions? You yourself want to do the exercises and meditate, yet they insist on preventing you from becoming tranquil and from doing the exercises. How could you still acknowledge them? Every part of your human body is yourself because it is you. Your mouth opens however you want it to and makes whatever sound you want it to; that mouth is yours. Your hands move however you want them to because they are you. Your arms and legs are the same. Then why don't your thoughts quiet down when you want them to while you're doing the meditation? It's because they are not you. If you can't distinguish these things, if you regard them as yourself, we won't save you. Isn't that so? If you accept that those bad things are you, we won't be able to save you. What we save are humans, not demons, not those things, which aren't even demons. They're just a chaotic mess that's unable to form any independent being. They function by attaching to your thoughts. Could we possibly consider them something to be saved to attain Buddhahood? That's impossible. Eliminate them in the process of cultivation and they won't affect you later on.

Question: There's no punctuation in Master's article "Firmament." What inner meaning is implied by that?

Teacher: When I write in classical Chinese I think I don't normally use any punctuation. "Firmament," or "firmament of heaven" means "universe." When you formed boundaries in your conception about the term "universe," I switched to another term so as to broaden your boundaries. I've also used words such as "cosmic body." That's all there is in human language, there's nothing else to use. There are no more words to describe anything larger, it's beyond description.

Question: I have fear in cultivation. Upon reaching which level will I become calm and unmoved?

Teacher: I think there's a big problem behind your fear. If you've truly reached a very high level in cultivation you won't be fearful. How could you have more fear when you're doing better in cultivation? When some people were just beginning to learn, they were afraid of walking at night and used to be timid. Once they began the practice they became brave. If you say that you become afraid as you continue to practice, you should find out what your problems are. It's definitely not a matter of levels. It's not you who fears—even you yourself don't know how you become fearful. Some people have been cultivating in Dafa for a long time, but it's no good if their hearts are not in the Fa. If they don't do actual cultivation, and don't change the fundamental things—if they don't change the fundamental things of humans—they will attain nothing, and all kinds of problems might occur. One's accomplishment in cultivation is measured by the improvement of one's *xinxing*, not by the length of time.

Question: There are several places where The Great Consummation Way is different from Teacher's exercise instruction videotape. Which one should we go by?

Teacher: *The Great Consummation Way* is different from the videotape? The movement demonstrations were all performed by me. They're the same. There might be some changes in

the wording [of the instructions]. Aren't you paying too much attention to trivial things? You should focus on what's important in your practice. Don't go delving into those petty details.

Question: Veteran students and new students don't share the same viewpoints, and do things differently, although both are diligently making progress. Can we group them into separate practice sites?

Teacher: No, you can't. The things veteran students say are helpful to new students. That's always true. If a veteran student has cultivated very well, it's truly hard for him to listen to things said by new students. That's because new students talk about a lot of ordinary human things at the beginning, and comprehend the Fa from an ordinary human perspective. He can't stand it, and he can't be blamed for that. So I haven't raised any objections when some veteran students go home to practice or practice alone. However, if your understanding hasn't reached that high, you can't force this. Some individuals aren't in this situation; when undoubtedly they are able to listen to new students, they insist on saying that they can't and stay away from the others. I'd say that's the attachment of showing off, because those veteran practitioners' feelings are a natural development.

Question: Matter over there all comes from here. I don't understand this very well.

Teacher: True, it's hard for you to understand. And it isn't the concept that you've understood. As you know, if you want to go to a heavenly paradise, you have to do so through cultivation and getting rid of the bad things in your body. If you want to take this body with you, you have to assimilate it to the things over there, transforming it into a Buddha-body before you can take it along. It's a matter of elevation. If substances this filthy were to be placed in a Buddha's paradise, wouldn't that be terrible? That's absolutely not allowed. What's over there is elevated matter. All substances have to go through a process of elevation before they can go over there.

Question: What's meant by "clergy"?

Teacher: Clergy refers to the priests, pastors, monks, and so forth in Western religions. They're called "clergy." People in the East don't have this concept and don't have this term.

Question: During group study, some students do the double-leg crossing. Will this affect their Fa-study?

Teacher: When you meditate, you practice sitting cross-legged. If you know that you can't sit cross-legged for long, and it becomes so painful that you have to grimace, you won't be able to study the Fa well. Studying the Fa is extremely crucial. Don't do anything that affects Fa-study. If you say that you're able to keep sitting cross-legged, that's of course great! Feel free to do so while listening; it's better to sit cross-legged while studying the Fa. Some people aren't able to keep sitting like that. If it becomes totally unbearable for you to sit cross-legged, then you should free up your legs. Don't wait until they become numb before freeing them up. By then you wouldn't be able to hear anything. You'd only be thinking about not letting others bump you. You should focus on studying the Fa when you study the Fa.

Question: Are notions mixed in with emotion (qing)?

Teacher: Your concept isn't correct. Any living being, as long as it exists in the environment of the Three Realms, is permeated with emotion. This permeation is different from a person

being submerged in water, where only his skin makes contact with the water. Everything in the cells of his entire body, as long as they're at the level of molecules, is permeated with emotion.

Question: Which comes first among everyday people: emotion or notions?

Teacher: As soon as you are born you're amidst emotion. Even before you were born you were amidst emotion. When you were in your mother's womb you were already amidst emotion, only you didn't know it. But you knew that mommy was dear. Notions are acquired postnatally. They're formed gradually as a person ages. A four- or five-year-old child doesn't have any notions. He hasn't formed any notions yet.

Question: We should carry out the tasks as assigned by the assistance centers. But some people say that Assistants are also cultivators, and that we should take the Fa as our teacher and follow our own discretion based on our understanding.

Teacher: Let me tell you first that we should cooperate with the assistance centers in everything we do. You can't just do whatever you want to on your own. Secondly, I also want to tell you that the things done by the assistance centers are all approved by the Dafa Association in Beijing while I'm not around. Many assistance centers have done a lot of work and have done it rather well. Mistakes are bound to happen since they too are people who are cultivating. You're correct on that point. The activities they organize are inseparable from their cultivation. This is something for me to devote some attention to. You shouldn't each go your own way. That's why none of you should dwell on this. If they really do make a mistake you can kindly tell them. I think that if you are indeed correct they won't refuse to accept it.

You are all cultivators. I often say this: If you speak to others out of your kindheartedness, entirely without any selfishness or your own self-interest, and completely for the sake of others, your words will move others to tears. But if what you say is self-centered and every word you say is intended to please everyone, "Oh, he'd better not misunderstand me as meaning this or that," or "I'd better watch what I say so others won't use it to criticize me later," and has all kinds of things, then the messages carried by the words active in your mind and emitted from your mind will be very bad. If you are truly kindhearted and without any of your own motives, what you say will be nothing but pure and kind.

In the past, ancient people did things very quickly. They could walk a hundred *li*³ a day, and horses could travel one thousand *li*. They didn't lie. Their thoughts were relatively simple and focused. They would follow one path when doing something and give their all to do it well. They meant what they said. If they promised something they would fulfill it for sure. That's how human beings should be. Nowadays people don't keep their promises. They do things while trying to please everyone. In the past, people's thoughts emerged from their minds like a road—a straight line—on which they moved very fast, whereas nowadays people try to please everyone. They worry about this, concern themselves with that, and the thoughts coming from their minds travel horizontally. That's why their minds react quickly but their actions are slow. Some people open their mouths and struggle for quite a while before saying a word. That's why people today move slowly and can only walk twenty *li* before night falls. Humans will become hopeless if they go on like this. The more complicated they become, the worse they become. Everyone knows this.

Yet some people may say, "If I'm not complex others will take advantage of me." Yet I've also told you that whoever is bad will bear the consequences of everything he's done. Precisely

³ Translator's note: *li* is a Chinese unit of distance equal to 1/3 mile or 1/2 km.

because of the way humans are, because you humans all want to protect yourselves in this way, human society has been pushed to this stage and is sliding downward. So everyone has his share of the blame. Even if you haven't done anything wrong in this lifetime, you did in your previous lives. Actually, your words and deeds are all conforming to modern trends. It's the same as drifting with the current.

Question: I feel a sense of urgency, and I haven't done well in cultivation. I'm afraid there isn't enough time left.

