



Jing Si Aphorisms, Volume One [Revised Edition]

Shih Cheng Yen

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Buddhism teaches about the law of karma which explains our past, present, and future. What we did in the past dictates our present, and what we do now determines our future. Life is short. The best way to cope with impermanence in life is to cherish our gift of life by planting good karmic causes and conditions now. By practicing wisdom and compassion to help others and to enrich our spiritual cultivation, we won't feel a void in our lives.

Dharma Master Cheng Yen is one whom millions of people around the world look up to as a wise teacher because with her teachings, they find the path for a more fulfilling life and lasting happiness. Named as one of the 2011's TIME 100 most influential people in the world, she shares her insights into the Buddha's teachings in simple and easy-to-understand language to help people in modern-day society understand the profound truth in life. Her teachings have been compiled and published as *Jing Si Aphorisms*. In this collection of *Jing Si Aphorisms*, you will find many tested and true lessons in life from Dharma Master Cheng Yen.

Through the efforts of Tzu Chi volunteers, *Jing Si Aphorisms* have reached schools, offices, hotels, and stores in many communities. They have become course material for students' moral education. An elementary school student was about to step into a video game arcade after school when he suddenly remembered the *Jing Si Aphorism* he learned in class just earlier; it made him quickly change his mind, and he went home instead. See, a simple teaching can strengthen a person's will to be good, and a change in perspective can impact a person's future.

Reading these *Jing Si Aphorisms*, one feels as if having a heart-to-heart dialogue with the Master. Once there was a young man in Taiwan whose life was saved by a *Jing Si Aphorism*. He said, "If not for the *Jing Si Aphorism*, I would have robbed a bank." He used to be a very law-biding civil servant and enjoyed a comfortable life. However, due to a loan guarantee for his friend that went wrong, he found himself suddenly facing a huge debt, with debt collectors chasing after him. He didn't know what else to do but to rob a bank for money. But, he had no experience. So, he paced back and forth outside of the bank, indecisive as to what to do.

Just when he decided to go ahead with the robbery, a woman parked her motorcycle near him and went into the bank. There was a book lying in the basket on the bike. He reached out and picked up the book. When he opened it, the first line that jumped out and met his eyes said, "In the tug-of-war between good and evil, the side of good can't do without me and the side of evil doesn't need me to join them." That was a *Jing Si Aphorism*. Startled and taken aback, he quickly put the book back and ran home.

He said, "I was saved by that *Jing Si Aphorism*. If not for it, I would have done something that hurt others and myself. For sure, had I robbed that bank, I would go to prison and ruin the rest of my life and destroy my family." This is the power of *Jing Si Aphorisms*—a refreshing stream of wisdom and strength for many people seeking enlightenment to overcome their worries and afflictions.

These worries and afflictions create the spiritual crisis that we struggle with at all times of the day. Everyone knows about the financial crisis that impacts our daily life, but not many people are aware of their spiritual crisis which has even greater influence on their lives. Our minds are as wild and unruly as the financial

market. We need to live a simple and peaceful life to keep our minds calm and balanced. Then, we can face everything with wisdom and come through any crisis.

Dharma Master Cheng Yen's Jing Si Aphorisms was first published in 1989. Over 3.5million hard copies have since been printed in 15 languages, including traditional Chinese, simplified Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Indonesian, Thai, Vietnamese, English, Spanish, French, German, Italian, Russian, Hindi, and Arabic.

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