

Ikigami Konko Daijin Grand Ceremony

S e r m o n O c t o b e r 2 , 2 0 2 2

Good morning! Happy Sunday in this New Week of Kami's blessings! Thank you very much for taking time to attend our 2022 Ikigami Konko Daijin Grand Ceremony here at KC Chicago. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, attendance today is limited again. I really appreciate that many of you are offering prayers with us from your homes in Chicago, in other states & other countries, too. I hope each one of you is in good health & excellent spirits on this wonderful autumn morning.

Shodai Oyasensei taught us, "Filial piety is the basis of Konkokyo faith, especially the faith of KC Airaku." If you look at the steps of Shodai's faith, we can understand it well.

Before the war Shodai went to Beijing with a desire to be filial to his parents. He got a great success in business there. Then as if deprived of everything, he was repatriated to Japan from China, because Japan lost the war. However he was not blamed for Japan's loss of the war that he has to come up bare-handed.

Moreover he became aware that his faith had been misdirected. He realized his faith had been the one only to aim for the blessings. He came to wish that he really wanted to practice faith seriously. Then he was supposed to devote himself to the parent minister of his parent church, who, he thought, was more important than his parents. He was driven into daily worship at the church, devotion to church activities & offerings, and people's guidance to the church. He also came to seriously listen to the teachings and apply them into his daily life.

At first his business thrived easily, but for a short time. Then everything reversed and what occurred was the complete opposite of what he had expected. He also tried to follow various practices of prominent leaders. Then he began to receive revelations from Kami. Kami's instructions were sometimes beyond human thoughts. He did his best to follow them, with such enthusiasm as 'first for Kami, second for Kami, third for Kami.' His filial piety finally drove him into total devotion to Kami, the Divine Parent of the Universe.

Filial piety was taught morally in younger days in Japan. So when I heard at first that filial piety was the basis of the faith of KC Airaku, it seemed corny to me in my younger days. I also came to know some young Americans who were interested in the Konko faith and had been bullied by parents in their childhood days. Shodai often said to the first comer to the church, "Are you good at filial piety? Please try to do so, and you come to feel Kami's workings around you." So I often wrote or told my first acquaintances

in the USA the same things as Shodai. Therefore I sometimes happened to do so to those young American people who had been mistreated by their parents in their childhood days. In such occasions, I at first felt it hard to let them understand this basis of Konko faith.

I now realize the importance to tell even them to understand that filial piety is the basis of the Konko faith. So I would like to talk about it to them at any time without hesitation.

Through this basis anyone can easily understand the essence of the Konko faith and deepen our faith limitlessly to the extent to really attain mutual fulfillment with Kami.

The more our founder realized Tenchi Kane No Kami was the Parent Kami for us all humans, the more he could not help but accept each & every happening in his daily life as Kami's doing sincerely and conscientiously. Then he came to realize that everything that would happen would be doings of the Divine Parent to deepen peace & joy in his heart.

He came to recognize everything he saw as the appearance of Kami and everything he heard as the voice of Kami. Then he could sense that Tenchi Kane No Kami is the Divine Parent and is actively working for us all throughout the entire universe.

Our founder sincerely prayed for everything to this Parent Kami with all his heart, and accumulated his experiences that this Kami was really the Divine Parent who only thought of saving people, nothing else. Then he attained the mutual fulfillment between Kami & him such as Kami supports man as Kami's children, and man supports Kami as his parents and manifested eternal prosperity through this mutual relationships.

Therefore there are many teachings that our founder described Tenchi Kane No Kami was the Divine Parent. I would like to write just one of them to grasp the main point of our founder's faith.

“I practice faith by praying to Nittenshi (deity of the sun), Gattenshi (deity of the moon), and Kane No Kami (deity of the earth). From Tenchi Kane No Kami people receive a body and a part of Kami's mitama spirit. They are able to live by eating the grains bestowed by Heaven & Earth.

Since long ago, it has been said that Heaven is the father, and Earth, the mother. Tenchi Kane No Kami is the parent of all people. Those who practice my Faith will meet their immortal parents and will keep receiving divine blessings.”

With this realization I will practice faith and pray for everything to this Divine Parent. Thus I will deepen my realization that this Kami is really my immortal parents and would like to establish the mutual fulfillment with Tenchi Kane No Kami.