

**Gedatsu Teaching 7**  
**By Seiken Okano (Gedatsu Kongo)**

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Translation and commentary by Rev. H. Taki

*The Gedatsu teaching is truly precious and sacred. Without practicing Gedatsu, absolutely nothing can be accomplished. I have repeatedly stated this reason in the monthly magazines. The gist of Gedatsu teaching is the great path of God, or the path of humanity.*

*In this world, there is but one true path. Shinto, Confucianism, Buddhism and all the other religious teachings are supposed to be the gateway to Gedatsu. When the path is reached after numerous scriptures and sutras are researched and studied, along with meditations in the mountains, it should save the world and benefit people. If not, then it should be an evil path.*

*The righteous path should definitely benefit the world. You should not learn or do anything unnecessary or useless in life. You cannot recapture youth. Time passes. Life is truly not permanent. Therefore, don't do anything useless.*

*Teachings must be put into practice. Reading countless doctrinal volumes, if not applied, is useless. There are many religions which take pride in the substance and magnitude of their doctrines and scriptures. However, after diligently judging their merits and demerits, advantages and disadvantages, you should discard the useless and retain the useful. The purpose of your Gedatsu study should be to save the world. Only when you actually practice this path, can you reach the point of Gedatsu.*

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**Commentary:**

Gedatsu Kongo begins by stating: "The Gedatsu teaching is truly precious and sacred. Without practicing Gedatsu, absolutely nothing can be accomplished." When you read these words, you may construe them to mean that Gedatsu is the only truth, and that other religions are inferior or unreliable. I believe that interpretation is far from Gedatsu Kongo's attitude on religions.

In 1935, Gedatsu Kongo published the monthly magazine entitled "Gedatsu-kyo," or Gedatsu Religion." However, in 1936, he changed the title to "Gedatsu," explaining that Gedatsu is not a religious sect, but a common goal for all religions.

Gedatsu is not a particular religious sect. Gedatsu means the Universal Truth. All religions,

such as Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam, have explained this Universal Truth according to their historical and cultural backgrounds. Just as there are various routes to the summit of a mountain, each route is different but reaches the top. Similarly, various religions in the world have explained this Universal Truth according to their respective traditions.

Why did Gedatsu Kongo teach Gedatsu then? It is important to fully understand this point. All religions explain the Truth of the Universe in their own words, but many of them promote solely their own dogmas, while rejecting other beliefs – sometimes killing people in the name of preserving their faith. World history is rife with religious persecutions and wars.

Gedatsu Kongo emphasized that we should not relate to the difference of dogmas and sectarianism, but rather, clearly see the common basis of all religions, which is the Universal Truth.

When you look up at the sky, you see no divisions in the sky. The universe is one in its wholeness. It is not religion but man's self-righteousness and exclusiveness that perceives this wholeness as fragments, and causes fights, wars and genocide. When we become aware of our dogmatic sectarianism and see the wholeness of the universe, all religions will be able to work together for people's happiness and world peace. This is Gedatsu.

Gedatsu Kongo encouraged us to respect our family religions, which have been transmitted from ancestors. When we join Gedatsu, we need not change our faith or family religion. Rather, we should respect our family religion more and try to practice it in our daily lives. This is the teaching of Gedatsu Kongo.

Gedatsu Kongo expanded this concept further by saying, "In this world, there is but one true path. Shinto, Confucianism, Buddhism and all the other religious teachings are supposed to be the gateway to Gedatsu." That is to say, Gedatsu is not to stick to sectarianism but to see the common basis of all religions, which is the Universal Truth.

He explained the common goal of all religions as follows. "When the path is reached after numerous scriptures are researched and studied along with meditations in the mountains, it should save the world and benefit people." "The righteous path should definitely benefit the world." "When you actually practice this path, you can get to the point of Gedatsu." This is Gedatsu.

What is the essence of religion? It is not in the magnitude of scriptures or in the exhaustiveness of doctrines. The purpose of religions is served best when teachings are put into practice for the salvation of people and world peace. Let sincere practice be the core of your Gedatsu study. ☸