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The Mercy of Others

By Gerald L. Campbell

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These photographic images reveal through the lives and faces of individuals an 'interior presence' whose poignant energy and pathos communicate to the viewer the conflicting dynamics of love and alienation. Initially, each image comes alive as a living metaphor symbolizing the alienation of the individual from the moral and spiritual bonds of community. But, more profoundly, each image penetrates beyond the 'metaphor of alienation' and discovers in the dynamic core of the person a certain restless and irresistible 'crying out for love and community.'

The metaphorical quality of this 'crying out for love and community' gives these images a unique capacity to establish a profound and lasting dialogue with the viewer. To be sure, each image presents a brutal and unsettling presence of moral and spiritual alienation. Many who see them will hesitate, grow uncomfortable, and perhaps recoil. Some may even take flight.

But, for those who go deeper, there is much more. For, by going beyond alienation, the veil over community is lifted as the viewer and the image are melded together in simple humanity. Each viewer becomes reminded of their 'higher self' and the potential they have for love and compassion, understanding and mercy. They feel a glowing sensation. Yet, they also awaken a sensitivity to their own vulnerability. Life is contemplated as though it were apart from the love and compassion of others. They imagine its horrors. They recognize their own 'crying out for love and community,' and realize in their need to 'belong' a dependency on others. They know that only love and compassion can ease the pain of aloneness, and recognize the moral indifference and emptiness of the contrary. A simple truth has been discovered: community can be forged out of the crucible of alienation only through the mercy of others.

Herein lies the crux of America's current social predicament. Only as a similar dialogue is replicated in the lives of individuals throughout America will the wounds of personal alienation be healed, and the ills of our society be ameliorated. If we but seize the moment, and set in motion a creative dynamic that

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will energize each of us to care for and to help one another through individual acts of love, compassion, understanding, and mercy the moral and spiritual bonds of community will be strengthened, the dynamics of our most fundamental institutions — the family, the schools, and the churches — will be renewed, and the quality of life for all Americans will be enhanced.

Gerald L. Campbell

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Gerald L. Campbell served as senior staff to Members of the U.S. House of Representatives for nine years. He became Senior Advisor to the Director of the United States Information Agency (USIA) under President Ronald Reagan and President George Bush. Campbell went on to serve the administration of President George Bush and later, he served Texas Governor Bush as Senior Advisor to the Commissioner of Health at the Texas Department of Health in Austin.

Give Thanks

By Joyce C. Lock

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It is God that avengeth me, and that bringeth down the people under me, And that bringeth me forth from mine enemies: thou also hast lifted me up on high above them that rose up against me: thou hast delivered me from the violent man. Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the heathen, and I will sing praises unto thy name. That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works. To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent.

O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever. I will give thee thanks in the great congregation: I will praise thee among much people.

I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving. I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord.

~ * ~

O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever.

O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments.

O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy endureth for ever.

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O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth for ever.

O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name: the upright shall dwell in thy presence.

They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion,
which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.

Psalm 125:1

Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God: For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of them that make merry: and I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small.

By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

Glimpses of God © by Joyce C. Lock

<http://our.homewithgod.com/heavenlyinspirations/>

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Joyce C. Lock founded and maintains the e-mail ministries "Heavenly Inspirations" <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HeavenlyInspirations/> and "Share a Smile" <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/smilesharing/>. She also has a published e-book, "The Difference", which can be purchased here: <http://www.theeaglesgarden.com/>

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