

The Word for Me Is Philanthropy: Religious Perspective

Talmud Sukkah 49b

Whoever does charity and justice is regarded as if he filled the whole world with kindness

Luke 19:20-26

"The next servant said, "Master, here's your money safe and sound. I kept it hidden in the cellar. To tell you the truth, I was a little afraid. I know you have high standards and hate sloppiness, and don't suffer fools gladly."

"He said, "You're right that I don't suffer fools gladly--and you've acted the fool! Why didn't you at least invest the money in securities so I would have gotten a little interest on it?"

"Then he said to those standing there, "Take the money from him and give it to the servant who doubled my stake."

"They said, "But Master, he already has double . . ."

"He said, "That's what I mean: Risk your life and get more than you ever dreamed of. Play it safe and end up holding the bag."

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Muslim Theme:

At the end of one of Prophet Muhammad's prayers (SAW), he hastily got up and, stepping over the shoulders of the people, went home in a hurry. People, not knowing what the hurry was, were wondering why he was rushing. When he came back he saw that his friends were confused and wondering about his rushing away. He explained that he had suddenly remembered leaving behind a piece of gold in the house and he was afraid that if something happened to him and he didn't give as much as he could in charity, it would be judged against him on the day of judgment. So, he had hurried home to give it to the poor immediately. Source: Bukhari and Mishkaat. Philanthropy in Islam is an obligation that you must be careful about.

Processing Questions:

1. What have we learned about philanthropy today?
2. How do you know when someone is a philanthropist?
3. What happens if we don't use our gifts?
4. How does it affect others when we are not willing to share or use our talents?
5. What benefits do we receive when we use our talents? (achievement, self-worth, we stop thinking about ourselves...)

Muslim Perspective:

1. In the story above, why did Muhammad rush home? How do you feel about what he did?
2. Muslims believe we should help people because God wants us to. What happens if we don't give as much as we can?
3. Are we rewarded by God more if we give more?

