
If Only I Had Known

BY CAROLYN WINFREY GILLETTE

“If only I had known the cost of human greed,
perhaps I would have reached out more to those in need.
But now I see the truth across the great divide!
If only I had known and changed,” the rich man cried.

If only we could see which bargains in the store
are made in dismal sweatshops that oppress the poor.
For each subsistence wage – each tiny, crippling stitch –
makes wider the divide between the poor and rich.

And, too, if we could hear a mother’s lullaby;
she’s singing now to calm her hungry toddler’s cry.
For rich ones came one day, took land and water rights,
and left the poor with hopeless days and hungry nights.

If only we could learn what keeps us wanting more:
we build our bigger barns so we’ll feel more secure.
But you alone, O God, give true security;
possessed by our possessions, we cannot be free.

O Christ, if we could know God’s will for all the earth!
And yet, by your own Spirit, you have shown God’s truth:
“Do justice, help the poor, share life and love and land,
and when you see the hungry, open wide your hand.”

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CAROLYN WINFREY GILLETTE

MEYER LYON (1751-1797)

1. "If on - ly I had known the
 2. If on - ly we could see which
 3. And, too, if we could hear a
 4. If on - ly we could learn what
 5. O Christ, if we could know God's

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