Teacher: There are all kinds of attachments, even ones like this. Even on the day you're to go beyond the Three Realms, if you become fearful you will drop down. So you shouldn't be afraid of anything. What's this fear of not cultivating well? A single fear like this might prevent you from succeeding in cultivation. Just let go of your worries and cultivate yourself, let go of all your concerns. Now that you've obtained the Fa, what's there to fear? There was a saying in the past: "Having heard the Dao in the morning, a person can die at dusk." No one understands its real meaning. What's meant by, "Having heard the Dao in the morning, a person can die at dusk"? Does it mean that if someone hears the Dao in the morning, he'll die in the evening? No. What it means is, if he heard the Dao in the morning, he wouldn't be afraid even if he were to die in the evening. That's its true meaning. Think about it, everyone: "Having heard the Dao"—who has heard the Dao? It's you who has attained the Dao. Isn't it the Fa that's filled your head? What's filled your head is Fa! The Fa that's filled your head has melted into your mind, for sure. Otherwise you wouldn't remember it. How could the part of you that's attained the Fa go to hell or reenter the six-fold path of reincarnation if you really did die? This is a part that has attained the Fa and been assimilated to the Fa. You've learned such an immense Fa today and have been reading the book over and over again. Why do you still think about those things? Just focus on cultivation. All fears are attachments, and all attachments are obstacles.

Question: Having studied the scripture "A Dialogue with Time," students have different understandings of Time.

Teacher: It's alright to have different understandings. Once you hear something novel, you then develop another attachment. I can tell you that—and little would you imagine—many, many things are gods; you even speak about some of them frequently without realizing what they are. This universe is so vast. There are many things humans aren't allowed to know. Don't you get sleepy? Don't you feel sleepy as soon as you read the book, or become drowsy once you study the Fa? Let me tell you that those are gods at a level in this human dimension. If you can't break through them, you remain a human. They aren't intentionally doing anything to you—they treat everyone like that. That's why people feel tired and sleepy. If you want to break away from being a human, you have to break through everything before you can make it. If you go along with them they'll think you are just a human.

Question: In Lecture in Sydney and Lectures in the U.S., Teacher talks about the composition of dimensions in the cosmos and the origin of life. How is this related to our cultivation?

Teacher: The composition of the cosmos and the origin of life have very much to do with your cultivation. And I talked about them for a reason. If you haven't studied the Fa well enough to reach there and your realm of mind hasn't reached that level, you will feel it's irrelevant. But my *Lectures in the U.S.* were aimed at over three thousand highly educated individuals in the

audiences. Half of those Dafa students had degrees, including Ph.D.'s and Masters degrees. Some had obtained three to five degrees. Those present were the Chinese elite; I was addressing them. Those students specialized in a wide variety of fields. Their minds were quite broad and open. Everyone has a knot when it comes to studying the Fa. Knots that aren't unraveled are obstacles. It was because I had to do away with their knots based on their specific situations that I discussed those things. That was one of the reasons. Of course, there are more profound inner meanings.

Question: For the “Falun Standing Stance” exercise, can we do only one of the “holding the wheel” positions? In the “Penetrating the Two Cosmic Extremes” exercise, should the upper arms drive the forearms or should the forearms drive the upper arms?

Teacher: Our way of doing the exercises is very flexible. It's alright if you perform any one of the movements separately. It's designed to be flexible like this so as to suit the needs of working people and allow them to do cultivation with their busy schedules. We've provided this convenient cultivation way. You can cultivate under any circumstances. When you have more time, do more. When you're busy, you can do less. (Make it up later when you have time.) But it's best you do all the exercises. That's how it works.

While doing the “Penetrating the Two Cosmic Extremes” exercise, the forearms don't drive the upper arms, nor do the upper arms drive the forearms. I think the entire arm is moving as a whole. But in the fifth exercise the forearms do drive the upper arms. When doing the “Penetrating the Two Cosmic Extremes” exercise, if you put your force in your forearms your movements may look somewhat more graceful. What I'm saying here is that you shouldn't dig into those trivial details. You should concentrate on the important things and go study the Fa!

Question: A person began to resent me because I stopped him from selling counterfeit books. He pulled some of our students away to practice separately. How should I treat him?

Teacher: If he's making money by selling counterfeit books, I'll tell you clearly here: He is not my disciple. If he buys counterfeit books and sells them at purchase price to students, then he's buying books for others and we can't say he's damaging the Fa. If the text in the books is altered and he doesn't know it, then you should tell him not to do that anymore. The problem should be handled that way, and the discord shouldn't have gotten so intense. If later on he begins to separate practitioners to form his own group, then that's absolutely not the behavior of our Dafa disciples.

Question: In my dreams I often encounter ghost-like things controlling my body. As soon as this happens, I remember that I'm a disciple practicing a righteous Fa.

Teacher: Don't be afraid when you see bad things. Those horrible scenes might be seen often by new practitioners, or those who've been practicing for some time but who aren't diligent, who are making very slow progress, and who've remained at the same level for a long time. Why is that? It's because in another dimension, in a place everyday people call “the netherworld,” there are as many lives as in our world. At night when we go to sleep it is daytime over there. When it's nighttime for us here, it is daytime for them; when it's our daytime, it is nighttime over there. When you're asleep at night it's the time for them to come out. Older people used to say, “Don't go out at night!” They had their reasons. That's because more of those things are out at night. They rest during our daytime.

When you first start doing cultivation (you start from the ordinary human level), if your Third Eye is opened at that realm you will see them. That's because you start at a very low level, [a level] of everyday people. They know you can see them, so they'll come to contact you, or some phenomena that interfere with your cultivation might occur. All of those things are possible. Regardless, you should control yourself well and ignore them, and only focus on studying the Fa and cultivating. Then you will break through that level very soon; upon improving, you won't see them anymore because your level will have elevated and they will no longer be able to reach you. Although you'll still be cultivating among humans, the space and time of the field surrounding your body will have changed. Those things will have become very small. As a result, you will no longer be able to see them, and they won't be able to bother you anymore. I've discussed these things in *Explaining the Fa of Zhuan Falun* and *Explaining the Content of Falun Dafa*.

Question: Does the essay "For Whom do You Exist?" tell us to completely get rid of the human side and cast off this human shell?

Teacher: Yes. Many of our people think at the very beginning that the Fa is good because they think this Fa is beneficial for humankind. They think, "Being a cultivator doesn't disturb the society of everyday people and is quite beneficial for it. I should learn it." The basis of their thinking is human. Some people have continued to evaluate everything of our Dafa with human criteria for a long time. If they think that anything slightly disagrees with modern people's notions or with human society's ways, they won't like it or accept it. In fact, what they protect are human things; they don't want to break away from being human. That's the reason. The ultimate goal for you cultivators is to Consummate and break free of humanness. You absolutely aren't allowed to cling to human notions and not let them go.

Question: I can forbear (ren) when it comes to ordinary emotions. But if I hear someone making negative remarks about me, I find it a bit hard to forbear.

Teacher: Your forbearance actually isn't even up to ordinary standards. Your sitting there and thinking you can forbear amounts to nothing but wishful thinking. If you can forbear when you really encounter problems, that's true forbearance. So as for this, I think that if you come to understand the Fa through reading, you will be able to do it. When you encounter conflicts or when problems suddenly arise, how much you can forbear at that instant is the most critical. Some people aren't able to forbear at all, even when they understand the principles. You can't call that forbearance. Some others say they can endure, but still can't handle themselves well when problems suddenly arise. Then it's not really that good. If you can forbear when a problem suddenly arises, and can hold your ground even in dreams, then you are solid. Dreaming isn't cultivation per se, but it's true that it can test whether your *xinxing* is solid. Those who say bad things about you are everyday people, not Gods and Buddhas. Why would a cultivator be affected by that?

Question: Sometimes, when I'm trying to understand the Fa's principles or am passing xinxing tests, I talk to Master in my mind. Is that an attachment?

Teacher: That's not an attachment. It can't be called an attachment. Although you can talk to me, you should not, however, expect any answers or favors in return, nor should you expect me to give you some good things or leniency. None of that would do. It's alright for you to talk to me. So anyway, you can talk to me. You might talk with an intention, but I won't pay attention

to that when I listen. Pursue nothing and you will gain naturally. Anything done intentionally won't work; you shouldn't talk to me with any intention. Some people say: "I just want to look at Teacher, since Teacher has told us that a person can tell whether something is good or bad by looking at Teacher's facial expression. So every morning after I get up, I look at the Teacher's picture to see if today is going to be a good day. Every day whenever I do anything, I look at Teacher's picture." Then your attachment has grown quite strong. When some cultivators indeed feel uncertain after doing something, and they really don't know if they've done right or wrong, they take a look at my picture and truly get clued in. Cultivation is about cultivating your heart and mind. Yet instead of trying to get rid of that attachment, you put it all before me.

Let me tell you why people aren't able to do cultivation in Buddhism today. One of the most crucial reasons is that they aren't cultivating, but pursuing. Yet they don't realize they are pursuing. What are they thinking when they worship Buddha? "So and so in my family is sick; I beg you, Buddha, to bless him because I believe in you." What they mean is: "I'm believing in Buddha, I'm burning incense." So they're bargaining with a Buddha. While worshipping the Buddha some people are thinking... they don't have a specific motive in mind when worshipping Buddha and burning incense, but every day when they do this, they think: "Doing this means I'm paying respect to the Buddha and cultivating Buddhahood. Buddha, look at how pious I am to the Buddha." They're thinking to themselves, "I'm so devout in front of the Buddha. Buddha must be seeing this." The Buddha won't accept any thinking of the sort. He'll think that the person is no good at all.

