

A Single Ray of Light

In quiet times of meditation, do you sometimes consider the value of your life upon this earth – whether your existence and your accomplishments have any eternal significance? I do, and perhaps most people have similar thoughts.

Human beings, in general, want to believe that our lifetimes, brief though they are, count for something – that our existence is not unsuccessful or useless. What, then, really matters? Here is a poem, by an unknown author, that addresses this subject:

*If I can throw a single ray of light
Across the darkened pathway of another;
If I can aid some soul to clearer sight
Of life and duty, and thus bless my brother;
If I can wipe from any human cheek a tear,
I shall not have, then, lived in vain while here.*

*If I can guide some erring one to truth,
Inspire within his heart a sense of duty;
If I can plant within my soul of rosy youth
A sense of right, a love of truth and beauty;
If I can teach one man that God and Heaven are near,
I shall not have, then, lived in vain while here.*

*If from my mind I banish doubt and fear,
And keep my life attuned to truth, love and kindness;
If I can scatter light and hope and cheer
And help remove the curse of mental blindness;
If I can make more joy, more hope, less pain,
I shall not have lived and loved in vain.*

*If by life's road side I can plant a tree,
Beneath whose shade some wearied head may rest,
Though I may never share its shade or see its beauty,
I shall yet be truly blessed,
Though no one knows my name, nor drops a flower upon my grave,
I shall not have lived in vain while here.*

While the composition is anonymous, its message is powerful and thought-provoking. The writer speaks of love and service as the twin pillars upon which we should build our lives.

These same pillars are the strength and support of our mission in Life Care, Century Park and Life Care at Home.

– Beecher Hunter