

Foreword

Having a Mindset to Worship Our Founder

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This year, I welcomed New Year's Day in the Sacred Grounds of the Konko Faith for the first time in more than 20 years. In the Sacred Grounds, there were banners lined up, saying "A Happy New Year!" Lots of people from various areas of



Japan came to the Headquarters to worship Kami on New Year's Day, and I observed those worshippers with respect.



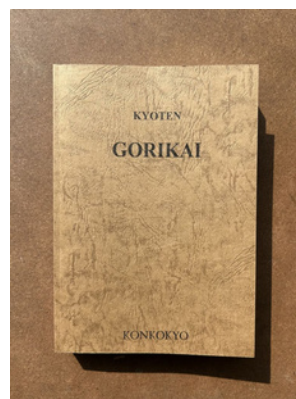
At a "wish-card-fill-in counter," worshippers were allowed to take a strip of paper (tanzaku) home. On each strip of paper, a teaching of our Founder, Konko Daijin, is printed. A middle-aged/elderly man was taking a good look at several strips of paper and muttered, "What are these? These words are all plain and obvious. Nothing special, nothing surprising." I was surprised at the gentleman's sudden, unexpected words. A staff member of the Konko HQ Administration happened to stand close to the gentleman. He also heard this man's words and spoke to him, "I think you are

right. Many of us find it pretty difficult to put these plain, obvious teachings into practice. This is why daily faith practice/training is necessary for us, I believe." The man was impressed with the words of the Hombu staff member and murmured, "Yeah... that's very true." He looked convinced, took the strip of paper he'd just chosen and headed for the Main Worship Hall.

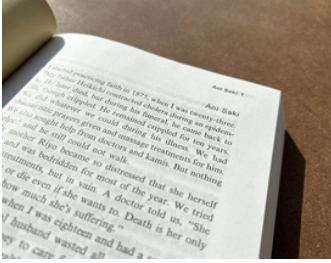
The Founder's teachings, most of them are written/expressed in plain words that anybody can understand. However, can we say "Understanding something" and "Being able to put it into practice" are the same? Likewise, can we say "Knowing something" and "mastering it" are the same? Can we really say so? As soon as a new year arrived, I was allowed to motivate myself to reflect upon myself.

In the section of "Naiden" of the Sacred Scriptures of Konkokyo/Konkokyo Kyoten, the late Reverend Norio Sato (the Founding Minister of Konkokyo Church of Geibi) wrote the following things:

"A young man who had fervent intentions following this faith came the other day and asked to receive teachings from me. I was busy at the time and could not talk with him. Fortunately, I had written an article about that and give it to him to read. He finished reading it in five minutes and gave it back to me. People can read it in five minutes if they want. However, since I was the only one who knew and experienced what was written in that article, I would read it, think carefully, and meditate while recalling those days. I could sit there for hours reading the article. The young man,



on the other hand, read it in five minutes and returned it to me. From this experience, I felt that I should reconsider giving teachings in written form. Until then I had thought that people would be moved to tears and captivated when they read my



article. When you read articles written about the founder, have the feeling that you are meeting with Konkoko Daijin directly.

Then you will gain the ability to deepen your faith. You may even feel deeply touched after hearing the words of an uneducated but virtuous man. We must all correct the manner in which we propagate or teach, otherwise, we will not be able to receive Kami's teachings."

Here, what is the difference between Rev. Norio Sato and this young man? Even if two people read exactly the same texts, the things each of the individuals can get will

be unbelievably different in both quality and quantity IF the following things are different; how seriously one faces the texts, how gratefully one reads them and how much one wants to know about Konkoko Daijin's faith. It is going to be a world of difference.

"Something that makes one shed tears and remain immovable" are the words of Rev. Sato. I have also been blessed to read such valuable resources of the Konkoko Faith many, many times, but I am now thinking about myself: Have I read those Konkoko materials with as much gratitude and awe as I can? And I am now praying to Kami that I would like to work hard in order to have and develop a mindset to "worship Konkoko Daijin when I read materials of Konkoko."