I often say that people in Buddhism don't know how to cultivate anymore. This is what I mean. They don't realize it at all; their intentions are deeply concealed. Nowadays people have become very crafty. People today know how to hide their attachments. And then they hide the hiding of their attachments. When I look at this kind of person I know it's really hard to save him. When I give him a hint about it, he himself doesn't even realize this concealment of the thing he uses to hide his hiding. What's more, when I point out his real problem—when my Law Bodies point out his real problem—he tries to deceive my Law Bodies, as if he were dealing with ordinary humans. He fakes it and says, "Oh, I was wrong." Then he again finds another cover to hide what he's hidden—he uses another cover. How's someone like that to be saved?! Now, you still have your Master teaching you and guiding his disciples here. But in those temples where no one is looking after them, how could they cultivate? Humans have come to this stage. What would you say can be done?

Question: I see many students taking notes. Master, would you please address this?

Teacher: Every one of you who's taking notes, you'd better stop. Why? Let me tell you, you won't be able to hear everything I say because you're focusing your attention on taking more notes. So no matter how hard you try, you won't be able to take everything down in full. If you take incomplete notes and share them with others, you'll be quoting me out of context. And besides, you won't have heard the speech well yourself. The disruption is that significant. Though you can't remember everything, with each point you come to understand in my speech, you are making progress and being assimilated to the Fa. That is true improvement. When you walk out of here you will all have undergone a change. It's possible those who've been taking notes won't undergo any changes at all. That's how huge the disruption is. We've addressed this problem before. Don't take notes.

Question: Please elaborate further on the inner meaning of [the article,] "Expounding on the Fa."

Teacher: If I wanted to make it explicit to you I would have written it explicitly. It's for you to enlighten to. However much you can realize from it is fine. If you try to understand it without any notions, you won't be off track regardless of how little you can enlighten to; it'll only be that what you enlighten to is limited and what you come to know isn't much. But it won't be off track. If I could tell you explicitly I wouldn't have written it that way.

Question: What's the relationship between notions and attachments?

Teacher: Those things that you think are good and that you always hold on to and don't let go of are attachments. To make it more explicit, anything that you can't let go of is an attachment. It's very simple. Many of you haven't studied the Fa well enough. The reason you haven't studied the Fa well enough is not that you haven't studied or that you don't spend enough time on studying—it's that you study with an ordinary human mindset. You pick out those parts that meet your psychological needs. You think those are good and you selectively read them. If you skip those parts that you think don't meet your needs, have nothing to do with you, or even don't agree with your own notions, and you read selectively, then you will never be able to ascend in cultivation. Although some matters that I discussed in *Zhuan Falun* might not seem to have anything to do with your cultivation or your *xinxing*, the book covers things at different levels and in different forms. Even when it appears as though I'm talking about *gong*,* to tell you the truth, what I'm discussing includes things related to *xinxing*. The book is systematic. It won't work if you skip even one chapter. If you can't change that mindset of yours it will truly impede your improvement, impede your Consummation.

Question: Every now and then I feel as if something is pressing on my head, but I can't figure out what it's related to.

Teacher: Just ignore it. Don't worry about anything. As long as you're a disciple in cultivation, you should regard all the states you experience as good phenomena. I've talked about "Three Flowers Gathering Atop the Head." Three Flowers Gathering Atop the Head occurs only at a very minor level and is a manifestation in the In-Triple-World-Law. When one reaches a higher level there will be manifestations at higher levels and many types of forms occurring over one's head, and the pressure felt on the top of the head will be great. Once I mention the specific manifestations you're likely to develop an attachment or get elated. You've probably seen that Buddha statues have bodies of different variations, some of which have four heads, and some of which have one head stacked atop another head, which is stacked atop another and another... All of this will occur during your cultivation. That is the magnificence of the Buddha Fa. Or that's a partial manifestation of the magnificence of Buddha Fa, at least. What's more, it's only one phenomenon. Thousands, tens of thousands, even hundreds of millions of different manifestations of *gong* as well as manifestations of the Fa will appear. How could you not feel anything on your head? As your *gong* column (*gongzhu*) grows taller it presses down on you, making you feel pressure on your head. All kinds of things will happen. If you take things this good to be bad things, where have you placed your *xinxing*? Does it measure up to the level you've reached? That's why I often tell you that it doesn't matter if you can't see. You have to take it as a good thing. It would be impossible for me to thoroughly tell every one of you about the minute details of all phenomena at every level. If I did, you would become just way too overjoyed. If you focused on those changes every day, you couldn't cultivate anymore. That's

why I don't discuss those things with you. You should only work hard on your heart and mind—true improvement depends completely on your heart and mind. If your heart and mind don't ascend, everything else is for nothing.

Question: When I can't pass a test, I express my regret in front of Teacher's picture. Is it alright to do that?

Teacher: It's alright to express it. That isn't wrong, but you need to correct your behavior afterward. If after you express it today, you walk out the door and become your old self again, then what good would it do if you came back to express your regret again? When you tell Teacher that you regret something, you should have the resolve to correct it.

Question: Please explain the meaning of "This is a great, imminent danger" in the essay "Pacifying the External by Cultivating the Internal."

Teacher: I wrote that essay because some students raised questions related to that. They asked: "I've practiced Falun Gong. It's good and it helps the morality of people in society to become good again. Yet if everyone becomes so kind (*shan*), what if foreigners attack us? What if a war breaks out?" I wrote the essay to address that question.

Wars don't break out simply because people want to make war. Everything is determined by heaven and driven by the cosmic climate. No matter how hard human beings strategize, think hard, or try, there are times when they just can't succeed. Sometimes when they do succeed, they then think it's the result of their own effort. But in reality, the efforts and activities in their lives are inevitable. That's how it is. So if human beings don't do a thing, good things won't just land in their laps. The reason being, that's how human beings live their lives, and they will never live like Gods. Even if you tell them this, they won't believe it, and they'll keep on competing and fighting with others. That's a human being for you. Consequently, competing and fighting become inevitable actions, become human behavior, and are simply human. So the state of human society comes from the state of human beings.

Question: When we improve our xinxing, our own karma is eliminated. Is it transferred to those people who help us improve our xinxing?

Teacher: No, it's not. It seems you're quite attached and are afraid of losing your stuff. (*Laughter*) Let me tell you that it isn't at all like you've imagined. I've eliminated many, many things for you. The fact is, I am bearing them for you. It's impossible for anyone to not pay for the crimes and wrong he has done—it's absolutely prohibited. This is a law of heaven. The amount of karma you need to eliminate is left for you at the right amount so that it allows you to cultivate; it's proportionate to your *xinxing* and enduring. If it were a bit more, you would fall and couldn't cultivate. It's not that because I've borne [karma] for you I'll want something from you. Everything is mine, and I need nothing. Some bad things are directly destroyed, and that's something no one but I can do.

Do you know why Jesus was crucified? Do you know why Sakyamuni had to choose Nirvana? Many people have gone to Famen Temple to see Sakyamuni's finger bones; they are indeed Sakyamuni's finger bones. If his finger bones are like that, how could his body have decayed? Couldn't he have taken his body along with him? It had completely transformed into high-energy matter and was no longer human flesh. Why did he still choose Nirvana? You don't know that in the process of your cultivation, the debts you owe aren't just the sins committed among human beings; the debts you owe in different cosmic bodies, at different levels, and in

different environments are just so numerous. Those are things human beings can't settle by any means. Even Gods at lower levels have no way of settling them. But if someone wants to save a person and if that person has the desire to cultivate, how could you not have mercy on him? A Buddha is merciful, and so will try to save him. But what about all the things he owes? You have to resolve that for him, which actually means that the knots of his debts are then brought onto the Buddha himself. When a Buddha comes to save people he needs to have a flesh body. What are the knots tied to? They're tied to his flesh body. In the end, neither Buddha nor Jesus could free their flesh bodies because they just couldn't extricate themselves from the debts owed by the disciples they were saving, and those included different kinds of karmic debts owed at different levels and in different time periods, and it was because it involved lots and lots of different things in the cosmos. They weren't able to free themselves whatsoever. So they chose this kind of path: to eliminate the flesh body or have the body cremated, and let that one ending end it all; everything was resolved, and they thought they paid their debts.

In order to pay the debts as much as he could and to dispel the resentment towards him coming from different realms, Jesus accepted his own crucifixion and underwent that suffering. And yet there are still people who send me notes like, "Teacher, you should save me this way" or "You should save me that way." I say, "Do you think Buddhas are obligated to save you, that they have nothing to do and have to save you, that they're addicted to saving you?" Sakyamuni said that the number of Buddhas and Tathagatas is like the number of grains of sand in the Ganges River. How many grains of sand are there along the banks of the Ganges River? He said that Tathagatas were as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges. There are so many Tathagatas. That's what Sakyamuni said from the level he was at in those days. Then why don't tons of Buddhas come here to look after human affairs? Actually, a Buddha up there doesn't need to come down: it just takes a wave of his hand to wipe out all of humankind's illnesses, and a wave of the hand to eliminate the karma of all human beings and save them. Yet no one can do it that way.

