

SIGN POSTS: Buddhism From the Heart
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Others read the Lotus Sutra with their mouths alone, reading only the words, but do not read it with their hearts. And even if they read it with their hearts, they do not read it with their actions. Praiseworthy indeed are those like you who read the sutra with both body and mind! (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 5, p. 127)

During the holiday season, I always spend time with my family and friends who do not practice this Buddhism. I want to show proof to them of this practice and often find myself focusing on material proof — a great job or relationship or financial security.

But what I sometimes do not focus on is simply how I treat people. I need to really understand and show evidence of this practice with my whole life. This is what I feel Nichiren Daishonin is stressing in this passage.

Like many people, I was traveling on the Thanksgiving holiday. As I traveled back on Sunday afternoon, I found myself surrounded in a busy airport by travelers anxious to get home. What I observed was that in their haste, they were treating each other badly.

As I was waiting in line for my seat assignment, the woman in front of me, who had been late and missed her plane, was yelling at the reservation agent, angry that there were no seats available on the busiest travel day of the year. As I watched her, I realized how counterproductive her treatment of the agent was. Her abuse of him certainly did not motivate him to help or respect her. I was as exhausted and anxious as anyone, but when it was my turn, I greeted the agent with a big smile and thanked him for his help. He looked so happy to be treated humanely. It was a simple action, but through it, I am confident that I touched his life positively.

As we approach the sometimes stressful holiday season, I am going to focus on my interactions with others. In this way I hope to show Buddhism, as Nichiren Daishonin stresses, with my heart and actions.

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