

Ode to Giving

“Small things done with great love
can change the world”

Readings

1. Robert Fulghum (born 1937) – American Author
2. Mother Teresa (1910-1997) – Albanian Roman Catholic Nun
3. Confucianism
4. Baha'i Writings
5. Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965) – British Prime Minister
6. St Francis of Assisi (1181-1226) - Italian Roman Catholic Friar
7. Qu'ran
8. Sogyal Rinpoche (born 1950) – Tibetan Buddhist teacher and author
9. Helen Keller (1880-1968) – American lecturer – blind and deaf
10. Old Testament – Deuteronomy 14: 21-28
11. Kahlil Gibran (1883-1931) – Lebanese poet, artist and mystic
12. Hinduism
13. George Eliot (1819-1880) – female English writer (aka Marian Evans)
14. Baha'i Writings
15. Chinese Proverb

O God, we pray for all those in our world
who are suffering from injustice:

For those who are discriminated against
because of their race, colour or religion;

For those imprisoned for working for the
relief of oppression;

For those who are hounded for
speaking the inconvenient truth;

For those tempted to violence as a cry
against overwhelming hardship;

For those deprived of reasonable health
and education;

For those suffering from hunger and famine;

For those too weak to help themselves
and who have no one else to help them;

For the unemployed who cry out for work
but do not find it.

We pray for anyone of our acquaintance
who is personally affected by injustice.

Forgive us, Lord, if we unwittingly share in the
conditions or in a system that perpetuates injustice.

Show us how we can serve your children
and make your love practical by washing their feet.

Mother Teresa

A man of humanity is one who, in seeking
to establish himself, finds a foothold for
others and who, desiring attainment for
himself, helps others to attain.

Confucianism from Analectics

Let deeds, not words, be your adorning.

Baha'i Writings

We make a living by what we get,
but we make a life by what we give.

Sir Winston Churchill,

Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace;
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master,
grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console;
to be understood, as to understand;
to be loved, as to love;
for it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Amen.

St. Francis of Assisi - 13th century

Whatsoever good you expend is for parents and kinsmen, orphans, the needy, and the traveller; and whatever good you may do, God has knowledge of it.

Qu'ran

A Story

As the old man walked the beach at dawn he noticed a young man ahead of him picking up starfish and flinging them into the sea. Catching up with the youth he asked him why he was doing this. The answer was that the stranded starfish would die if left until the morning sun. “But the beach goes on for miles and there are millions of starfish” countered the other. “How can your efforts make any difference?” The young man looked at the starfish in his hand and threw it to the safety of the waves. “It makes a difference to this one.”

Compassion is not simply a sense of sympathy or caring for the person suffering, not simply a warmth of heart toward the person before you, or a sharp clarity of recognition of their needs and pain — it is also a sustained and practical determination to do whatever is possible and necessary to help alleviate their suffering.

Sogyal Rinpoche

Although the world is full of suffering,
it is also full of the overcoming of it.

Helen Keller

If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto. For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.

from the Jewish and Christian Bible

You give little when you give of
your possessions.
It is when you give of yourself that
you truly give.

Kahlil Gibran

The gift which is given without thought of recompense, in the belief that it ought to be made, in a fit place, at an opportune time, and to a deserving person—such a gift is Pure. That which is given for the sake of the results it will produce, or with the hope of recompense, or grudgingly— that may truly be said to be an outcome of Passion.

Hinduism, Bhagavad Gita 17.20-21

If you sit down at set of sun
And count the acts that you have done,
And, counting, find
One self-denying deed, one word
That eased the heart of him who heard,
One glance most kind
That fell like sunshine where it went -
Then you may count that day well spent.
But if, through all the livelong day,
You've cheered no heart, by yea or nay -
If, through it all
You've nothing done that you can trace
That brought the sunshine to one face -
No act most small
That helped some soul and nothing cost -
Then count that day as worse than lost.

George Eliot

O Son of My Handmaid!

Be not troubled in poverty nor confident
in riches, for poverty is followed by riches
and riches are followed by poverty.

Yet to be poor in all save God is a wondrous
gift, belittle not the value thereof, for in the
end it will make thee rich in God and thus
thou shalt know the meaning of the utterance,
'In truth ye are the poor' and the holy words,
'God is the all-possessing,' shall even as the
true morn break forth gloriously resplendent
upon the horizon of the lover's heart and
abide secure on the throne of wealth.

Baha'i Writings

A bit of fragrance always clings
to the hand that gave you roses.

Chinese proverb