

## **Meishu-sama Brings the Light of Salvation**

New Year message by Rev. Tetsuo Watanabe, President, SKK Izunome  
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Happy New Year to all of you.

I am grateful that we can greet this New Year with a fresh frame of mind under the guidance and blessings of God and Meishu-sama, being enveloped in the prayers of Sandai-sama, and receiving guidance from Kyoshu-sama. I am firmly convinced that if we try to have God-centered lives, with the practice of faith through daily reflection as our main focus of attention, a bright future will open to us, just like plum blossoms come to full bloom suddenly in the cold winter.

This is the 10<sup>th</sup> New Year since Kyoshu-sama began to give us guidance regularly. When I look back on the development of our spiritual work, I am keenly aware how important the law of order is. And I also realize that "one important key to ending and overcoming the organizational purifications and disputes of the past, and to manifesting a new leap and growth in our spiritual work, is for us to keep our vertical spiritual line strong and follow the law of order." And "we can cultivate true faith in Meishu-sama by our efforts to follow Kyoshu-sama's wishes."

By practicing our faith through daily reflection, based on Kyoshu-sama's guidance, we have been able to revive our own faith, and also we have received many blessings, exemplified by the many remarkable miracles we witness in Africa. When we try to understand Meishu-sama's wishes behind these facts, we learn many important lessons.

One is that Meishu-sama is trying to give each one of us the firm conviction that he brings us the light of salvation. We should be able to say to each other with strong belief and pride, "It is a joy and a blessing for us that our illness was healed by Johrei, and that we were relieved from financial and other difficulties due to God's grace. But the bigger joy and blessing is that we have met Meishu-sama, who is bringing the light of salvation to humanity, and have become aware of our mission of building Paradise on Earth and have been spiritually awakened."

Another important matter is that Meishu-sama wants us to extend this light of salvation first and foremost to those who are suffering, to those who are sad, and to those who are hurt, ahead of anybody else. God's healing power should be offered to those who are in need of help before those who are blessed with everything. If Meishu-sama saw somebody in trouble, he could not sit still and leave that person alone. He wanted to give such a person hope and courage to live, and the spiritual strength to keep living. Meishu-sama strongly wishes each one of us Johrei members to listen to the silent voices of those seeking help and to do our best to care for them.

Sonen Jissen is a wonderful spiritual practice, holding unlimited potential to bring the light of salvation to many people. It is not just to relieve the suffering of our ancestors.

If we really want to see growth and expansion in our work, there is something we need to do first, before beginning to give service, whether that is giving Johrei, or helping with nature farming or art and beauty activities. It is,

as Kyoshu-sama taught us, for us first to pray that Meishu-sama's wish be realized, and to try to be humble and obedient instruments of Meishu-sama. We need to have this kind of mental attitude in our work before starting any kind of service.

Even if the outcome of our efforts – the result we receive from God – is not what we wished and hoped for, we can accept it with gratitude, with the attitude that "Meishu-sama gave me this experience for my own spiritual growth and progress." And we can ask ourselves, "What is Meishu-sama trying to tell me and wanting me to become aware of." In this way, we can move forward in our service with a bright and positive attitude. We can serve in God's Work with the attitude that "Meishu-sama shall work through me, and manifest himself, not me."

Through this kind of process, I believe, we can live a life of respecting God and Meishu-sama, respecting our ancestors, and can be awakened to the great power of the invisible, cultivating true, God-centered faith and becoming aware of eternal life.

When we look around the world, we realize that conflicts between people due to differences in race, nationality and religion are becoming more and more serious. Meishu-sama taught us that destruction and construction take place simultaneously at the time of transition. As the construction in our Kyoto Sacred Grounds makes progress, our Johrei work expands more and more in the Buddhist countries and in Christian countries, and it has begun to grow in Islamic countries. We began the second phase of the construction in the Kyoto Sacred Grounds. Let us realize one more time that the progress of the Kyoto Sacred Grounds construction is reflected in the worldwide expansion of Johrei, and let us do our best to help in this project, along with our ancestors.

This year, let us continue to study Kyoshu-sama's messages and put into practice his wishes contained in these messages. In this way, we can be renewed and reborn to be in harmony with the new vibrations in this totally new phase of God's work, which is based on the law of the spiritual preceding the physical. I pledge to God and Meishu-sama my best efforts toward doing this, and conclude my New Year message. Thank you very much.