

Train Ourselves to Be Thankful to Everything and Everyone around Us

By Rev. Tatsunori Kamiya

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Rev. Nishimura visited Hawaii on Friday, March 15, and stayed here for three days. He visited Hawaii 35 years ago and stayed here for three months as a guest minister. After that, he didn't have a chance to visit Hawaii, so he was looking forward to his trip to Hawaii. He was so happy to see you.

Rev. Nishimura has been the director of the propagation department at the Gedatsu headquarters in Japan for years. He visits many Gedatsu branches and training centers all over Japan and has been supervising and counseling many Gedatsu members. During his stay in Hawaii, he had me copy the handouts that he created to help Gedatsu members understand Gedatsu teachings deeply.

In our morning prayer, we say "I shall reciprocate the profound and immeasurable blessings from our country, parents, teachers, society, heaven and all creation." Have you ever thought about the deep meaning of these words?

Our founder, Gedatsu Kongo, said that "Gedatsu is to learn the law of nature." Some people in Hawaii were born in other countries and moved to Hawaii. Our religious leader, Hoshu Seiho Okano, once told me not to forget the blessings I received from my home country, Japan, and especially the blessings from the guardian deity of the city where I was born. It is called *Ubusuna Gami* in Japanese, which means the guardian deity of our home town who is in charge of our life since we were born. Hoshu-sama said we should always remember the protection and guidance from our *Ubusuna Gami*.

According to Rev. Nishimura's handouts, the place where we were born, our family, including parents and siblings, our teachers and mentors, the time and the society when we were born, our occupation were all given by God. That is the law of nature. We are supposed to accept those with gratitude.

Some people, however, tend to think: "My father is a drunk. I hate him." "My mother is overly protective." "I didn't ask to be born as the oldest son. There is nothing good in being the oldest son." "I hate my family." "I wish I hadn't married my spouse." "I wish I didn't have a child." "I shouldn't have started my job." Or "I wish I was never born." Rev. Nishimura said that those kinds of thoughts are totally against the law of nature.

In Gedatsu teachings, there are two types of sinful actions: one is called *Kunitsu Tsumi*. *Kuni* means country. *Tsumi* means sin. *Kunitsu Tsumi* means a crime in this world. If we did something illegal, we would be called a "criminal," and we would receive punishment under the law.

The other sinful action is called *Amatsu Tsumi*. *Ama* means heaven. *Amatsu Tsumi* includes our sinful thoughts against the law of nature. For example, Rev. Nishimura said that people who hate their home country or their parents are committing *Amatsu Tsumi*, and they will never be happy. Why? Let's go back to our opening prayer. We have been receiving immeasurable blessings from our country and parents. If there was no country, our ancestors couldn't have settled

down and made a family. If our parents didn't exist, we couldn't have been born in this world. We should always remember that.

Rev. Nishimura also mentioned Dr. Naoki Shibuya, who brought hypnotherapy from the U.S. to Japan. Dr. Shibuya used hypnotherapy to cure adults who suffer from chronic diseases. The hypnotherapist hypnotizes patients, taking them back in time to when they were three years old to newborn babies, then finds out any traumatic experiences affecting their current life.

Dr. Shibuya, however, recently realized that there are limitations to what hypnotherapy can do. He was convinced that the main cause of our diseases came from our daily thoughts. He would tell his patients: "Any diseases or any decisions you made are derived from your daily thoughts, okay? So, did you like your father when you were young? Did you like your mother when you were young? What about yourself? What do you think about your life?"

Dr. Shibuya discovered that all of his patients who were suffering from chronic diseases or cursing their lives had negative answers to those questions. He said that if those people could change their way of thinking by counseling, their sickness and troubles would be gone.

Again, it is important to feel thankful to our parents for our lives. Some people were adopted or raised by step-parents. Rev. Nishimura said, even then, we should be empathetic to the adoptive and step-parents because raising non-blood-related children is not easy.

My wife asked Rev. Nishimura, "What if my mother died and my father remarried after I had grown? My step-mother didn't raise me."

Rev. Nishimura said, "In that case, you need to find something for which you can be thankful. For example, the step-mother can take care of your father for you when he grows old. It is always important to train ourselves to be thankful to everything and everyone around us."

Let's always remember the blessings we receive from our country and our parents.