**Motivational Minutes on Giving from 2015**

**(Also see Making a Difference file.)**

1. **Robert G. LeTourneau**

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**Quote of the day:**

“Don't just look for a blessing, be one." — Ladydell

**Reflection:**

One of my favorite giving stories is about Robert G. LeTourneau who was the world's first manufacturer of large, heavy-duty earth-moving equipment. He was the first man to put huge 10-foot rubber tires on bulldozers out in the desert so they wouldn't sink in the sand. Up to that time they had never used rubber tires on earth-moving equipment at all.

*His business was going bankrupt. Although he wasn't a heavy giver he prayed and asked the Lord to save his business and to give him some kind of big order that would keep it going. In return he promised he’d start giving 10% of everything on it. His next order was for $100,000! As soon as God blessed him that way, he started giving 20%. By 20 years or so later he was giving 90% of his income to the Lord's work and missions, and he and his family were living on the other 10%!*

This story inspires me. Even if you are not a Christian it is a law of the universe that what you give comes back to you. The same thing can happen to you no matter what your background, if you give from your heart, 10% or more of your income, you will gain.

I personally would like to live on 10% of my income and give 90% away. I’m not there yet but I’m working towards that and putting this principle to the test.

Want to join me in my experiment?

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1. **Half Of What He Owned**



**Quote of the day:**

“There was a man, though some did think him mad, the more he cast away, the more he had.” -- Author unknown

**Reflection:**

I read a story sent in from a reader of the Bits and Pieces magazine about the unselfish giving of a five year old. It so touched my heart that it caused me to stop and think about my own practice of giving.

*In a kindergarten class the teacher and children had been discussing what had happened in the 9/11 incident and how some children had lost their parents. One five year old felt very sad for them and wanted to do something nice to cheer them up and so took half of his savings out of his piggy bank and gave it to his teacher. He asked her to buy toys for those children to brighten their day. The teacher was so overwhelmed that she began to cry. Although his contribution only totaled $15.50, yet to him it was half of everything he owned.*

What a great example of unselfish giving. It's hard to imagine giving half of what I own for total strangers to cheer them up but that is what this child did. This little boy's example of love and giving gave me courage to give more to others in need and not to worry so much about the consequences.

Are the evils of this world preventing love, compassion, and kindness from flowing into your thoughts and deeds? If so, take heart by the caring and loving example of this five year old.

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1. **Has one life breathed easier because you lived?**

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**Quote of the day:**

“To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded.” – Ralph Waldo Emerson

**Reflection**

This story particularly spoke to me. As the Dalai Lama says, “Our prime purpose in this life is to help others.” I don't know about you, but I often forget this.

*One day, as usually was the case, a young waif (little girl) stood at the street corner begging for food, money or whatever she could get. Now this girl was wearing very tattered clothes; she was dirty and quite disheveled. As it happens, a well-to-do young man passed that corner without giving the girl a second look. But when he returned to his expensive home, his happy and comfortable family, and his well-laden dinner table, his thoughts returned to the young waif, and he became very angry at God for allowing such conditions to exist. He reproached God, saying, "How can you let this happen? Why don't you do something to help this girl?" Then he heard God in the depths of his being respond by saying, "I did. I created you!"*

You do not have to be a Mother Teresa but what are you doing to help those in need around you?

If you have not gone to the Radical Giving Site lately please do. It has some new projects posted as well as inspiring updates from the projects and motivational blog posts of random acts of kindness, testimonies of lives given in service, and more.

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1. **Sharing Is Caring**

 

**Quote of the day:**

"We are rich only through what we give, and poor only through what we refuse.” — Ralph Waldo Emerson

**Reflections**

The following is a fable about what happens to the selfish.

*A young oak tree was growing tall and strong. It rejoiced when it bore its first crop of acorns. Then one day, it heard the rustling of a nearby bramble bush. "These forest trees are our greatest enemies," railed the bramble. "Look at all the space they take up. Just look at all the nourishment they take from the earth!" Some moss, growing at the foot of the parent-oak said to the bramble, "Oh, but see what beautiful shade they give! How cool and pleasant it is here, and how glad the poor animals are to lie down during the heat of the day, out from the blazing heat of the sun. And see how the birds build their nests among the sturdy branches." The selfish bramble replied, "All I know is they absorb a lot of nourishment, and they spread themselves out as if the world belonged to them. Cut them down, I say, and let us brambles take over." "But you are forgetting all the acorns the trees provide," chirped another voice. "We squirrels love them and so do the pigs. The oaks give them gladly and for nothing." "There, you see," said the bramble. "For nothing! Why should they be giving things for nothing? When it comes to us brambles, we give blackberries, but, in return, we snag all we can with our thorns. I don't believe in giving anything away for nothing." The young oak listened attentively and soon began asking itself, "Yeah, why should I give away my acorns? Why should I shelter all these creatures? What do they ever do for me?" Thereafter, whenever the squirrels and the pigs scampered and rooted for acorns, and whenever the weary cows and deer came to rest beneath the branches, the young oak shook its branches and said, "Go away. You can't share in my acorns or rest in my shade anymore." Slowly, the young oak's sap turned to poison. The mighty oak began to wither from the inside out. The seasons came and went as usual, but the massive oak shrank into itself. The wind whispered and the other trees murmured, "Give, give, or how shall you receive? Bless, or there is no room for blessing." But the oak tree still muttered to itself, "Why should I?" It had rotted by now, to the heartwood, and you can see its shriveled shell whenever you go into that part of the forest.*

Don’t let the voice of the selfish destroy you.