Human beings must themselves pay everything they owe, and what they owe isn't limited solely to the plane of human beings. If you want to save them, you have to change their hearts from the core. Only that way does it count as true salvation. If you paid their debts for them and cleansed them completely, but their realms of mind weren't elevated, sure, they'd look polished on the outside, but it would all be fake! Why do I say that the innermost part of your mind has to change? Some people have said: "I came to learn the Fa because I was ill. I didn't know at first, but later I understood that Teacher says this isn't about getting healed." Then the person doesn't mention getting well. "Okay, I'm not going to ask to be healed." He says to himself in his mind, "I won't ask to be healed. I'll just read the book and do the exercises. Teacher is sure to take care of my illness at some point." He's still thinking that way. He's polished on the outside, yet he hasn't changed at the core. It's meant to fool people, even his master. How could that work? In actuality he's only fooling himself.

This means that if you want to change, you have to change yourselves from deep down within, from your very nature. Only that is true elevation and true transformation. If the nature of your *xinxing* doesn't change, when you encounter a problem [your attachment] will come right up—it will swell up and display itself. Wouldn't it be terrible if Buddhas were like that? Changes have to come from one's very nature. That's why I've said that cultivation is a very serious thing. It's useless if you don't truly change yourselves from your very nature. When people try to be good and become role models or heroes in the society of everyday people—and it doesn't matter the motive, maybe it's born of a good wish—they always have, however, an intention or a

motive. Thus, that person's good conduct won't last long, and he'll make mistakes again in the future. Wasn't there a saying in the past, "Always glorify the dead but not the living"? That was because people have discovered it for themselves: "What if one day he makes a mistake again?" No laws or regulations, not even any campaign, will ever change people's nature or their hearts. A person needs to be truly moved before he can be changed.

Be it Sakyamuni's Nirvana or Jesus' crucifixion, which I just mentioned, they endured such enormous pain for human beings and suffered so horrendously for them! How should humans treat themselves? To whom should they be responsible? For whom should they live? If you are to be responsible to yourself, don't you want to live clearheadedly? If everyone could search inside for his own shortcomings, the civility of human society would certainly improve. Our Dafa can bring that about. But it definitely isn't for those things of ordinary human society that I've imparted Dafa. Our objective is to enable cultivators to improve, yet as more and more people learn It, they will form an environment that will stimulate the improvement of human society as a whole. That's how they're related. But let me make this clear: I am absolutely not trying to do something for society, for certain people, or to accomplish something in human society. The point is for you to achieve Consummation.

Question: When my body goes through karma purging right after I do something wrong, is this "retribution in the same lifetime," as Teacher has described?

Teacher: The phenomenon of retribution in the same lifetime existed before and will continue to exist in the future. Minor misbehavior may result in retribution in the same lifetime. After a person does something bad, he falls hard when he walks out the door, or is hit by something when he steps outside. Although the degree of severity can vary, he's still being punished. People usually don't believe in the existence of high-level beings in other dimensions, so they think that what happened was accidental. They recognize only humans as intelligent beings. How absurd people have become! There are lives everywhere in this universe. People commit bad deeds and do things as they please; when someone becomes like that, retribution in the same lifetime becomes less frequent. So what will happen? He'll accumulate karma, and accrue more and more of it. When there gets to be too much karma, his life will be shortened. The more karma he has, the more his life will be shortened, and additional karma will shorten his life further. For example, for people who've done too many bad things and have become "evil beyond forgiveness," although they die in this world, they will continue to be exterminated in other dimensions until they've paid off all of their karma—there are numerous ways of being exterminated. In other words, they have to pay for everything. That's really horrifying. For our cultivators, though, things aren't like how they are for everyday people. In most cases, you are transforming your karma as you improve, and you are being prompted with hints.

Question: If I cultivate at home, does Teacher transform less gong for me than if I were to do the exercises at a practice site?

Teacher: If you cultivate at home, truly conduct yourself as a practitioner, and cultivate solidly and steadily, then you aren't worse off than cultivating outside. But human beings usually have laziness in them—you can't deny it—because your thoughts haven't yet elevated to that level. When you stay away from the group practice environment, it's as if you won't be spurred on, and you lose an external condition that drives you in cultivation. For example, when we do the meditation, if other people are enduring the unbearable pain yet no one takes down his legs, you'll feel embarrassed to take yours down. This compels you to increase your exercise time.

That is, an environment like that pushes you forward in many respects. Without that environment, if you don't handle yourself well, you won't be spurred on by that external factor, you might slack off, and you won't manage to be diligent. Although you're still practicing, your progress might be much slower. That's the relationship. If you're really able to handle yourself well, then it makes no difference where you practice. The only concern is that you might not handle yourself well. Even though some people may say, "I can be self-disciplined," I believe some people, but not some others, because I see it very clearly: They haven't broken through to reach that level yet.

Question: Someone who does damage to the Fa wrote many derogatory comments in a copy of Zhuan Falun (Volume II). What should I do with that book?

Teacher: You can burn the book. That's how depraved some people have become. So there are all kinds of people, even those who dare to blaspheme Buddhas. As soon as the blasphemous words come out of his mouth, his Spirit (*yuanshen*) falls downward. What's left is a half-dead person who goes about things among humans with this body. That kind of person is the easiest target for spirit possession; a possessing spirit comes over immediately afterward. Without a Spirit, his body is no more than an empty shell, and a possessing spirit then takes over. There are lots of cases of this. And there are a lot of sham *qigong* masters of this sort. Those people are truly the worst people.

Question: Most kindhearted Russians are Christians. How can we help them to obtain the Fa?

Teacher: If circumstances allow, you can go talk to them. If they want to learn, they can learn; if they aren't interested, let them be. Also, Dafa is serious and solemn—we don't force anyone to learn. It makes no difference what nationality you are. We spread Dafa simply to let those who don't know about the Fa know, and it's so that we don't leave them behind. Whether a person wants to learn is his own business. The same goes for both foreigners and Chinese people. People judge whether a person is kindhearted using today's human standards. Everyone has a good side and a bad side. Besides, the entire human society is sliding downwards. Relatively speaking, there are some good people who still have the good intention of becoming virtuous again. That's most precious. But as for how good they are among everyday people, I don't think it's that important. Only their wish to become virtuous again is most precious. Without that it's very hard for them to be saved.

Question: An everyday person wanted to destroy a Dafa book, and a student got into a fight with him in order to protect the book. Did he do well in terms of forbearing? Did he accrue karma?

Teacher: We can't say that this student did wrong. When we run into problems, however, we need to think them over: Why did that person destroy the book in front of you? Could it be that you had some attachments? Or perhaps there was something wrong with you yourself? If you had adjusted your thinking at that moment, he might have immediately stopped destroying the book. It's very likely that would have happened. I've often said that whenever you come across a problem, you should take a look at yourself first. Even if a problem has nothing to do with you, when you see it, you should still search inside yourself. I'd say that then nothing can stop you from advancing on your path.

Question: I study Falun Dafa, but my husband studies The Book of Changes. I burned some of his books without telling him. Was that a bad thing to do?

Teacher: No, it wasn't a bad thing to do. Our Fa has inner meanings behind the words. But the books written by those sham *qigong* masters have things behind their words, too. They don't have that profound of meaning, but instead some shallow things that can't go beyond the Three Realms. And those things are evil. Their images are those of animals, foxes, demons, ghosts, and those kinds of filthy and messed up things. They're all black, harmful to people, and "yin" in nature. So it's indeed bad to have those things in your home. Your husband accepted those things out of ignorance, and those things hurt him. So if you burned them, you burned them. But if he gets upset and argues, quarrels, or fights with you, then don't bother doing it anymore. If he doesn't mind, then it was alright to burn them. You should [still] take a look at yourself: "Do I have some kind of attachment?" I think that probably a lot of things happen for a reason. Those things won't affect you, however, since you practice cultivation and have a shield around your body. You all have shields; otherwise, not only would others interfere with you, you would affect others.

Question: What is "the evolution of the universe"?

