



KONKO MISSION BULLETIN

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Back to School Blessings

By Yasuhiro Yano
Head Minister



As this season of Back-to-School comes around every year, there is one thought I still clearly remember when I attended the language school in Tokyo. Mr. Iwashita, one of the instructors at the language school made a remark that has become deeply embedded into my mind some 40 years ago. He said that we could produce an educated person, provided he or she has normal intelligence. Normal people can be educated to obtain a higher educational credential by utilizing any available educational resources, monetary resources and time. But it is quite difficult to educate a person to become warm-hearted. I didn't quite understand the message at that time. But I assume through his teaching career, he might have witnessed the reasons why he made that remark, and I also have been appreciating the truthfulness of the extended message as I get older and encounter many people in the world.

In regards to the matter, my daughter, Edna told us an interesting episode she learned in nursing school. The professor asked the students what they think is one of the most valued elements as a nurse? Majority of the students replied that a nurse with a kind, caring, and warm-hearted character is the most appreciated by the patients. And according to surveys, patients also expressed those same elements in a nurse they can appreciate. Two local Konko ministers who experienced hospitalization also pointed out that a caring and warm-hearted nurse was something they really appreciated. Especially when the body is weakened and the person feel vulnerable. While I was listening to a remark expressed by the late Rev. Yoshino of Honolulu Church, among the many nurses, there were a couple nurses who were known by the patients at the care home as the best nurses. They were caring and warm-hearted. Patients are people who are at their weakest physical condition and by instinct they seek to receive care by somebody who can unconditionally meet their needs in the given condition. It is interesting how kindness and caring is a universal element we want to see in the nurse and any other human relationship we may have, despite the fact we simple ask that element in others but hesitate to expose such individual trait.

Edna's professor pointed out if you think that kindness, warm-heartedness and caring is valued by the patients, and the nursing students also identify the importance of those traits, why are there no such classes to develop that individual trait as college courses? There should be a course called Kindness and

Caring 101 or Compassion 450, but there are no such classes that exist.

In my understanding, there can be no way to evaluate the quality and quantity of warm-heartedness. The values cannot be shown in numbers. This can be easily understood when you look at yourself and the people you associate with in your daily life. A person who usually is kind can suddenly change into a horrible person. The heart of kindness and gentleness is not necessarily a solid condition. And this can be the nature of people in general.

People spend tens of thousands of dollars to educate their children. The rich become even richer and educated while those who are less resourceful can hardly break the existing barriers. You can see this social pattern through your observation of the people. But it is also true; the government spends millions of dollars for educating young people. We may not be that much aware of this fact. The state spends thousands of dollars per person every year. But we have been complaining about the poor public education. Without governmental education funds, the public educational system may not exist today. Education has always been the central issue in the political world. Have you ever pondered to extend your thoughts of appreciation for the given learning opportunities made possible by the funding of the government? It can be conceived as an extended will of the government who want to help educate the young in the same way we want to help our children to enjoy sound growth. It can be a form of divine will actualized through the government. We may be taking for granted what have been given to us.

But who would ever appreciate what we have been given by Kami-Sama, we call as Our Principle Parent of the Universe. In the Konko faith tradition, the basis of our faith life is to appreciate the blessings of Kami that have been transformed in many visible and invisible forms.

The warm-heartedness or caring heart we may develop in the course of our involvement in the practice of the Konko faith may come from our appreciation of the universal warm-heartedness and kindness of Parent God Tenchi Kane no Kami being extended to each of us. It is the manifestation of divine love and caring we appreciate in the work of Parent God Tenchi Kane no Kami that represents warm-heartedness we can experience. We simply exist in the ocean of Divine Love and Giving, just like a fish in the ocean.

It is true that warm-heartedness alone may not provide us valid credential to get a job that sustains our living. We need to develop solid educational credentials. We should study hard and be a person who can help others through the learned skills and knowledge.

Konko-Sama Says . . .

