

THREE TRUTHS

As we study the teachings of the Buddha, we come to realize that he used many expedients to convey his message. In order to guide us he needed a starting point before teaching the actual truths. We started with the understanding of the Four Noble Truths, Eight Fold Path and Dependant Origination. After some time, Buddha began to expand his true message about the attainment of enlightenment. One of his messages was about the Three Truths.

First, nothing can exist by itself. An object cannot exist permanently and independent. Look at everything around you. The chair, the house, the car, were all created through a process. Many people were involved in first obtaining the raw material, shipping the raw material to a plant, the people in the plant customizing shapes to create the final product, then the product had to be shipped to a retail store, then you purchased the object to bring home and after it either breaks or gets too old, you throw it away returning it back to earth. These objects are only temporary which leads to number two.

Second, everything is constantly changing. All phenomenal things exist while they are changing. We are born and we will die. Although we wish to remain young and beautiful, in reality we grow old, our bodies wear out, get sick and pass away. Some people suffer with this fact; they do not want to get old and do not want to die. This is undue suffering. Even you right now are changing by being here, chanting and listening to my sermon. You are gaining the knowledge of the Buddha, thus you are growing.

Third, every phenomenon has a cause to it to happen. Why are you here? You woke up this morning, got ready and came to temple. Or your seed to Buddhahood is now beginning to sprout and are curious to learn more about the truth. There is a cause for

everything. You received wonderful news to cause you to be delighted. Or conversely, you received bad news which made you sad. This is the law of cause and effect.

Something cannot happen without first being influenced by another.

By understanding these Three Truths, we begin to awaken to the insight of the Buddha. Nothing can exist by itself, so we should always strive to work for our fellow humans in creating a better society. Your positive outlook will have profound effects on those around you. We also have to appreciate those who have sacrificed or placed their energy in helping you. Have you seen the Liberty Mutual commercial where person 2 sees person 1 doing a good deed, then person 2 does a good deed which person 3 sees then person 3 does a good deed for person 1? This circle shows that we are all interconnected and should act in a way that we do not break that cycle.

As we are all interconnected, we must realize that what is happening now will not stay the same. When we realize to let go of our attachment of want, we become free. We unshackle the bonds of suffering since we understand that everything changes. Live for the moment. Concentrate for the moment. Enjoy the moment. Nothing lasts forever. Yes, even happiness will pass, but there will be more happiness down the road. As we live for the moment, try to do good deeds. This will help sow good karma so that in future good things will happen to you.

By understanding that we are all interconnected and constantly changing, we are evolving. Our past karma is dictating our conditions in this life. As we strive to improve our karma, we are gaining the insight of the Buddha. The Three Truths are the reality of all things. When we realize this, we begin to open our eyes to see things as they are and make decisions based upon that. This process is difficult at times, so Nichiren Daishonin

helped us by giving us the Odaimoku. By chanting Namu Myo Ho Ren Ge Kyo, we are intuitively gaining the understanding of Buddha's Teachings. Our faith in Namu Myo Ho Ren Ge Kyo helps align our hearts and minds to the true teachings. When we are aligned we are in harmony with this world and the universe as we move closer to enlightenment. Our minds will know the reality of all things and the law of cause and effect even though we consciously may not be able to actively comprehend. Just have faith and you will be ok.