Teacher: You all know that "universe" is defined by humans. Exactly how large is the universe? Humans can't explain exactly. The universe we usually refer to is only the cosmic expanse that we see. The largest expanse that modern scientists can observe using telescopes doesn't exceed this small universe of ours. So put simply, this is what "universe" refers to. Yet this small universe of ours is not even one trillionth of the great cosmos. It's within this tiny, tiny realm, which is one trillionth of one trillionth of the great cosmos. It's only a speck of dust within a speck of dust, which is another speck of dust within a speck of dust—that's how miniscule it is. The entire great cosmos is in motion, and the cosmic bodies of a great expanse are in motion. Wouldn't you say that the universe is in motion? This motion brings about lives and creates species. Cultivators call this motion "evolution." The human mind can't comprehend things at that high a level. This cosmos is so vast that even when you reach the highest level of your cultivation at the time of Consummation, you'll still find it incredibly vast and will exclaim with awe.

Question: Master said, "Concern for reputation is a huge obstacle that prevents you from reaching Consummation." What if someone isn't attached to his reputation in the society of everyday people but seeks to get gong and to be well known for his Dafa work?

Teacher: Then his attachment has been revealed and so it has to be removed. Sometimes some of our students, including veteran students, demonstrate very bad attachments that are totally unfitting a cultivator. Nevertheless, we can't say that the person isn't good. That's because you can no longer see the attachments that he has eliminated, and only the attachments that he hasn't eliminated show themselves. In other words, many attachments are not evident in him because he has cultivated himself quite well; only the ones he hasn't yet eliminated can manifest. So maybe the attachments that haven't been eliminated will manifest. You can't say that the person isn't good—you can only say that the attachment of his isn't good.

No matter how a person cultivates, he can't conceal the attachments that haven't been eliminated. No matter how he cultivates, I use all kinds of methods to expose his most stubborn attachments—even when he thinks he's doing the most sacred work. Even when you're doing Dafa work I will still have them manifest. It's no good if the work itself doesn't help him to

improve; the improvement of his *xinxing* is the number one priority, his elevation is what's most important. Only if his heart is pure and clean, and if he can realize his problems, then when he goes to do the work again the work will be more sacred. So the reason many of our students can't achieve success in their work is that they do the work while holding on to a lot of attachments—they can't let go of this or that attachment. Whether they're attached to their own affairs or develop an attachment while doing work for the Fa, as long as they have an attachment, it will be exposed in the midst of their work. And especially when their intention isn't good, that's when they are less likely to be allowed success. So they'll have great obstacles then. That's because they aren't permitted to do work of a sacred nature with an impure heart. If they can do sacred work with a pure heart, only then is their work truly sacred.

Question: During the meditation, one of the students' legs shake and he vomits. He can't control it. Would Master please explain this?

Teacher: Everyone's situation is different. Since I'm speaking in a setting like this, I have to discuss it in a way that has universal application. If a person can't be pure and clean while he practices, if he still practices other things or can't become focused on one cultivation way, or if he mixes in his mind things of other *qigongs*, then all kinds of situations like this can appear. Another possibility is that those who have a great deal of karma might react strongly when karma is being eliminated. That too could cause this kind of situation.

Question: We need to act upon what we have enlightened to, right?

Teacher: Yes, you should. You might not be able to handle yourselves completely well; there is a certain degree of difficulty in being able to always handle yourselves well. But cultivators should hold themselves to this kind of standard.

Question: Is it true that the more that gets separated, the higher one has reached in cultivation?

Teacher: It's not that as more gets separated one reaches higher in cultivation. Only that which has met the criteria can be separated.

Question: When Master discussed "separation," did you mean that our whole self will go with you, and does that mean that the more we can take with us the better?

Teacher: In fact, you don't know that: Now that you have obtained the Fa, and as long as your mind is steadfast, you're on your way to Consummation. That's certain.

Question: Is it true that the greater one's compassion, the greater his capacity to endure?

Teacher: No, that's not true. Compassion emerges after that portion of emotion is eliminated. One's capacity to endure is an ability that results from a combination of many factors.

Question: Can I ask Master to increase my tribulations so that I can pay for my karma earlier and return to my original, true self sooner?

Teacher: No. No matter what you yourself conceive of, it won't work. Even less should you intentionally seek tribulations and suffering. That's wrong. In fact, all arrangements are systematic. There's no need to think much about these things.

Question: I think I should simply do things according to the three words “Zhen, Shan, and Ren.” Is it right to think this way?

Teacher: Yes. As long as your mind is steadfast, you should go ahead and do things that way and follow the requirements. But you need to study the Fa a lot. Otherwise you won't know the inner meanings of Zhen, Shan, Ren at different levels, and then you won't be able to truly practice Zhen, Shan, Ren in your conduct.

Question: There are things that I'm unable to enlighten to. Why does it seem that I just can't understand things completely?

Teacher: It doesn't matter if you don't understand them. It's not that you have to comprehend everything I've written in a short period of time. As your Fa-study becomes deeper and deeper, you will understand those things.

Question: Sometimes as soon as I see your picture I become afraid. I wonder why this is.

Teacher: It isn't you who fears—it is your thought karma.

Question: Is it alright if we rent a place for group study so that everyone can go there and study?

Teacher: If the conditions are good and it becomes too comfortable, then I think you're cultivating too comfortably. That isn't so good. If you have the conditions, that is, if you have a place like that and can provide it without spending any money, then I'm not against it. You could at least go there when it rains, snows in winter, etc. If you have to spend money to create a better environment, that's not good, regardless of how much or how little money was involved.

Question: Disciples in the countryside don't know much about the modern scientific terms mentioned in your books.

Teacher: Those are things that can be explained to them. Explain the original meaning of the terms, that is, explain the original words—the surface meanings of the words. But you need to read the Fa, and should read the book in the order it's written and with the context of what's being read in mind.

Question: If I don't understand the surface meaning of some words, can I look them up in dictionaries?

Teacher: Yes, that shouldn't be a problem. Dictionaries only explain the surface meanings of words. But often the words I use aren't in dictionaries.

Question: There's a Christian who lives near us. He always asks me to do calligraphy for him. I feel uncomfortable saying no, but I'm afraid of incurring interference by saying yes.

Teacher: If you've done so, then you've done so. We can only bring benefit to others. It's not like those things can affect us. In fact, be it Christianity or Catholicism, I only consider it a job. I don't regard it as cultivation. It's simply a job.

Question: There are things that I want to let go of. Why am I not able to?

Teacher: That means they've become formed notions. Even if you can't forget those things, you should find a way to repel them. Then they will gradually weaken and eventually be eliminated.

Question: Is it better to have everyone “follow the mechanisms downward” at the same pace [in Exercise Four]? Sometimes the differences are huge.

Teacher: That’s right—the more synchronized your movements, the better it will feel. That’s because when you are doing the exercises, you are strengthening the mechanisms outside your body. Your practice relies on the constant rotation of those mechanisms; they cultivate you automatically and at all times. When you do the exercises you are strengthening those mechanisms. So when your movements are synchronized and everyone does them together, the energy is stronger and you can strengthen the mechanisms better.

Question: In winter when the temperature is around -22°F (-30°C), is it alright if we do the exercises indoors?

Teacher: Just try your best to do the exercises outside, since we’ve been doing them like this for many years. The students in Changchun and Harbin have been exercising outdoors. You’ll be all right if you put on more clothes. But if it’s too cold to bear you can perform the exercises indoors, and when it’s not so cold, you can come out again to do the exercises.

Question: A student rented a classroom with his own money. Does that count as involving money?

Teacher: That isn’t something your assistance center did, nor was it done by your practice site. The student himself wanted to do that, so it was his own individual act. He wanted to do a good deed to support you, that’s how it is. He was simply doing a good deed as an individual. But we should also consider something: the student’s capacity to support this, meaning, whether he has the financial means. That’s one thing. Secondly, has this student done cultivation for a long time? If he were to change his mind, he might think that he’s lost out, and that could cause trouble later on. All of these things should be considered. But I think it’s best we try to do the exercises outdoors.

Question: Near our practice site there are people doing quite a few other qigongs. Some of our students are worried about being interfered with and affected.

Teacher: You won’t be affected. They definitely can’t interfere with us. But you shouldn’t have the thought, “Are they going to interfere with us?” You mustn’t be swayed. Your minds shouldn’t be attached.

Question: My thought karma has been particularly strong of late. I even fear that I’m a demon who came here by arrangement. Is this the thought karma, not me?

Teacher: Don’t worry—that isn’t you yourself. It is karma. But I’ll tell you, since the amount that everyone has of that thing is different, some people may have more, so it’s stronger. People who have more may need to endure more. Maybe previously you did more wrongdoing of this sort, so you have to do everything in your power to suppress it and defy it. As long as you can tell it apart from yourself, the rest is easy to deal with.

Question: I feel that I haven’t done well in cultivation and that I have too much filthy stuff. At home, I even dare not look at [pictures of] Master.

Teacher: It’s okay, Master knows what the situation is. I know, you’ve made mistakes before. Start anew today. So put your worries aside and cultivate.

Question: My daughter has a low IQ. But she has been persistent in studying the Fa and doing the exercises for three years. Yet she doesn't understand Dafa well. Will she be able to reach Consummation?

