

GIVING

Ephesians 4: 1-5

FALL IN LOVE WITH GOD WEEK ONE - GIVING

A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.
Proverbs 18:16 NIV

A Giving Perspective Stephen King

A couple of years ago I found out what “you can’t take it with you” means. I found out while I was lying in a ditch at the side of a country road, covered with mud and blood and with the tibia of my right leg poking out the side of my jeans like a branch of a tree taken down in a thunderstorm. I had a MasterCard in my wallet, but when you’re lying in a ditch with broken glass in your hair, no one accepts MasterCard.

...We come in naked and broke. We may be dressed when we go out, but we’re just as broke. Warren Buffet? Going to go out broke. Bill Gates? Going out broke. Tom Hanks? Going out broke. Steve King? Broke. Not a crying dime. All the money you earn, all the stocks you buy, all the mutual funds you trade—all of that is mostly smoke and mirrors. It’s still going to be a quarter-past getting late whether you tell the time on a Timex or a Rolex...

So I want you to consider making your life one long gift to others. And why not? All you have is on loan, anyway. All that lasts is what you pass on...

Now imagine a nice little backyard, surrounded by a board fence. Dad—a pleasant fellow, a little plump—is tending the barbecue. Mom and the kids are setting the picnic table: fried chicken, coleslaw, potato salad, and a chocolate cake for dessert. And standing around the fence, looking in, are emaciated men and women, starving children. They are silent. They only watch. That family at the picnic is us; that backyard is America, and those hungry people on the other side of the fence, watching us sit down to eat, include far too much of the rest of the world: Asia and the subcontinent; countries in Central Europe, where people live on the edge from one harvest to the next; South America, where they’re burning down the rain forests; and most of all, Africa, where AIDS is pandemic and starvation is a fact of life.

It’s not a pretty picture, but we have the power to help, the power to change. And why should we refuse? Because we’re going to take it with us? Please. Giving isn’t about the receiver or the gift but the giver. It’s for the giver. One doesn’t open one’s wallet to improve the world, although it’s nice when that happens; one does it to improve one’s self...

A life of giving—not just money, but time and spirit—repays. It helps us remember that we may be going out broke, but right now we’re doing O.K. Right now we have the power to do great good for others and for ourselves.

So I ask you to begin giving, and to continue as you begin. I think you’ll find in the end that you got far more than you ever had, and did more good than you ever dreamed.

I’ve learned that you shouldn’t go through life with a catcher’s mitt on both hands.
You need to be able to throw something back.

Maya Angelou

We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.
Winston Churchill