

忠 (ZHONG)

中心為忠 忠者 盡其中正之心之謂也

The Chinese characters ‘center’ and ‘heart’¹ combined together form the character ZHONG (Loyalty or Faithfulness). Thereby, ZHONG means ‘To do your utmost to keep your heart unbiased’ upon making a decision.

Note¹: Without any knowledge of anatomy, the ancient Chinese considered the heart to be the center of thought, as well as emotion.

當君主時代 君有過則犯顏直諫 是為忠直之臣 國有事則殺戮不辭 是為忠節之臣 斯二者無非保全民生 顧全國體 而不以個人之利害為利害也

During the period of monarchy, one who spoke out directly against one's ruler's mischief, and who admonished the ruler for them, was a ZHONG and right-minded official; one who did not hesitate to sacrifice in a time of national calamity was a ZHONG and indomitable official.

They, who acted in the best interest of the country, and disregarded their own personal gain or risk, did it either to maintain general well-being in the land or to protect the integrity of the country's governmental system.

今吾德教以忠字為首 蓋人必忠於國 忠於家 忠於朋友 忠於事事物物 而後可以謂之人也

Our Tien De Religion uses ZHONG as the first character of our doctrine, and in its aspect LOYALTY, hence mankind must be ZHONG to country, family, friends and all matters in order to be worthy human beings.

吾觀草木之類 忠於四時 禽獸之類 忠於卵育 天地之大 忠於氣候 日月之明 忠於晝夜 惟人最奸巧 最詭詐 交朋待友 處世接物 不能盡其中正之心

Behold herbs and plants are ZHONG to the four seasons; animals are ZHONG to their breeding. As vast as the sky and earth are, they are ZHONG to the weather. As bright as the sun and moon are, they are ZHONG to the day and night. Except mankind, which is extremely cunning and full of guile, cannot but seldom put its heart into the utmost unbiased position in associations with friends and in everyday life.

噫 人固非天地日月所可以比 而何草木禽獸之不如也

Alas, mankind, which is certainly beyond comparison to the sky, earth, sun and moon, why sometimes is hardly more than inferior to herbs, plants and animals?

古人云 良馬比君子 耕牛比丈夫 此言牛馬之效忠於人也

In the old Chinese saying, 'A good horse is comparable to a gentleman and a cow is comparable to a responsible man.' These analogies describe that the horse and cow are ZHONG to mankind.

況我輩秉天地之正氣 一言一語 一舉一動 可不以忠為首務乎

Moreover, since we inherit the righteous spirit of Heaven and Earth, shouldn't our words, speech, gestures and deeds comply with ZHONG first?

一人盡忠 千萬人盡忠 眾志成城 牢不可破

When one person does his utmost to live ZHONG, there will be millions of people following his example. Such unity of will can be an impregnable stronghold.

心本實心 足踏實地 有何事業之不可成也

Act accordingly to your honest heart and keeping your feet firmly on the ground, and there should be nothing you can't accomplish.

況忠之一字 乃天地之剛氣 無堅不破 無物可當

Besides, ZHONG, which is a spirit of fortitude in the universe, can crush any object. There is no defense against it.

以之治心而心正 以之治家而家齊 以之治國而國固

Use it to heal your heart and your heart will be righteous; use it to heal your family and your family will be in order; use it to heal your country and your country will be stable.

望我善男信女 攜手接踵 互相規正 同以忠字為前提 有此一忠
而廿字即有下手之處 入門之方矣

It is to be hoped that all people, working together and neutralizing each other's imperfections, use ZHONG as their first tenet. ZHONG is thus the first step on the road to living the TWENTY CHARACTERS DOCTRINE.