

From Patrul Rinpoche to Lungtok Tenpai Nyima, to Khenpo Ngakchung (Ngawang Palsang), to Tulku Arik Rinpoche, to His Holiness Lama Achuk Rinpoche.

With regards to all of them, the pith instructions were predominantly based on practice. His Holiness Lama Achuk Rinpoche said that those teachers and Khenpos that are pursuing fame, to please not come here to Yarchen Monastery. What he is teaching here is the true Dharma. Some of you have been practicing for so long and you still don't know the difference between karma and Alaya consciousness. His Holiness Lama Achuk Rinpoche often criticizes students who have learned a lot of theory. There was a Khenpo who had been a Khenpo for 30 years, and he went to visit His Holiness Lama Achuk Rinpoche, and His Holiness Lama Achuk Rinpoche asked him, "Where is karma?" And this Khenpo wasn't able to answer. His Holiness Lama Achuk Rinpoche was very angry and said, "You've got this title Khenpo, however, you don't even know where karma is."

The nuns and monks who have only been here at Yarchen Gar for only a few months already know where karma is. He asked Khenpo, "What have you been learning? What have you been doing all this time? There are many Khenpos who have been studying for maybe 20 or 30 years who aren't able to answer the questions of His Holiness Lama Achuk Rinpoche. His Holiness Lama Achuk Rinpoche asked a very simple question, "Where is karma?" Many people don't know.

"Karma is an obstacle and that obstacle is ignorance." And then His Holiness Lama Achuk Rinpoche would ask, "But where is this? Where is ignorance?" What we know from theory and what we realize from practice is completely different. If we can practice the two, understanding and practice together, then this is really great. Just like His Holiness Lama Achuk Rinpoche and Jigme Phuntsok, these two really incredible teachers. Some people think that all Shakyamuni Buddha did was study and learn and not practice. Some people think that Shakyamuni Buddha didn't practice any secret Vajrayana, and when I heard this, I had a really good chuckle to myself.

You see the understanding of some people, their understanding of Buddhism. Enlightenment, our Enlightenment, where is it? Did you ever see Shakyamuni Buddha circumambulating the mountain or with a textbook? No! Did he practice? Yes! He practiced for three eons to attain Buddhahood. Some people recite the sutras and the texts very often, and sometimes when they're not reciting, they feel a little bit uncomfortable or as if something is missing. Sometimes they have afflictive emotions. They say, "This teacher said I must recite this, another teacher said I must recite that."

Then after reciting this textbook, they do a dedication, and then they think: "And then what about those other auspicious texts? They're also very auspicious". Simply in the state of discrimination every single day. This is not according to the Dharma. Dedication is very beneficial. We really wish for all sentient beings to be free from all suffering and all its causes, that they may have happiness and all its causes and that they may attain enlightenment. When you do the dedication, really do it from the depths of your heart that they may attain liberation from all suffering. This is great compassion.

But often we aren't able to benefit sentient beings because we don't have the arising causes to benefit sentient beings. And His Holiness Lama Achuk Rinpoche mentions this often. He says this has happened because we have broken our vows in the past and because we've broken arising causes with the Buddha Dharma. What this may mean is that our liberation hasn't ripened yet.

We have all forms of discrimination. This teacher is like this, that teacher is like that and we say to other practitioners, "My teacher is the best, my teacher is the most incredible teacher."

People are always speaking like this and there's no need to do this. This is in effect slandering and saying negative things towards your teacher and the Dharma. This is a great obstacle to people attaining enlightenment. In Buddhism, everything is in equanimity. It is equal. Just like the water in the river, anybody can go to the river and take water, they can take it home. Just like the equanimity of the earth, it's available to everybody. The same with Buddhism, everything is in equanimity.

We all have our opinions. How could somebody say this? How could somebody write something like that? Just like Rinpoche explained in the last lesson, while people are allowed to read these texts, why can they only read the text when they've been explained to them? These books have been written by enlightened teachers and they're available for everybody to read. It's that simple.

The Dharma is taught at different levels according to the levels of the students, and we must adhere according to the step-by-step practices. Buddhism is equal. It's there for everybody. It's like the water. It's like the earth.

As His Holiness Lama Achuk Rinpoche said, if they didn't want anybody to read the text, why would they have written them in the first place? If you practice according to the step-by-step procedures, then there won't be errors in your practice and there shouldn't be a mistake in the way you practice and the methods that you use. So put our vows, the vows of bodhichitta, the vows of secret Vajrayana, into practice.

If we practice according to these foundations, then anybody can receive these empowerments and practice them. This morning Rinpoche said to one of his helpers that the practice of some students is like this yak dung. When you put the big pieces on the top, what happens is the big pieces create ash and smoke, and this smothers the fire below, and then the fire doesn't burn. When you burn the yak dung like this, everything becomes scattered and a mess.

However, if you start burning the yak dung from the bottom, it burns very well. This is the same as some people's practice: when you try to start from the top, then everything just becomes a little bit messy. This is the same with our practice. If we don't master the outer preliminaries in the beginning, then people receive the empowerments and they try and do all the wisdom emptiness practices and then the practice doesn't work. Then they don't attain the realizations, and thereafter they don't want to practice anymore. Just like burning yak dung.

Similar to wearing clothes, if we start with the inner garments first and then the outer garments afterwards. Everything works pretty well, however, if we take all of our clothes and try and put them all on at the same time, then it doesn't seem to work. This is much like our practice. The material world and the spiritual world work in the same way.

There are some great practitioners who have been wearing the same clothes for many, many years. However, everything seems to work well. It fits well. It looks like a good match. Maybe it's due to their great wisdom and their wish to benefit sentient beings and their great belief in their teacher that makes them appear like this. They look really smart.

Then you get some people who have the best, the newest clothes, however, you look at them and you think, this person in these clothes, they just don't fit. Similarly, some people and practice just don't seem to fit. Why go to the effort to get to the Dharma when you don't practice it anyway?

Then still asking for more Dharma and some more Dharma. This really is not appropriate. You meet one great teacher and he shows you great compassion and loving-kindness. Then you go and meet another teacher, another His Holiness, and then you slander your previous teacher.

Then you say to the second teacher: "The previous teacher was like this and like that." In Tibet, this type of situation would never arise. Some of these nuns, you see them, they look very simple. However, they have incredible wisdom. They have absolute belief in His Holiness Lama Achuk Rinpoche. Whatever His Holiness Lama Achuk Rinpoche says, they have absolute belief in. They don't doubt it for a minute.

Some people say His Holiness Lama Achuk Rinpoche said this, however what he said is actually something different. To go and judge the Dharma or your teacher from your lower level of realization is really not appropriate. It's not according to the Dharma and it brings no one any benefit.

This is very sad when practitioners do this. Then at the end of the day and in their next life, they maybe find themselves in the hells. Have respect for Buddhism. Buddhism has equanimity.

Whoever you meet, whichever school or lineage, whichever teacher, have the same respect as you do for your own teacher, your own root guru. Cherish them. In this way we may attain perfect benefit and perfect merit.

We teach to here for today.