



# The Sixth Patriarch's Radically Inclusive, Unifying Method of Teaching Dharma (continued)

## 六祖大師兼容並蓄之教法（續）

By Bhikshuni Jin Zheng

Chinese Translated by Allen Chang

比丘尼近證 文

張雨農 中譯

The Sixth Patriarch continues on with what could be an admonition as his top ten disciples prepare to set up new places in other regions:

*“People who attach to external appearances, and moreover practice this way in search of truth, or who extensively set up monasteries, and preach about errors and evils of existence and nothingness, will not see their fundamental nature even in aeons.*

*Just listen, understand, and cultivate according to the teachings. Do not try to completely stop all thought, because that will only obstruct the natural [flowing of] the Way. And if people just listen and learn, but do not cultivate, it will have the adverse effect of increasing misunderstanding. Simply cultivate according to the teaching, and do not cling to appearances when explaining it. All of you, if you understand, then so speak, so engage, so practice, and so act—and you will never stray from the original source.”*

There can be no learning or teaching without cultivation. Likewise, it is difficult to have cultivation without some study. The Sixth Patriarch then gives examples of how to respond to questions by responding with an opposite principle, and he advises his disciples to use this method to answer all questions to help them and their future disciples to avoid falling into extremes

*“Since the contrasting pairs mutually complement each other, they affirm the principle of the Middle Way. Answer every question in this way. Later, when you pass on the Dharma, pass it on this way, and you will never stray from the source of our teaching.”*

To show the Sixth Patriarch's teaching method in action, let's look at two of the ten room-entering disciples who are present with the Sixth

下面幾個段落是有關十大弟子們準備在其他地區建立新道場時，六祖大師所給予的諄諄教誨：

若著相於外。而作法求真。或廣立道場。說有無之過患。如是之人。累劫不可見性。

但聽依法修行。又莫百物不思。而於道性罣礙。若聽說不修。令人反生邪念。但依法修行。無住相法施。汝等若悟。依此說。依此用。依此行。依此作。即不失本宗。

修行是一切的基礎，能讓教導、學習更臻完美。接著六祖大師舉例說明如何以對待法答覆問題，並建議他的弟子用這個方法來回應所有的提問。

來去相因。成中道義。餘問悉皆如此。汝等於後傳法。依此轉相教授。勿失宗旨。

為了清楚說明六祖的教學方法，讓我們以第十品十位入室弟子中的兩位，法海和志誠為

Patriarch before he passes into nirvana. In Chapter Ten there are accounts of when and how Dharma Masters Fahai and Zhicheng were taught earlier in the sutra, as well as how they knew that they had learned something.

Dharma Master Fahai is the most senior-seated of his disciples when the Sixth Patriarch passes into Nirvana. He is also the compiler of this sutra. When he first met the Sixth Patriarch, he asked him to explain the line, “The mind itself is Buddha.” The Sixth Patriarch responds with a few sentences and a verse. The verse goes:

*The mind itself is called wisdom,  
Buddha is just concentration,  
Consciousness is clear and pure,  
When concentration and wisdom unite.*

*To understand this teaching,  
You must work on your own nature –  
It's been here all along.  
Both should be cultivated together.*

Upon hearing this verse, “Fahai had a deep awakening,” and he also speaks a verse:

*The mind itself is Buddha,  
I am embarrassed I didn't understand.  
Now I know the source of concentration and wisdom:  
I cultivate both together; and cling to nothing.*

Originally, Fahai doesn't understand how the mind can be Buddha. Notice how the mind and Buddha are paired together to initially contrast against each other, but are then united into a non-dual state. There are also the pairs of concentration and wisdom, and teaching and nature, also initially contrasted and then joined together. If we go back to the thirty-six complementary pairings, we can use them to further investigate: Buddhas appear to be external, and mind's seem to be internal.

The Buddha is sacred and living beings are mundane. The Buddha is pure and living beings are turbid. The Buddha is true and living beings deviate from truth. The Buddha is awakened (bodhi). Living beings have afflictions. There are a lot of contrasts between the Buddha and living beings on the surface, but then he says the “mind itself is Buddha,” rejecting that they are two separate things and showing them as one.

