

Discussion Topic februari - Kosenrufu

The Japanese phrase kosen-rufu is often defined as “world peace through individual happiness.”

In the Lotus Sutra the goal of spreading Nichiren Buddhism is summarized in the concept of kosen-rufu, which means to share Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, the universal law, with all the people in the world.

Nichiren emphasizes on kosen-rufu because our personal happiness—enlightenment—is inextricably linked with the peace and happiness of the people around us and of society as a whole. He emphasizes that we can transform our suffering and have a positive influence on our surrounding and therefore we are able to realize true happiness in this world.

Kosen-rufu does not mean the conversion of all Earth’s inhabitants to Nichiren Buddhism. In our world today, the darkness that most requires dispelling is the entrenched inability to recognize the dignity of life. The failure to recognize one’s own true potential and worth is always linked with the denial of these qualities in others. Violence has its wellsprings in a gnawing lack of self-confidence. Because the lives of all people are interconnected at the most profound level, a fundamental change in the life of one individual will have a positive influence on the lives all the people in their surrounding.

Kosen-rufu means the ceaseless efforts to enhance the value of human dignity, to awaken all people to a sense of their limitless worth and potential. It is for this reason that efforts in the fields of peace, humanitarian aid, educational and cultural exchange are all seen as vital aspects of the movement for kosen-rufu. For these promote the values that are integral to human happiness.

Kosen-rufu does not represent a static endpoint. As SGI President Daisaku Ikeda noted in 1970, “Kosen-rufu does not mean the end point or terminus of a flow, but it is the flow itself.”¹

Kosen-rufu does not suggest the end of history or of the inevitable conflicts and contradictions that drive history. Buddhism teaches that it is something that we can begin to implement right now, wherever we are.

1. What does kosen-rufu mean to you and how do you contribute to it?
2. Do you believe that your inner change contributes to kosen-rufu and do you have an example of it?

¹ Daisaku Ikeda, *Living Buddhism* (september 2016), 56.