Teacher: I don't think a lower IQ is a problem when it comes to learning the Fa. She has studied for three years, and her effort will definitely not be in vain. Aren't you a little too concerned? It might not be that bad. Oftentimes some of our children have extraordinary backgrounds. Since she saw clearly from above (those above are high-level beings) at what point in her life she could obtain the Fa and what she would do when, upon seeing that this family could obtain the Fa later on, she wanted to reincarnate into the family. There's an especially large number of cases like this. So some of our children are really prodigies, while some may be a little less so. You shouldn't think too much about it.

Question: How should we view the differences in the levels of Fa-study and cultivation among different regions?

Teacher: There's no difference. Each region has those who are very diligent as well as those who aren't diligent. There are wise persons, average persons, and foolish persons in every region. Some regions obtained the Fa later on and may be a little behind in terms of progress, for sure. But there are also latecomers who've surpassed veteran practitioners. Many of those who obtained the Fa later on haven't seen me in person, yet they have a very profound understanding of the Fa. And they progress rapidly and don't have mental obstacles. Before, new students had a transitional process through which they came to understand the Fa. Back then, when I taught the Fa in Guangzhou, during the first two classes students didn't seem to know what I was talking about. They just knew it was good, but they didn't know what I was talking about. That is, the minds of the people in Guangzhou were preoccupied with making money, especially with it being after the economic reforms and opening up. It wasn't until the third and fourth classes that they were jolted and suddenly realized what I was talking about. Only then did large numbers of students begin to catch up. Nowadays those who obtain the Fa later on often progress very fast. Maybe that's because the environment has been formed and conditions in every respect have become ripe; that is, the external conditions are there.

Question: Some people think that during group study, reading through the book means reading the book over and over again, that discussion is unnecessary, that one should understand the Fa on one's own, and that we should read one chapter a day. Is this helpful for Fa-study?

Teacher: Reading through the book simply means reading through cover to cover—there's nothing unclear about that. It means reading it over and over again—reading the book through. We study the Fa together after all, so we can share our understandings and have a discussion with each other: "I suddenly realized this meaning in these words of Teacher," or "I'm still not doing well enough in this regard." You might miss that when you read at home. Correct this shortcoming from now on. In other words, it's necessary to share understandings and to discuss among yourselves. Yet reading the book through should be your focus. We shouldn't study a passage, stop, start a discussion, and then study another passage, and discuss more—that's no good. You need to read it cover to cover a lot. The time spent on talking about yourselves or your understandings shouldn't be more than the time spent on reading the Fa. Studying the Fa is the most crucial thing.

Question: Could you tell us about the origin of the Great Law (Dafa) of the cosmos, namely, Zhen-Shan-Ren?

Teacher: Let me tell you, you will never know how vast this cosmos is, so it's even less possible to talk about its origin. Besides, there's no such language. In this cosmos, even languages of the Gods at very high levels are incapable of explaining what the cosmos ultimately is, not to mention human languages. The cosmos will forever remain an enigma to humans, they will never know what it is. Turn your attachments into Fa-study!

Question: Are notions the most fundamental things of humans? What would people be like if they didn't have any notions?

Teacher: A person without any notions is very innocent and kind. But he definitely isn't like a child—he's an adult and is rational. Children don't have notions, and are naïve and kind. They do things without a purpose. But adults aren't like that; even when you are freed of those notions you still won't be like that. That's because when you no longer have any notions, you are already in the process of ascending and your level has already risen up there. So during your cultivation notions are gradually reduced and weakened. That's how things are until they are completely gone in the end.

Question: Sometimes I do well at group study, sometimes I don't. How should I understand this kind of unstable state of mind?

Teacher: Those are your own states in cultivation. No one can persistently do that well in all kinds of environments and always absorb what he's reading without interference from various thoughts. But I also want to tell you that with every one of your tests, your passing them well, not passing them well, being able to pass them, or not being able to pass them—that's cultivation. If you could pass every test you'd be a God! And you wouldn't need to cultivate anymore, right? But you shouldn't let yourself slack off. You should be diligent in cultivation.

Question: After a coordinator at an assistance center was replaced, in an act to try to establish himself on his own, he pulled away a group of students and set up a separate study group.

Teacher: If that coordinator indeed had problems and was thus replaced, then I think it was necessary. Those who make money, those who mislead practitioners to do wrong things, those who can't conduct themselves well, those who cause problems... in my opinion, they not only damage the reputation of our Fa, but cause harm to society. Those kinds of coordinators should be replaced.

Either the students or the coordinator himself will gradually realize their mistakes. But during that period of time you absolutely shouldn't treat that coordinator as an everyday person. You can't do that. He has things that he's failed to overcome, but he might still be a cultivator. But if in his actions he really does damage the Fa, then that's a different matter. If he attacks the Fa, damages the Fa, or his action is different from the Fa, then he has developed demons in his mind, has totally deviated from the Fa, and is out of control. We definitely wouldn't acknowledge him. That's how we should deal with it if this kind of problem occurs. I wouldn't acknowledge him [as my disciple].

As for those who followed him—think about it, everyone—that wasn't accidental. Cultivation is like a great tide sifting the sand. Some people aren't sincerely studying Dafa, and

perhaps they'll leave that way. We don't need those who fool around and try to pass themselves off as practitioners. That could be one of the reasons. Students may temporarily have an incorrect understanding or be temporarily confused, but they'll come back once they realize their mistakes. Some people are just plain confused, though—why don't you think about whether you've come here to study the Fa or to follow someone around?

Question: Master said that it's time for them to become clearheaded and have them become real Gods. Many students find this hard to understand.

Teacher: We're gradually doing that right now, including what I'm talking about today. Many things are discussed surrounding this matter in order to have all of you become increasingly clearheaded.

Question: Does the test of breaking away from humanness happen frequently or only once?

Teacher: Opportunities like that certainly don't come around often. Perhaps in the future there will be other forms—perhaps there will be, perhaps there won't. This is all unknown. But if you don't change yourself fundamentally you won't pass them regardless of how many chances there are. That's just how cultivation is. You'll never be told clearly whether something will happen or not. If everything were made known to you, you would pass them, but that wouldn't be a true test. It's only when you aren't aware of it that you will be tested at the critical moment to see if you are solid and can make that step forward. Or, when you're judging whether something is right or wrong you'll be tested to see how you deal with it. That's how it is.

Question: While studying Zhuan Falun, is it good if we take information from Zhuan Falun (Volume II) and other Dafa books that's relevant to certain parts of Zhuan Falun and study them together?

Teacher: No, it's not good. Just focus on studying. When you read one book you should concentrate on it; that's how you should read it, and read it in order. You shouldn't look for something with your own goals or do something with your own goals. That won't work. And let me tell you that when you reach a certain point and it's time for you to reach the next level, you'll be allowed to move up, and when it's time for you to understand the Fa principles at a particular level, you'll be allowed to know them. Suppose you did something today and you aren't sure whether it was right or wrong: If you pick up *Zhuan Falun* and turn to a page randomly, without any intention of opening it to a specific page, I guarantee that the page you open to will be relevant to the thing you did today. (*Applause*) Of course, if you want to give it a try when you get home, then with that attachment you won't find anything. Cultivation is serious business: You'll never be allowed to try this as if it were kid's stuff, that wouldn't work. In other words, you shouldn't do anything with your own motives.

The Dafa book *Zhuan Falun* is for systematic cultivation. Go read it. As for the other books such as *Explaining the Content of Falun Dafa*, *Zhuan Falun (Volume II)*, etc., they're only supplementary materials to be read for reference. The objective of *Essentials for Further Advancement* is to correct common problems and incorrect situations that have appeared in your cultivation as a whole.

Question: Some people say that the power of Dafa is boundless, so Dafa disciples don't need to safeguard the Fa. Is what they're saying correct?

Teacher: No, it's not. It's true that the power of Dafa is boundless. Today we are all practicing cultivation in the environment of this ordinary human society. If corrupt high-level beings came to do bad things, the Fa Itself would send our Fa-Safeguarding Gods or other high-level beings to destroy them; if our disciples were doing bad things, and Gods came and killed them, everyone would acknowledge that the power of this Fa is truly great and wouldn't dare cause any more trouble for the Fa. Then you couldn't cultivate anymore. Gods can't come here to kill ordinary people that casually, nor can they damage this environment in which you cultivate. In our cultivation, if we can do well defending Dafa in different situations when society and various people create all kinds of troubles for us, isn't that safeguarding the Fa?

As for bad people or those who do bad things, if they're savable, we can try to persuade them and maybe they'll be saved. If they're bent on doing things their own way and continue doing such things—doing them hysterically—then we'll deal with them when the time comes. It's also possible they are being used for the time being to test our students. Once our cultivation ends, they'll have to pay for everything they've done, for sure.

Question: As for those who won't be able to become Gods, why can't they even remain as humans?

