

DIVINE PATH TO ETERNAL LIFE

Sermons by His Holiness Phạm Công Tắc

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The True Happiness of Humanity

Today, Bần Đạo will continue to explain where the true happiness of humanity comes from. Bần Đạo have been describing to you the debates at the Cung Hiệp Thiên Hành Hóa. Those souls who are highly intellectual but lack virtue argue that only noble and respectable souls have the spirit, power and where-with-all to immerse themselves in the Four Noble Truths and reach higher Divine positions. The majority of other souls are unable to undertake, let alone resolve or conquer the Four Noble Truths. Furthermore, because humanity bears the weight of so much suffering, it is no wonder that we look for transitory happiness. They look for any kind of happiness that may help them liberate themselves from suffering, but there is only one way to seek happiness and that is through suffering itself. And so they generate sins from such wrong deeds, which only add to their karma. Therefore, Bần Đạo have brought you together so that we may find out the source of true happiness in our lifetime.

By the way, Bần Đạo will let His Holy Body and all the children of the Supreme Being use their knowledge to find out (in this talk) how the Divine beings at the Cung Hiệp Thiên Hành Hóa reply to that question. So tonight Bần Đạo will preach a little longer. Please be patient and listen as attentively as you can.

Whenever we want to preach the truth, we use the common dharma. This dharma is especially difficult, because it is the dharma summarised in a very concise way. Since after each ceremony everyone is tired, Bần Đạo do not want you, friends, brothers and sisters to be overly tired. Preaching is not easy. It is not like when our sisters go up to the stage and say a few things in two or three sentences just like a bishop who goes up to the pulpit, but is hit by stage fright, it is not easy to preach because we do not have time to research our topics. During each sermon, Bần Đạo leave a white space for all

the children of the Supreme Being and His Holy Body to add more. In this way, you will seek and gain more profound knowledge.

Bần Đạo is trying to pass to you a key, one that you can hold, so that you will be guided through the all-encompassing conscience of the Supreme.

Let us discover where true happiness comes from in this lifetime. Bần Đạo often offer the advice that it is not easy to validate a truth or an abstract philosophy. We must have an absolutely thorough grasp of it. We can easily find the answer in our mind, for it is from the little things that you discover the larger truths. In order to resolve the suffering of this planet, people are venturing into the invisible realm to find happiness for humanity.

Alas, there are many wicked schemes along the way to happiness. What a pity for this humanity! They are longing for happiness and love through which they can live. Whoever initiates the creation of happiness for them will win their heart. They followed Hitler, because they thought that he could create happiness for them. The same is true for Italians when they followed Mussolini.

At the present, the human race is beguiled by those ideals which confuse and divide them. It is because of this misplaced longing for happiness that humanity is being deceived.

Let us contemplate what the true source of happiness is. Let us each recall from our own memory the moments of happiness ever since our birth. We find none – it is all suffering. Therefore, Bần Đạo advise all of you to recognize the Four Noble Truths of the Sakyamuni Buddha as the ultimate Truth. The souls at the Cung Hiệp Thiên Hành Hóa cannot deny this fact.

We know that our life is suffering. From birth onwards, whether we are male or female, we must seek this source of our happiness.

When Bần Đạo reflect on my life, I see how much suffering I have gone through and how much happiness I have enjoyed. Where should I start? I see that I was born into a family of both clemency and virtue. My father was an official in the French Colonial Administration. When I was at the age of 4, he attained a good position and the family lived well. If my father had been corrupt and taken bribes, he would have been rich. My father, however, was

very virtuous. He considered virtue the highest of goals. He often objected to injustice, especially oppression of the poor. Because he committed himself to helping people he had difficulty keeping his position. He was always defending the weak and the lonely, and objected strongly to the unjust authorities. Such people hated objectors like my father, and so he was eventually fired. He then returned to the family house to work with my mother as a trader to make ends meet. I was the eighth child and had a ninth younger sister. We lived as a herd of children in a ragged nest. My other brothers and sisters made their way in the world with their own families, but I remained with my parents because the second last must stay with the family. At that time, I thought I was unfortunate, but looking back, we all loved each other; that is, I love my father for giving life and raising me, and for his honest virtue. I love my mother who worked hard to care for our family, and my brother and sisters who studied hard because they loved my parents and did not want them to worry. My parents would say, "If you do not study, we will be very sad." It was because of love that I determined to study hard. Study is a natural virtue. I loved them so much, even more than others in the family, and I also loved intensely my brothers and sisters, especially when there was disharmony amongst them. Disharmony was always the biggest suffering. During those times, I tried and begged them to make up. It was the happiest time of my life; the time when all I knew was love.

My father passed away when I was 12 years old, so by the time I completed my studies and started working I was living with my mother. I loved her dearly and was worried that she would pass away. I did not know where I would go after her death. I was very worried even during sleep.

