

## Learn Through a Result

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Good morning, everyone.

Last week, I spoke on the law of karma. Today, I would like us to study more deeply on this subject.

Simply stated, when we think, speak or act, we initiate a force in this universe. Our thoughts, speech and actions in life are like seeds that we sow. These seeds are our karma, which results in consequences. This is the principle of cause and effect.

In reality, however, things are not so clear-cut. Usually, it is difficult to trace an effect, or consequence, directly back to a particular or single cause. Innumerable causes – as well as the intervention of spirits – can lead to multiple effects.

Because of this complexity, we are apt to believe that an unexpected incident is nothing more than a random occurrence – or the result of a physical, environmental or situational cause. We give little or no thought to how our own souls, or spiritual influences, may be connected to the situation.

The fact is, we ourselves – our thoughts, words and deeds – are the cause of many such unexpected events in our life.

As Buddha taught, our thoughts, words and actions create our own karma, which can come back to us as either good or bad results.

Jesus Christ also preached that “as you sow, so shall you reap.”

We should understand that the most important lesson in learning the law of karma is not to look for the physical cause. Instead, it is to realize that our own intentions and actions in the past are related to today’s results. Until we understand this, we will not be able to recognize our own karma and the deficiencies within our souls.

The late Archbishop Eizan Kishida emphasized the attitude to “learn through a result.”

What is the attitude to “learn through a result?”

According to the law of karma, any result that happens to you is caused by your own thoughts and actions. In other words, your thoughts and actions are reflected directly in the results you receive.

In the well-known fable “The Tortoise and the Hare,” there was a speedy hare who bragged about how fast he could run. A tortoise challenged him to a race, and all the animals in the forest gathered to watch. The hare ran quickly down the road but took a nap along the way, thinking, “There is plenty of time to relax.” As a result, the tortoise passed the sleeping hare and won the race.

The thoughts and actions of the hare are clearly reflected in the result. Conceit and over self-confidence were the cause of his defeat.

This simple story helps us to reflect on our own thoughts and actions, revealing our karmas. Consequences in any situation always should be welcome because they are the source for our education and learning. That is why Gedatsu Kongo taught us to self-reflect and become self-aware.

If the hare had self-reflect and become aware of his self-conceit, he would have recognized the defect of his heart. Had he corrected the deficiencies within his heart and reformed his thinking, he would have transformed the negative karma and purified his soul.

In 1980, I was a Gedatsu youth group leader and held monthly study sessions, to which teachers from headquarters were invited to speak.

On one occasion, Archbishop Kishida conducted a study session. It was attended by a young staff member who had a big lump on his forehead as a result of hitting it against a pole. He asked Archbishop Kishida, “By what kind of karma did I injure my forehead?”

Archbishop Kishida answered immediately: “You had a karma that injures a forehead.”

Everyone burst into laughter. At the same time, it was an important teaching moment.

“The forehead is the area of the frontal lobe of the brain, where judgment takes place,” Archbishop Kishida continued. “You have made mistakes in your judgment. Reflect well on your past thinking.”

If we self-reflect and discover defects of our hearts, consider it a wonderful opportunity to make corrections in our thoughts and behavior, to reform our thinking and to elevate our souls.

Remember: Karma is the manifestation of the law of the universe. All results we experience in life are reflections of our thoughts and actions.

Learning moments are all around us. Let us always embrace the attitude to “learn through a result.”

Thank you and God bless you.