Teacher: The entire cosmos is being renewed. In regard to humans, when this cultivation ends, this environment won't be needed anymore. The humans that are left over will be vile human beings who are even more putrid and even worse; when humans aren't good they are eliminated. Think about it, everyone: Can they continue to exist like this? Human beings really are created by Gods. I explained it before, but let me explain it further. As you know, we human beings live in the dimension composed of molecules. But did you know that everything around us is composed of molecules, even the air? What you eat, what you drink, each thing you come into contact with, everything around you, and all of the things that you can't see are composed of molecules. So if one looks from the outside—if one looks at the Three Realms from outside the environment of our universe—aren't human beings amidst mounds of molecules? You are living right amidst mounds of molecules; even the air you breathe is molecules. Then to the high-level beings who look at the human dimension from outside of the Three Realms, what are molecules? Gods generally call these molecules “soil” or “mud.” You're amidst mud, human beings are crawling around in mud—that's what Gods see. Gods see everything [here] that way. Also, there are more superior substances at different levels. After I explain it this way, I think it's not that hard for you to understand what Jesus said about how Yahweh created man from mud!⁴ It's not the mud and soil that you see—everything here is mud. Even your flesh is regarded by them as soil, as mud. That's because in the eyes of Gods, the plane of molecules, and especially the plane of the coarsest molecules, is the filthiest and worst mud. That's how they see it.

Question: Some people's bodies tilt to the left or right when they do the exercises. This looks a little askew to others.

Teacher: Everyone has his own situation. Some people have more matter on this side of their bodies and less on the other. There are cases like that. That was caused by you yourselves in different environments and under different circumstances in the past. All the same, you only need to concentrate on cultivation, and I will take care of those things for you. You can't handle them yourselves. So you only need to focus on cultivation. Your having one more attachment is useless. If you keep thinking about it, it will become a burden, an obstacle, and an attachment.

⁴ Translator's note: this term could also be translated as “clay.”

Didn't I just mention that I've opened things up so much that there's no door anymore, and that I only look at people's hearts? If even under these circumstances you still don't cultivate yourselves and I don't look at your hearts, how could I save you? Right?

Question: How can we remove all postnatally-acquired notions as quickly as possible?

Teacher: The only way is to be determined in studying Dafa, and when a wrong thought pops up, to remember that you're a cultivator and suppress it with right thoughts. My Law Bodies see your mental activities very clearly. If you can make a distinction and not regard it as you yourself, then naturally it won't be you and will be eliminated. But it won't be eliminated for you all at once. It will be divided into different levels and reduced gradually, since we need to leave [some of it] so that you can understand the Fa on your own and cultivate. But we'll get rid of a few extremely bad ones all at once. That's how it is.

Question: A student was falling asleep during group study. After others pointed it out to him, he didn't like it and stopped coming to group study.

Teacher: Then you don't need to ask him to come to study. He didn't come to study the Fa, he came to sleep. So why ask him to come? Is that right? Coming to sleep? We don't need people coming to sleep.

Don't worry about having a small number of people. Even if there's only one true cultivator at one of our practice sites, I'd say that's not bad. Don't worry about having a small number of people. If you had a big pile of people—say, one thousand people—but not even one of them was a true cultivator, what would be the use? It would even damage the Fa.

Question: Sometimes our work assisting others isn't good enough because we're afraid of making the mistake of interpreting the Fa.

Teacher: I've discussed many times the topic of assisting others. For example, you can speak in this way: "I understand this meaning of the Fa at the level I'm at—this is what I understand at my level. Of course, the Fa has meanings that are more profound!" It's not a problem to say, "I haven't met the requirements of the Fa in a certain area," or "I think the Fa discusses certain things at this particular realm. However, the Fa has other inner meanings"—that should be stated clearly. In other words, you shouldn't confine yourselves.

Question: Practitioners still hold jobs in society. Do they need to apply the principles of ordinary human society in handling [job-related] problems?

Teacher: Work is work. Cultivation is cultivation. But your *xinxing* improvement through cultivation will be reflected in [your handling of] specific issues at work. Also, if your boss insists that you do something, you can be a little more accommodating, since it's not you who wants it done. If you don't do it, he won't understand you. But you won't make big mistakes. If something is wrong, when you do it you'll try your best to do it right and handle it your own way. It all depends on how you handle it. I think you can handle all those things well, I don't think there's a problem. There's another thing: Some of us are so concerned about our own image we don't let others know that we're practicing Dafa. They don't let others know how good they are. I think much of this is caused by people themselves. I can tell you that there are now 100 million people learning Dafa. That's no small number. You aren't an isolated phenomenon and you won't be laughed at. And in this setting of Changchun especially, when Falun Dafa practitioners are mentioned everyone knows they're good people.

In many regions, when our laid-off workers look for a new job, people say, “I’ll hire any Falun Dafa practitioner.” Don’t think that yours is an isolated case or that you stand out, that’s not the case. We *have* established this environment. Moreover, this kind of environment has been forming across the whole country.

Question: There’s another qigong group that does their exercises next to us and plays their tape loudly. Should we...?

Teacher: It doesn’t matter. Isn’t that too testing our minds to see if we’re affected? When they play their things, doesn’t it affect your mind? At those times you are being tested to see if you’re disturbed by it, or if you get angry. So we must look within for the cause, and not even flinch when thunder sounds. Let them play their music. When you’re truly not affected it will disappear naturally. That’s guaranteed. If they do it on purpose, if you really can’t handle it well, or if there are a lot of new students, then in that case we can find a new location. They think that place is good, so let them have it. Wherever we practice Falun Gong will become a good place. We’re remaking the environment, not selecting the environment.

Question: How should cultivators do their jobs as leaders well?

Teacher: Nowadays there are so many vexing things at work for people with leadership positions. If all the people in society practiced Falun Gong, I think you could do your work very well without many worries. If everyone were to think in the interest of the public, if nobody were to think in the interest of himself, if nobody were going after things that benefit himself, and if everyone were to think in terms of others’ welfare, think about it, what would society be like? Of course, we don’t mean to ask everyone to become an everyday person after they obtain the Fa. I’m just illustrating a point here. As for how you should handle things, those are specific matters that you should decide for yourself. You should handle them yourselves according to what you think a practitioner should do. You can be more accommodating and more tolerant with certain things. With yourselves, you should be stricter.

Question: How should we deal with the unhealthy phenomena in society that are encountered at work?

Teacher: Don’t think that much about things beyond your control. If you’re a leader and corrupt practices prevail in your organization, then you are responsible for it. But if they’re not something that happens at your workplace, or if you’re not in a position in society with certain responsibilities for others, then you shouldn’t make it your business. You should just make sure that you conduct yourself well. What we require is that we act well, starting with ourselves. If everyone made sure that he conducted himself well, then everything in society would be good. Whereas if everybody tries to police others, then the more people try, the worse things will get, and more and more friction will arise. If people don’t conduct themselves well but instead police others, then they’ll bicker among themselves about how “you’re not good,” “she’s not good,” or “he’s not good.” Tensions among people will get more and more intense. It’s bound to be that way.

Question: Why do some people always misunderstand the Fa or understand the Fa in an extreme way?

Teacher: It’s actually very simple. It’s nothing but a question of what the starting point of a person’s thinking is. That is, when you want to understand the Fa, what’s the basis of your

thinking and what's your vantage point? When you hold on to your own attachments and want to search for answers or for something that protects the things you can't let go of, of course you'll misunderstand the Fa. If you don't think about anything as you read the Fa, what the Fa tells you will be correct. Don't try to search in the Fa for what *you* think is right. Don't try to search in the Fa for things that provide excuses for yourselves, and don't take things out of context to protect yourselves. That's unacceptable, and the more you read, the more confused you'll be. It just depends on what your starting point is.

Question: At present, what's the quickest way to reach Consummation?

Teacher: I've created for people the quickest and best cultivation way. We're in this most complicated crowd of people, and this complex environment enables you to improve quickly. At the same time, a Fa this immense has been imparted today. This Fa allows people to improve quickly. How much faster do you still want it to be? Nothing can save people any faster than Dafa. A person full of karma should first of all think about how to pay off his karma. You have no business choosing [a preferable method].

Question: I always think that copying the book by hand is a waste of time.

Teacher: Then your thinking is a bit too extreme.

Question: In order to overcome thought karma, other than using strong willpower to repel it, are there any other good ways?

Teacher: No. Even if you used your hands to grab it you couldn't pull it out. There's no other way. Your improvement and the removal of your thought karma come with the raising of your level. Cultivation is a serious thing, it doesn't go however you want it to. Every aspect of it has been carefully arranged for you. Wishful thinking doesn't work.

Question: After the layer of the largest cells of the human body sloughs off, in what form do the bodies in other dimensions exist?