There's an initial introduction where it seems as if they are separate things, but then they are joined together seamlessly to the point that there is no

例，他們是六祖大師入涅槃前的侍者。從經文中他們受大師指導的記載，可一窺六祖大師如何觀機逗教，以及弟子如何知道自己受教。

六祖大師入涅槃時，法海法師在弟子中輩分最高，他也是本經（六祖法寶壇經）的編纂者。初次見到六祖大師時，他請大師解釋「即心即佛」這句話。六祖大師以幾句偈頌回答他：

即心名慧，即佛乃定。  
定慧等持，意中清淨。

悟此法門，由汝習性。  
用本無生，雙修是正。

聽到這首偈頌，「法海言下大悟」，也說了一首偈頌：

即心元是佛，不悟而自屈，  
我知定慧因，雙修離諸物。

原本，法海法師不明白心為何是佛。請注意，「心」與「佛」是成對的，兩者一開始是對立的，但後來卻合為一體，成為不二的狀態。另外「定」與「慧」、「法門」與「自性」這兩對，也是初而對立，最後而為一。再回來看三十六對相應法，我們可以用它來做進一步的探究：「佛」是外在的，「心」是內在的。

佛為聖，眾生為凡。佛為清，眾生為濁。佛為正，眾生為邪（偏離正道）。佛是覺醒（菩提）的，眾生是煩惱的。表面上，佛與眾生之

apparent moment of joining; they were never two distinctly separate things, but always from the same substance. This method of contrast and inclusion is a way to break down the places where disciples set up their identities, opinions, perspectives, and understanding. As they dissolve the barriers between what is and what isn't, they realize a non-dual awakening and liberation, which is the point of the teaching. This point is echoed again by the Sixth Patriarch in the Final Instructions chapter:

*“This Dharma is non-dual, and the mind is just the same... The mind is fundamentally, pure; with nothing to grasp or reject. Each of you work hard, and try your best wherever circumstances take you.”*

Another disciple, Dharma Master Zhicheng, is an interesting case study. He comes to the assembly, in the beginning, to potentially spy for Master Shenxiu, but the Sixth Patriarch calls him out to reveal himself. He doesn't allow him to hide. That is the Sixth Patriarch's first teaching to him: do not hide, just be natural and sincere.

Then the Master asks him how his Master taught him to practice and Dharma Master Zhicheng replies, “He always instructs his students to stop the mind and contemplate stillness; and to sit upright at all times without lying down.” Then the Sixth Patriarch responds with a verse:

*You can sit without lying down from the moment you're born,*

*But when you die, you'll lie down, never again to sit.*

*How could you build a solid practice*

*On a set of stinking bones?*

After hearing this verse, Dharma Master Zhicheng has an awakening, and states that he has been “reunited with his original mind.”

In this interaction with Dharma Master Zhicheng, the Sixth Patriarch talks quite a bit about his teaching method. When Dharma Master Zhicheng asks, “I wonder, High Master, what teaching do you give?”

The Sixth Patriarch replies, “If I said I had a teaching to give others, I would be deceiving you.

Depending on the situation, I merely use expedients to untie people's bonds, and provisionally call it ‘samadhi’.” The Sixth Patriarch expounds a bit, and then also says:

*“My teaching never departs from the essential nature; to depart from the essential nature in explaining the Dharma is teaching superficially, and this only leads to confusion. You should realize that the ten thousand dharmas all flow from our own essential nature. This is the true teaching of morality,*

間在許多方面是對立的，但他接著說「心元是佛」，原來「心」和「佛」並非對立的兩個，它們本來就是一個。

在最初的列表中，它們似乎是各自獨立，但接下來它們又無縫地融而為一，以至於難以看出交融點；它們本來就沒有分別，始終是一體的。這種對比與共融的教學方法，能打破學生的盲點：他們的身分、見解、觀點與理解，當他們突破是與非之間的障礙時，就能得到「不二法門」的自悟自證，這就是教學的重點。六祖大師在〈付囑品〉中再次呼應這一點：