If you practice faith, you should not say bad things even idly. What you say will come true. You should be careful when you scold your children. You should not scold them by telling them that they are fools or they should not do such stupid things. You should tell them they are good and, because of this, should not do bad things. Children will be good and will not do bad things when they think on their own. However, if they have been told that they are fools, they will do bad things because they think they are fools. When they don't listen to you after all your efforts, pinch their bottoms without verbally chastising them. (III Jinkyu Kyogoroku 164)

Don't raise children by scolding them constantly. If you do so, they will grow up to lead loose lives. Raising them in constant fear will also make them cowards. (I Ichimura Mitsugoro 2-43)

Bulletin Board

Monthly Services

8/1 Thu For Tenchi Kane No Kami-Sama at 7:30 p.m.
8/4 Sun Sunday Service at 9:00 a.m.
8/11 Sun For the Founder at 9:00 a.m.
8/18 Sun For Mitama Spirits at 9:00 a.m.
8/25 Sun Sunday Service at 9:00 a.m.
40th Memorial Service for the late Rev. Masayuki Kodama at Honolulu Church at 11:00 a.m.

Ehime Kenjinkai Picnic

Affiliated people to the Ehime Kenjin-Kai will make a visit to the Ehimemaru Memorial site and join the annual Buddhist oriented memorial service and picnic to follow on Saturday, August 10 at 8:30 a.m. If you are interested in the program, please join us. (Below are pictures of the Ehimemaru Memorial Clean up activity on July 6, 2013)



HCRP Meeting

The members of Hawaii Conference of Religions for Peace will make a visit to the Arizona Memorial on Monday, August 12 at 9:30 a.m.

Volunteer Activity at Wahiawa General Hospital

The monthly volunteer activity at the same facility will be held on Friday, August 23 at 10:00 a.m. Your participation to the program will be very much appreciated.

Amagi Church Members to visit Wahiawa Church

A group of eight headed by the Rev. Michiyoshi Yasutake of Konko Church of Amagi will attend the 40th Memorial Service for the Late Rev. Masayuki Kodama of Konko Mission of Honolulu. They will also extend their travel to make a visit to Waipahu and Wahiawa Churches on Saturday, August 24. Please come to greet them at the church in the morning.

Honoring Mitama Spirits

August

Jinpei Hayashida	8/13/1939
Sunao Hayashida	8/8/1958
Helen Y. Eguchi	8/14/1946
Masaru Nakano	8/5/2004
Rev. Masayuki Kodama	8/24/1973
Masataka Yano	8/13/2012



Sunday

If you wish to have a name added to the church Mitama listing or removed, please contact Rev. Yasuhiro Yano.

Insight into the teachings in “Tenchi wa Kataru” or “Voice of the Universe”

The following are excerpts of series of an English translation of “Tenchi wa Kataru—Kanwa-shu” or “Compilation of Insight into the teachings in the Voice of the Universe” which contains 400 selected teachings from the original “Konkokyo Kyoten” or the “Konkokyo Scriptures.” Three authors, namely, the Revs. Mikio Seto, Yasushi Hata and Matsutaro Kōsaka contributed the insightful articles. The translation is provided by Yasuhiro Yano. (Reference pages 52, 53 and 54)

No. 52

Do not disrespect others. Doing so will not bring divine blessings. (III Konko Kyoso Gorikai 72 Kyoten page 792)

Do not disrespect others.

This message originally found in the section of “Konko Kyoso Gorikai 72” of Konkokyo Kyoten Scriptures, is based on the teaching shared by Mitsugoro Ichimura. The message reads as follows, “Konko-Sama II (Konko Ieyoshi) said in a teaching, ‘Don’t disrespect other people. Doing so will bring no divine blessings. Since Konko-Sama’s neighbors knew that he was originally a farmer, only a few of them received divine blessings. However, many from afar have returned with divine blessings. Thus, they say there is darkness below a lighthouse” (Gorikai I Ichimura Mitsugoro 56).

In reference to this original message, “other people” in the passage, “Don’t disrespect other people. Doing so will bring no divine blessings” actually represented “Toritsugi-Mediators.” If believers show little respect toward the Toritsugi-Mediator because of their knowledge about the background of the person who served as Toritsugi-Mediator would not enjoy blessings. The message would become clearer if an additional clause: “Even if they have the heart of worshipping Kami” is inserted before the passage, “Don’t disrespect other people.”

The original message was directed to a particular individual. But since the message can be universally appreciated, the editor of Konkokyo Kyoten Scriptures introduced them to the public. People who take for granted the extended thoughts of others, contributions from others, degrade others, take life for granted, deny not only the worthiness of other people’s presence, but also lose their own meaning of existence will not fulfill the heart of Tenchi Kane No Kami who loves each and every individual as His beloved child. They will never be able to get blessed unless their hearts change.

We can sustain our lives because of the interconnectedness with others. Every so often, we need to remind ourselves to get engaged with others by reciting, “Do not disrespect others. Doing so will not bring divine blessings.”

