

April 28th, 2011, *Won*-Buddhist Year 96
Great Enlightenment and Founding Day Message,
The Head Dharma Master of *Won*-Buddhism, Venerable Kyongsan

This Very Mind is My own Creator

Today we greet the Great Enlightenment Day, *Won*-Buddhist Year 96. I wish that the light of *Il-Won*, which Sotaesan has shown us, will spread to all parts of the world so that the world of paradise is realized and is in full bloom. I sincerely pray for the peace of the world and the reunification of the two Koreas as a merit of this celebration. Sotaesan taught us the dharma of realizing the fundamental principle of the universe, and our minds, and to use our minds well. May we all become Bodhisattvas who lead everyone we meet to paradise, by finding and utilizing the Mind Buddha which resides in our own minds.

Right at this moment, there is something to which we can listen and see. What is this? It is our original mind the main character. All the things that we listen to, think about, speak of, and act upon, are the function of our mind. Depending on how we use our mind, we may gather the fruit of happiness or the fruit of misery. What causes war is the mind, and what makes peace is also the mind. Therefore, Sotasan taught that each person is their own creator.

Habit creates our personalities.

How my mind, which is my own creator, thinks, judges, and acts in various situations, shapes my own personality. One builds their own personality and talent by themselves. All sorts of thoughts and ideologies exist in one's mind, and depending on one's cognitive powers, they form an important value in life. All these personalities, talents, thoughts, and values are based on one's body and mind function. That is to say, "habits make self" or "self- karma". We need to reflect on our own level of personality by reflecting on our lives. If our personalities and thoughts are inclined to one side, then we need to transform them to sounder personalities and thoughts. If we do not have enough talent, we can inquire into the way to improve, and practice hard for perpetual happiness and glorious life. If our values are too secular and selfish, we need to cultivate the public spirit and an altruistic mind. The way to reach this is to discipline ourselves by spiritual practice based on our founding master's teachings and scriptures, which are based on the truth of *Il-Won*.

We harvest the suffering or happiness we create.

Natural, cultural, and human environments are built on how one's mind acts towards Heaven and Earth, Parents, Fellow beings, and Laws. The people, with whom we associate at this present moment, may seem to be with us by accident. The truth is that we have been deeply connected with them for a long time. With some people, we are positively connected, and with others we

are harmfully connected. How we interact with a nation, our fellow citizens, a regional culture and our life environment in general are also reflective of our own karma. Our actions toward a barren natural environment, or a beautiful and affluent natural environment is the result of our mind function, which is the creator of ourselves. This is harvesting the suffering or happiness we create." According to what I do to others, I harvest the consequences, whether it is suffering or happiness. This is the karmic principle of responding.

Let us clearly reflect on the lives that we have been living. We need to do more good with the mutual life-giving affinities and make realistic buddha offerings to the negative affinities in order to change mutually harmful affinities to mutually life-giving affinities. In addition, when there is a lack of affinities, we need to explore new affinities. As long as I make a buddha offering to whatever beings, e.g. for Heaven and Earth, they will help us and lead us to the successful and blissful path.

Our original nature is empty-space mind, which has no birth and no death. As long as we meditate and cultivate the wholesome and meditative state of mind, we can transform even very ingrained habits or mutually harmful affinities to good and mutually life-giving affinities. There is a principle of cause and effect--as long as you do your best, you can achieve anything. So let us make a vow and make a buddha offering so that we can all be successful. Let us become a Buddha, with a firm belief in and realization of the principle of Habit and Karma, and build our personalities and cultivate buddha habits. Let us make a vow to become the owner of a meritorious and happy life based on the belief of the karmic principle of cause and effect, and cultivate eternal happiness and blessings.

At this time leading up to the 100th Anniversary of Won Buddhism, let us exert ourselves to achieve the sacred work of bodhisattvas based on the realization of 'habit makes self' and the karmic principle of cause and effect. I wish that whenever we use our mind, which is our own creator, we create a peaceful world, and with self practice it will bring forth countless enlightened ones.