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1. **In Giving We Receive**

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**Quote of the day:**

"For it is in giving that we receive.” — Francis of Assisi

**Reflection:**

Here is a cute story that illustrates this quote.

*A man spoke with the Lord about heaven and hell. "I will show you hell," said the Lord, and they went into a room that had a large pot of stew in the middle. The smell was delicious, but around the pot sat desperate people who were starving. All were holding spoons with very long handles that reached into the pot, but because the handle of the spoon was longer than their arm, it was impossible to get the stew into their mouths. Their suffering was terrible."Now I will show you heaven," said the Lord, and they went into another room identical to the first one. There was a similar pot of delicious stew, and the people had the same long-handled spoons, but they were well-nourished, talking and happy. At first the man did not understand. "It is simple," said the Lord. "You see, they have learned to feed each other."*

We could all have heaven on earth if we would think of others and learn to feed and care for each other. Saint Francis knew the secret; it is in giving that we receive.

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1. **Generosity**

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**Quote of the day:**

“Generosity is the perfect flower of love. It does not think who it is that needs—but gives and serves the unworthiest.” – J.R. Miller

**Reflection:**

Generosity is a large word. It has a root which means excellence, goodness. It is a noble word. Its first definition in the dictionary is "nobility; the order of nobles." The word *generous* was applied only to the good, the brave, the noble. There is a Prussian order of distinction, founded in 1665 that bears the name *The Order of Generosity.*

The brightest deeds that shine in the story of humanity are the deeds of generosity. Generosity does not merely return good for good; does not merely measure its giving by what it has received. It blesses the hand that has smitten it, it repays cruelty with gentleness and it serves unselfishly those who have done the sorest wrong.

Let’s cultivate the spirit of generosity. Think of how we enjoy God's goodness, and likewise think of those who lack the blessings we enjoy. Why not send love to the less fortunate—for in so doing we enlarge our own hearts, and fulfill the ministry of love we have been sent here to perform. This will draw us closer to those who need us, and enable to be a blessing to them. For we never can truly reach others by seeking to have them first love us; the best good we can do for them, is show them love.

This is a lesson we can never learn well enough, nor fix too deeply in our hearts. We sometimes forget that nothing is given to us for ourselves alone. When an abundance of blessing or prosperity comes to us in any form, we must not keep it to ourselves and use it only for ourselves. The good we have received, we are to bestow on others who are in need. This is our duty. So when blessings come your way, think of others who have no such blessing or favor as you are enjoying–then show them generosity and share your love, and in so doing your nobility will grow.

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1. **Get More Personal in Your Giving**

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**Quote of the day:**

“Today it is fashionable to talk about the poor. Unfortunately it is not fashionable to talk with them.” — Mother Teresa

**Reflection:**

I read the following words below and found them quite thought provoking.

*Many celebrities are known by their causes. They host benefits for those who suffer with AIDS, rock concerts to help the victims of earthquakes or floods, and telethons to raise money and awareness of diseases. Raising money for the plight of the helpless is in vogue today.*

*Jesus had a soft spot for the poor and needy too. But He did much more than host a benefit concert or raise money. He got eyeball to eyeball with them and their suffering. He touched the leper, healed the blind, and spoke with the widow, the adulterous woman, and the Samaritan at the well. His approach was scandalous. It was radical.*

*Jesus calls His followers to follow His example to help the poor and defend the defenseless. Will you adopt an orphan or befriend a homeless individual? Will you volunteer in a soup kitchen, food pantry or shelter? Raising money helps fund causes for the poor, but it is only when we get personal, when we look into their eyes and touch them, that we love the poor the way Jesus loves them. And that’s radical.—Author unknown*

Even if you are not a follower of Jesus, this message is clear about helping those that are less fortunate than us. Are there ways you can get more personal in your giving?

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1. **Christmas Giving**

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**Quote of the day**:

"The joy of brightening our lives, bearing each other's burdens, easing other's loads and supplanting empty hearts and lives with generous gifts becomes for us the magic of Christmas.” -- W. C. Jones

**Reflection:**

It is this spirit which glorifies true *Christmas giving*. Christmas is a wonderful day. It works *miracles of love* all over the world. But the true glory of Christmas is seen in what it does among the *poor*, in *prisons* and *hospitals* and *orphanages* and *refuges* of all kinds, where it brings its portion for those for whom nothing has been prepared. Love is very sweet when it pours out its gifts for those who love us. But love reaches the finest moments when it brings its blessings to those who perhaps do not love us, or those who will never thank us, nor remember what we have done, nor return gratitude for our kindness.

Is there someone you can manifest your *Christmas giving* to that cannot repay you?

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1. **Helpers High**

 

**Quote of the day:**

“Giving starts the receiving process.” – Jim Ron

**Reflection:**

Darrern Hardy says, “That is a quote from my mentor, Jim Rohn. When I first heard Jim say this, I thought he meant giving created indebtedness on the part of the receiver—that you gave so you could get back. But I had it all wrong. Jim taught me that the real gift—the lasting benefit of giving—is what the act itself does for you. In essence, giving to others is the greatest gift you can give yourself.

“Giving feels good, but there’s more to it than that. Helping others incites physical and emotional responses within us. When we direct our energy and focus on meeting other’s needs, we push aside our brooding and negative emotions, especially those that contribute to stress induced psychological and physical illness. Studies reveal that when we help others, we release extra amounts of endorphins into our system, and we get what researchers call a ‘helper’s high.’”

Why not get a “helper high” for yourself by giving to someone today? If you need help with knowing who to give to, checkout the Radical Giving site.