

# “The Three Kinds of Treasure”

“The heart of the Buddha’s lifetime of teachings is the Lotus Sutra, and the heart of the practice of the Lotus Sutra is found in the “Never Disparaging” chapter. What does Bodhisattva Never Disparaging’s profound respect for people signify? The purpose of the appearance in this world of Shakyamuni Buddha, the lord of teachings, lies in his behaviour as a human being.”

“The Three Kinds of Treasure”, Pg. 851 WND.

The main reason that the Buddha Shakyamuni appeared in this world was to “open the door of Buddha wisdom to all living beings.” (1) In other words, to allow everyone to manifest their Buddha nature and attain the same enlightenment that he himself had developed.

Simply said, the Lotus Sutra embodies the philosophy that “each human being is a Buddha,” and urges its followers to do everything possible to reveal their inner Buddhahood. By extension, it teaches a way of life which is based on profound respect for others.

So, respecting others is the message at the heart of the Lotus Sutra, and has to be the root of our Buddhist practice. The words of respect

uttered by the Bodhisattva Never Disparaging can be seen as the authority that supports our endeavours to share the Mystic Law with others. (The practice of shakubuku).

The absolute reverence with which Bodhisattva Never Disparaging treats others shows how all human beings, without exception, can attain Buddhahood. The ignorance of humans works in such a way that it prevents us from understanding this point. In a state of illusion like this, even if we are told that all possess the Buddha nature, we are unable to believe it.

The ignorance and deceit that reside in the depths of human existence are horrendous. This is why it is

fundamental to have indestructible courage and profound conviction. It is essential that we be courageous in our struggle in order to eradicate the darkness in our lives and manifest good. SGE members summon up this kind of courage every day and maintain this battle in all different types of situations, as well as in their activities to transmit and share this teaching with others. That is why they are so strong.

“In the light of all this, it would seem that, when one who is able to show clearly visible proof in the present expounds the Lotus Sutra, there also will be persons who will believe.”

Letter to Honen. Pg 512 WND

Nichiren Daishonin inscribed the Gohonzon so that those of us who live in the present time could activate our Buddha nature and bring out our humanism, or inner enlightenment. He gave us the Gohonzon and he taught us that all people are equally worthy of absolute respect. In the Soka Gakkai we have put these teachings into practice in our everyday lives, and, by doing so,

can show others how to profoundly respect the lives of all human beings.

Our lives acquire a profound significance when we advance upon the path of respect towards our fellow beings. Cultivating our respect towards others is the purpose of our Buddhist practice. By persevering in the practice of respecting others, just like Bodhisattva Never Disparaging, we can enjoy absolute happiness and experience the true meaning of life.

Why did Bodhisattva Never Disparaging persevere with his practice of respect towards others? According to the Daishonin it was because the purpose of Shakyamuni's appearance in this world was to demonstrate "his behaviour as a human being". In other words, Buddhism does not exist outside our true conduct as people. Unless the Mystic Law can be seen in real people of flesh and bone in the realm of the ten worlds, it will be no more than an empty theory, and of no particular value to anyone.

The fundamental purpose of Buddhism is to activate the Buddha nature in the behaviour, attitude and actions of real people.

SGI President, Daisaku Ikeda, states: "The behaviour of a Buddhist is characterised by their faith and conviction in their own Buddha nature and in that of others, and by the efforts they make to develop this potential. This defines the basis of the humanism that we are promoting in our organisation."

Daisaku Ikeda goes on by saying, "The letters of Nichiren Daishonin contain essential principles and perspectives about the nature and existence of human beings. In my opinion, this, in itself, demonstrates his 'behaviour as a human being'."

However we put it, compassionate love is at the heart of all truly human behaviour. The wisdom to cultivate goodness in others is born of a serious and sincere concern for each person.

SGI President, Daisaku Ikeda, in "The World of Nichiren Daishonin's Writings," concludes that the key to ensuring that the humanism preached in Buddhist teachings flourishes is the absolute faith in the essential goodness of human beings, and the dedication to cultivating that goodness, as much as in ourselves as in others. This way of living is what the Daishonin calls "the behaviour of a human being".

