

Listeners Tell Their Favorite Proverbs

Now, the VOA Special English program Words and Their Stories.

A proverb is a short, well known saying that expresses a common truth or belief. Many proverbs give advice about the best way to live.

We asked our listeners to send us their favorite proverbs. A short time later, we received suggestions from around the world. We heard from listeners in Africa, Asia, Europe and South America.

The top proverb among these listeners is this one: "Where there is a will, there is a way." This means that you can rise above your problems if you have a goal and work very hard.

Some listeners liked another proverb: "Strike while the iron is hot." This means it is best to take action quickly and at the right time. Another favorite proverb was, "God helps those who help themselves."

Xu Da-ju from China wrote that his country has thousands of proverbs. Several of them are also used in the United States. One example is "Birds of a feather flock together." This means that people who are alike often become friends or spend time together.

Another proverb is "Blood is thicker than water." This means family ties are stronger than other relationships. A similar proverb states "Charity begins at home." A person should help his family or close friends before helping others.

Alina from China sent us this proverb: "He who would climb a ladder must begin at the bottom." That is good advice when working around your home or looking for a job.

Antonio Jose from Brazil says his favorite proverb is "Tell me who walks with you, and I'll tell you who you are." Didier Vermeulen of France sent us this one: "It does not matter the speed you go. The most important thing is to never stop."

Wafaa from Egypt says his favorite proverb is, "Think twice, act wise." He also says he is making an effort to use this saying in his life.

Another favorite proverb among our listeners is "Practice makes perfect." This means you will become good at something if you keep doing it. Another popular proverb is: "If you want something done right, do it yourself."

Najeeb from Afghanistan sent us this proverb: "If you risk nothing, then you risk everything."

And, here is the favorite proverb of Marius Meledje in Ivory Coast: "Your defeat now is your victory in the future." He says it means you can learn from your mistakes. This will help you do better when facing similar situations in the future.

This VOA Special English program was written by Shelley Gollust. I'm Faith Lapidus. We will present more programs about proverbs in the future.