Drop a pebble in the water

Drop a pebble in the water:
just a splash, and it is gone;
But there’s half-a-hundred ripples
Circling on and on and on,
Spreading, spreading from the center,
flowing on out to the sea.
And there is no way of telling
where the end is going to be.

Drop a pebble in the water:
in a minute you forget,
But there’s little waves a-flowing,
and there’s ripples circling yet,
And those little waves a-flowing
to a great big wave have grown;
You’ve disturbed a mighty river
just by dropping in a stone.

Drop an unkind word, or careless:
in a minute it is gone;
But there’s half-a-hundred ripples
circling on and on and on.
They keep spreading, spreading,
spreading from the center as they go,
And there is no way to stop them,
once you’ve started them to flow.

Drop an unkind word, or careless:
in a minute you forget;
But there’s little waves a-flowing,
and there’s ripples circling yet,
And perhaps in some sad heart
a mighty wave of tears you’ve stirred,
And disturbed a life was happy
ere you dropped that unkind word.

Drop a word of cheer and kindness:
just a flash and it is gone;
But there’s half-a-hundred ripples
circling on and on and on,
Bearing hope and joy and comfort
on each splashing, dashing wave
Till you wouldn’t believe the volume
of the one kind word you gave.

Drop a word of cheer and kindness:
in a minute you forget;
But there’s gladness still a-swelling,
and there’s joy circling yet,
And you’ve rolled a wave of comfort
whose sweet music can be heard
Over miles and miles of water
just by dropping one kind word.

~By James W. Foley~