

Make Efforts without Expecting Anything in Return

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Last Friday, the Sun Spirit Monument Festival, *Taiyo-Seishin-Hi Konryu-sai*, was held in Kitamoto city, Saitama prefecture, Japan. Gedatsu members from all over Japan gather there to attend the ceremony every year. Gedatsu Kongo, our founder, built the monument on February 11, 1940 as a symbol of the sun on earth. He built the Sun Spirit Monument as a reminder for us to live like the sun always. The sun just keeps shining without expecting anything in return. True religious people are supposed to be like the sun.

Our founder used to say, “Expecting something without making any efforts is ‘immorality.’ Making efforts and expecting something in return is ‘normal morality.’ Making efforts without expecting anything in return is ‘the highest morality.’ I want all of you to become the highest moral person.”

The founder also emphasized that it is important for us to remember to make efforts without expecting anything return not only in our daily activities but also in our Gedatsu study.

Our founder said, “Humans are too selfish. Humans ask God to fulfill their selfish desires too much. That means humans demand something from God. People who don’t make any efforts but demand something from the others also demand something even from God. If we are truly grateful for our life, we never ask for anything. If we are truly grateful, we can make efforts with joy. We don’t need to ask for anything. Everything goes well. That is the highest moral life.”

Our founder preached the importance of “doing what we are supposed to do first.” Before we ask God or someone for something, we should do what we are supposed to do.

My Gedatsu mentor in Japan used to tell my wife, “Do your duty first.” He always reminded her not to forget what she is supposed to do as a wife and a mother. One of the definitions of duty is “a task or action that someone is required to perform.” For example, if you are a student, study hard. If you are an office worker, work hard. If you are a housewife, do your housework. If you are a mother, do what mother is supposed to do for your kids. If everyone can do that, each family, society and country will be better.

It is said that our founder always finished what he was supposed to do by the end of the day. Even though he came home late from his lectures, he always opened mail from Gedatsu members and wrote them back. He did his duty.

In Christianity, it is said, “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.” That means we should be positive to get something.

On the other hand, our founder said that we should do what we are supposed to do first without asking anything in return. Then wait for natural blessings. That is the highest way of living.” Since the historical background of Christianity is different from Japanese Shinto style, the way of teaching is also different.

With which do you feel comfortable? “Ask and it will be given to you” or “Do what you are supposed to do without asking anything in return.” I know our founder’s teaching is harder to practice. “Ask and it will be given to you” sounds easier. Our selfish desires, however, are endless. We have been seeking convenience, comfort, safety and speediness, and we have been destroying and polluting nature.

Our selfish desires can be unstoppable. Again, Gedatsu teachings teach us to do what we are supposed to do without asking anything in return.

John F. Kennedy said, “My fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country.”

Let’s think what we can do for our family, friends, society and country.