Teacher: I've said that human beings don't die following the death of the human life. I've talked about this matter in the Fa and have explained it clearly. When a person dies, only the layer of the largest molecules—the human shell or this layer of molecules on the surface—dies and falls away from this dimension. How could your real body that's composed of microscopic matter die? The fire in an incinerator can't burn away your more microscopic matter, it can't reach it. Let me tell you that this isn't because human fire can't burn them or human fire isn't hot enough to burn the nuclei. It's because there's a difference in dimensions between the fire here and the substances there. That's why the fire can't reach them.

Question: In the section "Practicing in an Evil Way," you said that the Great Enlightened Beings constructed new universes based on their own characteristics. Then the original characteristics and the new universes...

Teacher: This cosmos is extremely vast, and what you brought up has happened in universes at multiple levels, but what's discussed in the book aren't matters in that large a cosmic body. That's not how it is.

There are numerous universes in the cosmic body. Looking at them from the enormous cosmic body, they're all like specks of dust. At different levels of the Fa, different universes understand the Fa at different levels. For example, the true Fa of a certain level of the Fa won't

be disclosed to beings. But the characteristics of the Fa that manifest can be known by beings. By the same token, what I've told you today is only a generalized discussion of what you'll understand upon elevating to that level. You won't know the true revelation of that level. Thus, if the beings at a certain level have reached there through cultivating from below (Dafa practitioners are an exception), they would have assimilated to the Fa at that level in the process of raising their levels in cultivation, and would have developed their own things that they've cultivated. For example, Sakyamuni had "Precept, Samadhi, Wisdom." His Precept, Samadhi, Wisdom conforms to the principles of the Fa at his level and to the Fa of the cosmos at that level. He had thus risen to that level. [His] entire universe is constituted by the principles of his Fa—constituted by Precept, Samadhi, Wisdom. At the same time, his Fa is also the evolutionary principle for all of their Righteous Attainments (*zhengguo*). All matter and forms change along with those things of his. In other words, he doesn't know that it's the fundamental Fa that is truly reflected there, yet he can know its manifestation. Having enlightened to things at that level, he can thus exist at that level. And he then attained something of his own: Righteous Enlightenment Status.

There are other Buddhas and Gods at that same level. Similarly, they enlightened to other understandings of the principles of the Fa at that level. They, too, conform to the principles of the Fa at that level and thus have enlightened to their own Attainment Statuses (*guowei*). The same goes for other Buddhas: They, too, have established their paradises there and have enlightened to their Attainments of Righteous Enlightenment at that level of the Dafa of the cosmos. But they are each different from one another, and yet they've all met the standards of that same level. After I explain it this way, you now understand, right? Then in this enormous cosmos, phenomena like this—the phenomena like this at different levels—are extremely many. So in a universe such as this, periods of formation, stasis, and deterioration cycle through frequently. Yet the Fa of our entire cosmic body will never change. This will forever be the Fa, which will never change, and never has changed.

Question: Between those students who've attended Master's seminars teaching Fa and those who haven't, other than having a different predestined relationship with Master, are they different in any other way?

Teacher: Actually, let me tell you: You aren't at all different in your cultivation. Many people who have a strong predestined relationship with me didn't attend the seminars back then. That was caused by their own circumstances, situations, and many, many other factors.

All the questions have been answered, with some repetitive ones filtered out. Some others were raised by everyday people and don't need to be answered, so they were filtered out too. I've talked for five hours now. Since it is the Fa you're listening to, everyone likes to listen, and if we went on for another five hours you probably wouldn't feel it was long. No matter how much I say, it's only for one purpose: to enable you to improve as quickly as possible and to rise through cultivation as quickly as possible. Most of you in the audience are Assistants, and the goal is for you to do your job well. As for the many, many questions you have and the situations in your cultivation, if I were to answer all of them for you, you wouldn't be able to cultivate. Or even if you could, I'm afraid it wouldn't count. So you yourselves need to enlighten to many questions, and you yourselves need to cultivate. Only that is cultivation. I often use this example: Let's say you Consummated and you went up there and saw mighty, great Buddhas sitting there; the mighty virtue every Buddha has established is magnificent. You would ask yourself how you got

up there. You'd find yourself trembling with anxiety, and even you would know that you didn't belong there, and you'd go down on your own. You'd feel unworthy! So in cultivation, each one of you has to reach his own realm, and you have to reach every level solidly. Cultivation is serious! After you leave today, don't use my words to target others, because I said them targeting your situation. And don't quote my words out of context. Nor should you elatedly tell others, "I heard Teacher Li say such and such." The moment that attachment of yours emerges, you become an everyday person. I want to see you cultivate smoothly and steadily, so I don't want these problems to recur.

This environment today... It really hasn't been easy for me to rectify, amidst the trials and difficulties, the overall cultivation environment so that we're free of problems and stay on such an upright course. As a matter of fact, I'm able to do that—we don't have any tangible form of organization, nor do we keep money or property. The good things you see are that we haven't engaged in building some sphere of influence in the society of everyday people, and that we don't disturb society or the government—that's what you see. The truth is, I can tell you, it's because we have the Fa—we have such an immense Fa—that I can be hands-off. Whether or not you learn it is your own business... We don't have any rosters, nor do we keep track of anyone's personal information. As long as you cultivate I will be responsible to you. Yet this kind of being responsible to you doesn't show in ordinary human society. As long as you cultivate, you can improve, and if you keep on cultivating, you can reach Consummation. But none of this manifests in ordinary human society.

The reason we do things this way is to complement this Fa. This Fa is so immense, so it has a high requirement for the way it's spread in ordinary human society. That is, the form it takes among everyday people must conform to the requirements of Dafa. Then what kind of form conforms to this enormous Fa's requirement that It be spread in ordinary human society without being tarnished? There's only one: "a great way without form." We really have managed to do that. No form—we don't have any of the forms of ordinary human society. Yet we can enable people to truly cultivate and truly improve. That is how we've walked our path, and that is how we've done it, and it's the best way. Nobody can find fault with us. Even when someone tries to nit-pick, he won't find anything, and that's because we have the Fa. I don't set any rules or restrictions. All of you know for yourselves how to handle things.

As for you Assistants, those who we call "Assistants" are simply charitable people who don't become well-known or gain from it personally—you don't get anything personal out of it. Out of your charitable nature you bring a tape player to the practice sites to assist others. That's how all of you are—you're doing this out of your charitable nature and it's your own action. Experience has shown that this environment is the best for our cultivation. None of the saviors in the past dared to take this approach, because they didn't have a Fa this immense. They all had to gather their disciples together to cultivate by following rules and precepts. Since we have such an immense Fa today, we can be open and we don't need to have those rules. Anything with a form cannot match this Dafa. No rules or restrictions can change people's hearts—only Fa can. That's why we've taken this approach.

At the same time, the form of our assistance centers is necessary. This kind of assistance center doesn't assume a form like that of a business enterprise or a government agency. An Assistant simply uses his home and gets together with others to help them when they have questions or to have a discussion. It takes a grassroots form. I think it's really good. I think it's great that you talk together about what people want to do, or about doing some things to spread the Fa.

Fa conferences are another thing unique to our Dafa. After reaching a certain point, we get together to have a Fa conference and have those who've learned well share their experiences and understanding, which will inspire others and help them improve. That is excellent. It's something unique to us.

Overall, you've all made many contributions to this Fa. Of course, I won't follow protocol and praise you, and that's not what you want, anyway. What you seek is merit and virtue, and the raising of your realms and levels. So I won't say those things. Your working for Dafa is the same as working for yourself, because you are a part of Dafa. Whether you're responsible to Dafa and whether you're responsible to yourself are the same thing. So there's no need for me to say much. I'm merely taking care of you in your cultivation, at your different levels, and in the process of your improvement.

As for how to handle things among everyday people, I think you all know how. I hope that from now on you have a better start and do your work even better. In the meantime, I hope that today's meeting, which can be called a Fa conference, helps you to improve considerably and spurs you on greatly. Here, I might be pushing you ahead, but you yourself need to hurry up in studying the Fa, and best utilize your time to study the Fa and keep up. Only that is solid progress. I hope everyone continues to cultivate diligently and vigorously. Don't just watch others achieve Consummation—you too should strive to achieve Consummation as soon as possible.

Glossary (provided by the translators)

<i>benti</i>	“innate body,” “original body,” or “true being.”
Dao	1. Also known as “Tao,” a Daoist term for “the Way of nature and the universe”; 2. An Enlightened being who has attained the Dao
Dafa	“The Great Law,” or “The Great Way”; short for the practice’s full name, Falun Dafa, “The Great Way of the Law Wheel”
Fa	“Law” or “Way”
<i>gong</i>	“cultivation energy”
<i>qigong</i>	A general name for certain Chinese practices that cultivate the human body. <i>Qigong</i> has been immensely popular in China in recent decades.
<i>xinxing</i>	“mind-nature” (lit.), “thought,” or “character”