

Words to the Wise: HUMANISM

The heart of the Buddha's lifetime of teachings is the Lotus Sutra, and the heart of the practice of the Lotus Sutra is expounded in the "Fukyo" chapter. What does Bodhisattva Fukyo's profound respect for people signify? The real meaning of Shakyamuni Buddha's appearance in this world lay in his behavior as a human being. How profound! The wise may be called human, but the thoughtless are no more than animals. ("The Three Kinds of Treasure," The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin, vol. 2 [2nd ed.], p. 240)

From SGI President Ikeda:

* The SGI stands eternally on the side of the people. We will forever work on their behalf. That is why our movement will remain solid and flourish for all time. (Feb. 13 *World Tribune*, p. 14)

* Friendship is proof of our humanity. And Buddhism is what enables us to develop that humanity to the fullest possible extent. That is why it is so important for us to devote our lives to encouraging the flowers of enjoyable, worthwhile discussions to bloom. And to causing the fruit of friendship to grow and ripen. (June 5 *World Tribune*, p. 9)

* The Daishonin's Buddhism is concerned with the whole world, with eternity. Mr. Makiguchi's focus was the same. What is the purpose of life? Mr. Makiguchi believed that one's life must encompass a commitment to world peace. This he wished to teach. (May 15 *World Tribune*, p. 6)

* Nichiren Daishonin is the original Buddha, the Buddha of the Latter Day of the Law. Shakyamuni and all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas throughout time and space are his followers.

Yet the Daishonin proudly declares that he was born as a commoner in Awa Province [present-day Chiba Prefecture]. What a noble declaration this is! It is the quintessence of humanism. (March 13 *World Tribune*, p. 13)

* The 20th century was a century of war and peace, and a century of politics and economics. The dawning 21st century holds the promise, however, to be a century of humanity and culture, and a century of science and religion. I hope all of you will advance on this wonderful, new path of humanism with pride and confidence as gallant young philosophers of action. (May 8 *World Tribune*, p. 15)

* The spirit of the Lotus Sutra is to resist the dehumanization of religion and religion's tendency to become divorced from reality; but rather to steadfastly redirect religion to the prime point of the human being. (March 1998 *Living Buddhism*, p. 38)

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