

# A Debt to All

by Mary Wilder Tileston

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*We owe it to ourselves and others to live out Christ's teaching by treating others with courtesy and respect, and creating opportunities for them to grow.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 25:35, Luke 10:30, Luke 16:19, Romans 13:8, Galatians 6:2

**Topics:** "Christian Ethics", "Social Responsibility"

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## Description

Mary Wilder Tileston, preaching on Philemon 19, emphasizes the concept of owing ourselves to others, drawing parallels to the priest and Levite's neglect of their Samaritan neighbor and Dives' disregard for Lazarus. She challenges listeners to consider the manifold debts they owe to those around them - the lonely, misunderstood, and ignorant - urging them to realize and act upon these debts. By treating everyone with courteousness and respect, acknowledging their right to be treated well, individuals can deepen their understanding of humanity and brotherhood, fostering a habit of considerateness and thoughtfulness towards all, especially the weak.

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## Transcript

Thou owest to me even thine own self.

PHILEMON, 19

ACCORDING to Christ's teaching, the priest and Levite did not pay their debt to their Samaritan neighbor, because they thought him a stranger with no claim on them. Dives ignored his rich man's debt to Lazarus. We can all think of manifold debts-to the lonely whom we might visit, the misunderstood whom we might sympathize with, the ignorant whom we might teach. Is it not bewildering even to attempt to realize our debts? And yet, let a man make a beginning, and all will be well. Let him steadily set himself to behave towards those whom he employs, or those who employ him, towards railway porters and shop assistants and others who minister to his convenience, as being men and women with the same right to courteous treatment, and to a real opportunity to make the best of themselves, as he has himself; let him thus realize his debts to his nearest "neighbors," and the whole idea of humanity, of brotherhood, will be deepened and made real to him. He will get a habit of considerateness and thoughtfulness for others, as belonging to Christ, which will express itself habitually towards all, and especially the weak.

CHARLES GORE

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