

SIGN POSTS: A Lifelong Challenge of Faith
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To seek enlightenment without repudiating slander is as futile as trying to find water in the midst of fire or fire in the midst of water. (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 165)

Earlier this year, some youth division leaders from the United States attended the 1st Nationwide Young Men's and Young Women's Division Leaders Meeting in Japan (see p. 10). At that meeting I was impressed by how, six years after all the trouble with Nikken began, SGI President Ikeda continues to talk with such intense passion and seriousness on the importance of "repudiating slander."

Quoting this passage from "Admonitions Against Slander," President Ikeda elaborated that "no matter what excuses people make, or what leadership position they hold, if they do not fight against evil, they will fall into hell."

When we speak out against the enemies of our movement, we receive a lot of benefit, he said. But when we ignore them we are essentially assisting them in their work. We then wind up sharing their destiny.

Like many other SGI-USA members, over the last six years I have been struggling to educate myself and my friends about the meaning of the Nikken sect, the concept of the third powerful enemy, etc. — why the SGI is being slandered. There have been many frustrations but also many victories for me along the way.

When I study this passage, though, I realize that what you've done in the past doesn't matter so much. Since the SGI is still being slandered, the time to speak up is still now. And in all likelihood, the SGI movement will continue to be slandered well into the future as it continues to expand.

Repudiating slander, just like seeking enlightenment, is in fact a lifelong challenge for practitioners of this Buddhism.

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