

Who is a Disciple of Christ? (Part 1)

~Other Speakers S-Z: K.P. Yohannan:

In her article, *Speech without Words*, Elizabeth Patten Moss narrates an incident: “Once St. Francis went to talk to the people. Instead of using words, he spoke through a smile of love and kindness to all those who came his way. He bought food for a person who was starving. He freed some birds that were trapped in a bush. He met a boy who lost his way and helped him to reach his house. In all the paths he traveled, people could not forget one thing: that is the divine love which they experienced in St. Francis.”

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The life of St. Francis is a model to others. Once he prayed like this:

“Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace;

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;

Where there is injury, pardon;

Where there is error, truth;

Where there is doubt, faith;

Where there is despair, hope;

Where there is darkness, light;

And where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek

To be consoled as to console;

To be understood as to understand;

To be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;

And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.”

The death which St. Francis mentions here is not the moment when we leave everything behind us at the end of our life. It is the stage when we leave our self: “me, mine, my life, my wife, my children, my future, my possessions”. It is when we leave the thoughts and work which are based on self. St. Francis speaks about a death that we must embrace throughout our life, leaving the self behind us. He wishes for such a death.