

BPW Collect

Keep us, Oh God, from pettiness.
Let us be large in thought, in word, in deed.
Let us be done with fault-finding and
leave off self-seeking.
May we put away all pretense
and meet each other face to face
without self-pity and without prejudice.
May we never be hasty in judgment
and always generous.
Let us take time for all things;
Make us to grow calm, serene, gentle.
Teach us to put into action our better impulses,
straight-forward and unafraid.
Grant that we may realize it is the little things
that create differences, that in the big things
of life, we are at one.
And may we strive to touch and to know
the great, common human heart of us all.
And Oh Lord God, let us forget not to be kind.

- Mary Stewart

The Collect was written by Mary Stewart, in Longmont, Colorado, in 1904, as a prayer for the day, not for any particular person or group. Miss Stewart had it published as a Collect for Club Women because, at the time, she believed that women working together with wide interests and important goals was new, and that a special meditation of their own would give them a sense of unity. The Collect soon was adopted among working women throughout the world.

The first printing of the Collect was an obscure paragraph in a column of club notes in the *Delineator*. Copies later were printed locally. In 1909, Paul Elder and Company, San Francisco, printed it as a wall card, and it has since been reprinted in many forms, in American yearbooks by national organizations and in other publications around the world.

Miss Stewart, who until 1910 signed the Collect with her pen name Mary Stuart, died in 1943.

The Collect was officially adopted by the National Federation of Business and Professional Women/USA in 1920.