In Tây Ninh, burial often took place at night. When I heard them chant, I would wake up and look for my mother. She would ask me what I was doing. I would reply that I heard people going to a funeral and was scared that she would die. Because of this deep love, at 17 I decided to go to work in order to return thanks to her.

Bần Đạo at that time was living in Tây Ninh and people around here still remember this. Back then, I did not know anything, except the love of my mother. Also, my younger sister was going to get married and moved out of the family home. By then, I had passed my examinations and could earn high salary in a trading company. But I was still worried whether I could look after my mother. Furthermore, my brother in law advised that working for a

commercial company brought no honour. Taking his advice, I decided to work for the government. My salary at the time was 70 – 80 piastres at most! I spent more than others but still had some left to look after my mother. When it went down to 20 piastres a month, I was in debt due to support for my wife. My mind was so caught up in work that it was now hard to look after my mother. How could I take care of all this? At the time, I suffered physically and mentally. It was a time I could not forget. Could I bring happiness to my family like this? No, not even until my mother passed away. At 22 years old, how sorrowful it was. I only knew one thing which was to work to look after my mother, and to support my brothers and sisters. When my honour was achieved, I was deeply sorrowful because both my parents had passed away. However I loved them, they were no longer with us. The mental suffering added up when my wife gave birth to our children. I could no longer care for anybody else. I was turning to my brothers and sisters for mental support, but they also passed away. All the familial love I had was directed to my elder brother-in-law. I loved him more than my blood brother. My youngest sister was the dearest friend in my life, but she also soon passed away. It was enough to turn me into a mindless dead body. The sound of birds, the songs of the farmers, and the voice of the boatmen all reminded me of my sorrow. There were no longer any days of joy, and all I wanted to do was become a monk. It was a terribly heavy weight on my soul.

Thanks to the Supreme Being, I was guided to spiritual enlightenment and relieved of suffering. And so Bần Đạo followed Him. The more Bần Đạo followed, His ideal the more I offered my soul to Him. Then He delivered a Profound Love to me – a love a million times deeper than that of a family.

If one knows how to practise the Way, then one knows the Dao/ Tao. If one knows the Đạo then one knows how to guide one's brothers and sisters with the sense of this Profound Love. Then comes compassion for humanity floundering in its sea of sufferings.

Bần Đạo has lived through many years of suffering and all I know is that we must share and undertake these sufferings together. But our elder brothers and sisters have one by one disincarnated and returned to union with the heavenly father. They have left only Bần Đạo to shoulder the burdens of this suffering. We all suffer to build up the Faith, but you friends still remain so unconcerned, as if you were still new to the Dao at all. Bần Đạo have to take care of the religious work, to guide our younger brothers and sisters, and to

look after the young children. Some do not help the Dao or protect it, but even change their nature.

On the other hand, Bần Đạo has offered my life for this religion. My soul has not been liberated from suffering, but has to endure more of it. What is the source of this agony? Amidst all of this, I can find happiness to live. If there had been no happiness, Bần Đạo would have already been dead at the time I was forced into exile (by the French to Madagascar), or during the time when the Dao was in a state of emergency. If there were no happiness to comfort my spirit, I would not be alive now.

Indeed, the happiness which comforts my spirit is the love that I have for the children of the Supreme Being, and the love of these million souls. This is true happiness.

Bần Đạo does not ask for it, but my physical body is strong and healthy. Its power keeps Bần Đạo alive in order to conquer suffering. Bần Đạo truly love His children, and I see that they have returned their true love to me. When there was no love yet, there were people who were jealous. Thanks to the love of His children, people have witnessed Love and Justice being manifested, as proof for my words.

Because of love, happiness is created, and the Faith has been established. In this moment, true happiness springs from the limitless love by the children of the Supreme Being, i.e. from the virtues they uphold. It is this happiness which enables me to live with strength and power. All of us should consider this point: whenever we accomplish a great cause or great work, its value remains as long as we can still enjoy its reward.

We can achieve great work, but not in a short period of time. It is impossible in a short time. If millions of people believe in it, we may even have to sacrifice our life for it. What is the value of one life? If we exchange our life for the happiness of millions, then why not?

I tell you now, if the Cao Đài religion can enjoy infinite happiness granted by the Supreme Being which has now come true, Bần Đạo have achieved great work for the children of the Supreme Being. Bần Đạo could only achieve this thanks to the incomparable power of the happiness I have been speaking of.

Next time, Bần Đạo will explain more regarding the power of love and the happiness of humanity.

Cung Hiệp Thiên Hành Hóa - The Realm of Divine Beings who hold the power to control all human beings in a universe of many planets. The Realm (or department) of the Divine Alliance for preaching (The Dao).