No. 53

Speak ill of no religion. Everyone is a child of Tenchi Kane No Kami. Having different religions is the same as having children in different occupations. A parent may have a carpenter, a plasterer, a gambler and a merchant as his children. People may belong to different religions, but they are all children of Kami. We all have our personal preferences. Some like sob a noodles, while others prefer udon noodles or something else. Because people like different things, do not criticize people’s preferences. (II Sato Mitsujiro 14-3, 4, 5 Kyoten page 574)

Everyone is a child of Tenchi Kane No Kami.

In accordance with the principle of the Konko faith, all people are beloved children of Tenchi Kane No Kami. But there always arises a question about dealing with those people who have different religious faiths because those people of different faiths may try to show vehement denial against the existence of Tenchi Kane No Kami or they may not acknowledge the valid nature of the existence of the deity we worship. The question is how do Konko believers respond to those people of different religious faiths?

In general, majority of the religions in the world advocate their conviction that those who believe in their supreme deities shall be saved, but those who do not accept their supreme deity will end up in suffering. Those supreme deities tend to choose only their adherents. They segregate and expel non believers and adherents to other religions.

In accordance with the Konko religious faith, all people, regardless of their difference of religious belief is regarded as a beloved child of Tenchi Kane No Kami. In other words, the nature of human beings as beloved children of Kami will never change whether they deny or acknowledge the presence of Tenchi Kane No Kami. All people being Tenchi Kane No Kami’s beloved children is the fundamental perspective of human existence in accordance with the principle of the Konko faith.

This distinctive perspective of human existence is based on the fundamental understanding of humanity as beloved children of Tenchi Kane No Kami. Being beloved children of Tenchi Kane No Kami is a common denominator as human beings. Sharing that common denominator as beloved children of Tenchi Kane No Kami, people get engaged in different religious faiths. It is not the other way around. What makes us beloved children of Tenchi Kane No Kami is not based on what religious faith we believe in. Therefore there would be no reason to slander people of different religious faiths.

The Founder’s down-to-earth reference: Parent may have children who get engaged in different occupations and personal preferences for foods are so exceptionally persuasive. The message seems to be likened to a gentle divine breeze that opens up our tightly closed heart in facing those people of different religious and spiritual traditions.

No. 54

There are those who speak ill of others. They slander the Shinto and Buddhist religions. Imagine having children of which one became a Buddhist monk, one a Christian reverend, one a Shinto priest, another a government official, one a craftsman, and another a merchant. If someone slandered one of your children, would you, as a parent, feel happy? When slandering others, you do not reflect Kami’s heart. Buddha, Christ or any other founder of a religion are all Kami’s beloved children. (II Sato Norio 4-3, 4, 5 Kyoten page 564-5)

Never speak ill of others of different religious faiths.

Similar to the previous message in page 53, the teaching is intended how the Konko believers would deal with the people of different religious faiths. The Founder quoted the same examples found in the previous page, “Imagine having children of which one become a Buddhist monk, one a Christian reverend, one a Shinto priest, and another a government official, one a craftsman, and another a merchant” and reasoned why we should not slander other people of different religious faiths.

There are two issues that should be addressed in the act of slandering people of different religious traditions.

The one is the problem pertaining to the attitude of the people who slander others, which was also discussed previously in this publication. We may be prompted to speak ill of others because of the shortcomings displayed by other people. But there seems to be more to it than just that. Those who speak ill of others harbor some subconscious intent that through the act of slandering others, they believe they would gain some merit of superiority. But they should be mindful of their act of slandering others whether they would actually gain some positive merit of superiority or could be lowering their own esteem.

The other issue is pertaining to a compelling thought held by some people who think the whole world would be saved only under the domination of one unifying religion. There have been some religious people who believed their religion is the

one and only true religious faith and any other religious faiths in the world should be under the domination of that particular religious faith. But such a thought is obsolete in today's religious world. Instead, the world has been embracing an emerging thought that for the salvation of humanity and the whole world that we should develop appreciation for different values and promote interdependent relationship with each other. It looks like the world has been moving in the direction the Founder envisioned long time ago.

This concludes section 4 "Man." One common element found in the discussions in the section 4, such as the Konkokyo oriented human perspective, human roles and responsibilities and human interactions, is the compelling view of human beings as beloved children of Tenchi Kane No Kami which represents the core religious perspective for human existence.