

Ode to a Great Leader

I'm writing this update September 5th 2006. I realize that you may not see it until long after it's been posted, but I'm writing tonight as a way to deal with the loss of a great leader and individual. Just yesterday, news of the death of Crocodile Hunter Steve Irwin arrived and saddened me deeply.

When someone or something touches us or makes an impact on a global scale in some way, we can't help but be affected by the fact that this person is no longer with us. Steve was many things in the global sense. He was an outdoor activist, animal rights protectionist, performer, husband and father but these are not the things I will miss the most about him. I will miss Steve as a remarkable role model for those who work hard at the art of transforming fear into understanding.

Steve had an amazing ability to not shy away from the fact that he was scared stiff when faced with a dangerous animal, showing his human-ness right in front of the camera. But beyond that, he had incredible courage and wisdom not to run from fear but to stay there as long as it took so that his fear could be transformed into compassion.

He also showed us that fear is a stepping stone that paves the way to better communication and understanding. He didn't just say, "These are things to be afraid of, so better stay away". He taught us to respect fear and to let the lesson bleed into the relationships with those we fear the most. He showed us how to step outside of ourselves and more importantly, how to create a common ground not just with ourselves and other people but with all of God's creatures.

Crocodile Hunter Steve Irwin was more than just a humanitarian; he was a planet-arian. He showed us respect and integrity on a global scale and did so in a way that charmed not just us, but our parents and our children too. Mr. Irwin will be sorely missed by those who knew him and of him. The world has lost a great leader indeed.

Sleep well, Steve. Your absence will be deeply felt.

Sincerely,

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