

When We Look Down on Others, We Are Destined to Fall

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Sometimes we get sick. If we go to see a doctor, we can receive proper treatment and recover. In Gedatsu teachings, we accept sickness as a message from God. Today, I am going to read an excerpt of a true story from "Message from Invisible World 3." The title is "Money can't buy health."

Shunsuke Ishida was well known in his city as a person of great wealth. However, his health began to deteriorate. At his annual checkup, he was found to have diabetes and liver malfunction. He had to have prostate surgery. He was in early 60s and had been very healthy until then. When he was 40, he established a new construction company, which had grown large.

He had been contributing to society as a community board member, volunteer social worker, PTA board member, etc. He also helped build welfare facilities. He had been studying Gedatsu since his early 20s and was willing to donate his time to help people.

After the prostate surgery, Shunsuke felt miserable because an artificial urinary pouch was hanging from the side of his body. His wife had been studying Gedatsu since she was young. They had two boys and were well off. They always felt they were blessed.

"I have been doing what I was supposed to do. I have been feeling grateful to my life. Why? What have I done to deserve this?"

His wife felt the same and became depressed. She stopped by the Gedatsu branch twice a day to offer Amacha Kuyo at the branch to pray for his recovery.

"Even though you think that you did good things for others, sometimes you hurt them deeply," The branch leader said. "Ask yourself if you haven't been hypocritical. Haven't you been deceptive? Sickness is unpleasant but it is a message. Sickness tells us that we have done something against the laws of nature." The branch leader told her to practice repentance for one week.

As she practiced repentance day by day, she began to recall something. After one week, she said to the branch leader, "I think my neighbor, Mr. Hirose, held grudges against us regarding his property. We didn't do anything illegal, but the property must have been precious to him."

Shunsuke and Mr. Hirose were friends from college. Mr. Hirose started his business, but it didn't go well. Shunsuke lent him about \$20,000. Since Mr. Hirose couldn't return the money after 10 years, Shunsuke took a third of Mr. Hirose's property in return. Shunsuke thought it was fair. Shunsuke built his house on the property. Seventeen years later, Mr. Hirose went bankrupt. Shunsuke was going to buy the remaining two-thirds of Mr. Hirose's property next door to expand his house.

Mr. Hirose begged Shunsuke not to buy his property because the property was from his ancestors and he wanted to buy it back in the future. Shunsuke knew that would never happen so he bought the property. Hirose became furious, but he couldn't do anything. He got

seriously ill and died cursing Shunsuke. One month later, Shunsuke began to suffer from an enlarged prostate.

“That’s right. Many things can be priced, and we can purchase them in this modern society. However, our feelings and thoughts are priceless. If you ignore others’ feelings and keep insisting on your righteousness, you will make a big mistake. You must apologize to Hirose’s spirit and do your best to help his family, the branch leader said. Shunsuke and his wife sincerely apologized to Mr. Hirose’s spirit for being arrogant. Shunsuke’s health stabilized, he has been doing okay now.

Our founder often said, “If we feel we are on top of the world and begin to look down on others, our destiny will begin to fall.” If we study religion for a long time, we tend to think, “I have mastered the teachings.” “I am right.” “They are wrong.”

We can never forget the compassion of God. It is important to try to be in another person’s shoes. Let’s stay humble and self-reflect regularly.