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Moiliili Hongwanji
9 a.m. Sunday
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a- Little Lord Fauntleroy

The Shinshu Pledge Says,
"I rejoice in the Compassion
Of Amida Buddha. I will respect
and help others and do my best
For the welfare of mankind."

Namoamidabutsu

Good morning everyone:

It is so nice for me to be here this morning and to share the Dharma with you.

It's especially nice to see the young people here so they can begin to learn about our wonderful religion.

Today I would like to talk about Amida's great Love and Compassion for us. Amida's Compassion is not conditional. He does not say that we must always be good to receive His love. He knows that we are not perfect. He says, "Come as you are and place your trust in Great Compassion. Come as you are and listen to the teachings. There is a gift which is part of my heart. This gift is called Shinjin. And it is going to bring about a change in you gradually and naturally. I will not punish you for your being who you are. Through my love and teachings you will be changed for the better. (pause). "So we can see that there is no dark side to Amida Buddha but only positive and bright side.

Well, there's a story that may explain a bit about Amida's love and Compassion. It's the story of Little Lord Fauntleroy. How many of you have heard of this story? Little Lord Fauntleroy is a delightful story written by Frances Hodgson Burnett, who also wrote My Secret Garden, way back in 1885. This is a story about the relationship between 7 year old Cedric and his mean old grandfather and how love overcame hate.

Little Cedric was living in New York City with his widowed mother when one day they received a letter from England saying that Cedric had been given the title of Lord leader of a castle (tonosama in Japanese movies). You see his father and 2 uncles were supposed to receive the title, but they all died, so that Cedric became the heir, to the castles and estates of the Earl of Dorincourt in England. Cedric became Little Lord Fauntleroy. His grandfather, the Earl of Dorincourt was an old fogie, very mean, stubborn and tight with his money and he had a heart as cold as ice. He was an example of

^{is how}
when they sailed to England

selfishness and egotism. He was like Scrooge in another story. The Earl wanted Cedric, who was now called Little Lord Fauntleroy, to live with him in his huge castle. This was so that he could supervise the little Lord in his education. Little Fauntleroy's mother who was as pure as she was softhearted, wisely told her son nothing about the meanness of his grandfather. She described the old Earl as kind and generous and as a most charitable man, especially kind to children. She went so far as to say that no man might be found in the whole world as good as he. Fauntleroy believed this completely. Trusting his mother's words implicitly, he firmly believed that the old Earl, his grandfather, was a merciful and kind man. And that is the way little Lord Fauntleroy treated his grandfather, with respect and love.

Hence, an old man as wicked as a demon, was thought to be as compassionate as a Bodhisattva. As you know a Bodhisattva is some one almost a Buddha, with great love and compassion. Even when his mother was not allowed to live in the castle, and was kept in a cottage outside the gates of the castle, ^{she did not complain} because she was a commoner. The little Lord was understanding, even though he missed ^{her} and wanted ^{her} his mother to be near him. Never for a moment did he doubt his grandfather.

The old man, as mean as he was, began to feel awkward before the strong love of his trusting and naïve grandchild. After a few years, he finally yielded, and became the grandfather, the Little Lord Fauntleroy thought him to be. The old Earl became a kindhearted and generous person that Fauntleroy believed him to be. Love had overcome hate. It is true that when we expect the best of a person, and behave in that way toward him or her, he or she will gradually change for the better. ^{The Earl} He became kind, respectful, and generous to not only ^{to} Fauntleroy, but to the servants, yardmen, and assistants.

Amida Buddha is something like Little Lord Fauntleroy, only ^{on} in a larger scale. Amida does not judge people, but accepts everyone. He loves everyone and expects the best in everyone. He sees good in everyone, even those people who say ^{or do} bad things. He accepts everyone as they are, and through His Love, he changes people to become good and loving people. We must respond in the same way, and recognize the great blessings that we are constantly receiving from Amida Buddha, and with a thankful heart recite His Sacred name, Namoamidabutsu. (NamoAmidabutsu) Thank you for listening!

Amida's great love +
Confession

Story - Little Lord
Fauntleroy
how overcome hate
Related to Amida
Buddha