其法無二。其心亦然……此心本淨。無可取捨。各自努力。隨緣好去。

另一位弟子志誠的公案也很有意思。志誠法師剛到曹溪的時候，或許是神秀大師的耳目，但六祖卻叫他出來表明身分，不允許他偷聞盜法。這種習氣剛要成形時，六祖大師教導志誠法師要光明磊落。

接著，六祖大師父問志誠法師，他的師父是如何教導他修行。志誠法師回答說：「常指誨大眾。住心觀靜。長坐不臥。」接著六祖以偈頌回應，志誠法師聽到偈頌後有所領悟，便說自己「便契本心」。

在這次與志誠法師的互動中，六大師祖暢談許多他的教法。當志誠法師心生疑問：「未審和尚以何法誨人。」六祖告訴他說：「吾若言有法與人。即為誑汝。但且隨方解縛。假名三昧。」接著六祖大師進一步闡述：

concentration, and wisdom. Listen to my verse:

*Mind-ground free from error: essential nature's morality.  
Mind-ground free from delusion: essential nature's wisdom.  
Mind-ground undisturbed: essential nature's concentration.  
It never increases or decreases: indestructible as vajra.  
The body comes and goes, (yet) you're rooted in samadhi."*

Then later Dharma Master Zhicheng asks another question: "What is the meaning of 'not setting up'?"

The Sixth Patriarch replied:

*When your essential nature is free from error, unobstructed, undisturbed, and unconfused, when prajna oversees and illuminates your every thought, and you are far removed from the superficial appearances of things, independent and free absolutely everywhere and anywhere—what is there to "set up"? Awaken by yourself to your own essential nature; awaken directly by cultivating directly. There are no gradual stages; no thing to set up. All things are "still and empty" — how could they be arranged in a sequence.*

The Sixth Patriarch's conversation with Dharma Master Zhicheng is a preview of a good portion of the Final Instructions chapter. These are both key moments where he discusses his teaching method in depth, and it all comes down to dissolving duality on the mind-ground and seeing the essential nature and allowing it to function properly without obstruction.

In conclusion, the Sixth Patriarch used the same basic teaching method for all of his disciples. This method is radically inclusive because he's able to use the same method to help diverse disciples from very different backgrounds and different levels of cultivation to get themselves unstuck and teach them to see their own nature. Over a few decades, he helps countless students wake up to their Buddha nature, and has shaped our understanding and practice of the Buddha's teachings a millennium and a half later.

In my own practice, I would like to better understand how to use the three classifications of dharmas and the thirty-six complementary pairs to help myself and others in their cultivation, but I have not fully grasped the method he's using, and since the point of the method is not to grasp or set up anywhere, I don't think his method can be truly understood until one has directly seen their nature. Though my understanding on this topic is shallow, I've appreciated this opportunity to write this reflection on his teaching methods..



吾所說法。不離自性。離體說法。名爲相說。自性常迷。須知一切萬法。皆從自性起用。是真戒定慧法。聽吾偈曰：

心地無非自性戒  
心地無癡自性慧  
心地無亂自性定  
不增不減自金剛  
身去身來本三昧

後來志誠法師又問了一個問題，「如何是不立義？」

大師回答說：

自性無非。無癡無亂。念念般若觀照。常離法相。自由自在。縱橫盡得。有何可立。自性自悟。頓悟頓修。亦無漸次。所以不立一切法。諸法寂滅。有何次第。

六祖大師與志誠法師的對話，預示〈付囑品〉大部分的內容。這些都是他詳細闡述教學之道的關鍵時候，也就是以心地法門去解決對待法，無礙的運用我們的自性。

總結，六祖大師用一貫的教法來幫助所有的弟子破迷開悟。六祖大師教導眾生數十年，幫助許多弟子明心見性，也塑造一千五百年後的我們對佛教的理解與實踐。

在個人的修行上，期望自己能更了解如何運用三科法門和三十六對相應法，來成就自己和他人的道業。我覺得自己還未掌握運用的技巧，因為這種教學的重點不在於執取或預設任何立場。我想在我明心見性之前，是不會真正領會六祖大師的教法。很高興能有這個機會研究六祖大師的教學之道。 ❀