
“The main thing is the YOU beneath the clothes and skin--the ability to do, the will to conquer, the determination to understand and know this great, wonderful, curious world.”

“Children learn more from what you are than what you teach.”

“Either America will destroy ignorance or ignorance will destroy the United States.”

“There is but one coward on earth, and that is the coward that dare not know.”
_Dusk of Dawn_

“The most important thing to remember is this: To be ready at any moment to give up what you are for what you might become.”

“Herein lies the tragedy of the age:
Not that men are poor, - all men know something of poverty.
Not that men are wicked, - who is good?
Not that men are ignorant, - what is truth?
Nay, but that men know so little of men.”

“The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife, -- this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost... He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American...”
_Souls of Black Folk_

“The world still wants to ask that a woman primarily be pretty and if she is not, the mob pouts and asks querulously, 'What else are women for?’”

“The cost of liberty is less than the price of repression.”

“One ever feels his twoness, -- an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose strenth alone keeps it from being torn asunder.”
_Souls of Black Folk_

“The function of the university is not simply to teach breadwinning, or to furnish teachers for the public schools, or to be a centre of polite society; if is, above all, to be the organ of that fine adjustment between real life and the growing knowledge of life, an adjustment from which forms the secret of civilization.”

“What do nations care about the cost of war, if by spending a few hundred millions in steel and gunpowder they can gain a thousand millions in diamonds and cocoa?”

Perhaps the most extraordinary characteristic of current America is the attempt to reduce life to buying and selling. Life is not love unless love is sex and bought and sold. Life is not knowledge save knowledge of technique, of science for destruction. Life is not beauty except beauty for sale. Life is not art unless its price is high and it is sold for profit. All life is production for profit, and for what is profit but for buying and selling again?”

“I believe that all men, black, brown, and white, are brothers.”
“Ignorance is a cure for nothing.”

“Now is the accepted time, not tomorrow, not some more convenient season. It is today that our best work can be done and not some future day or future year. It is today that we fit ourselves for the greater usefulness of tomorrow. Today is the seed time, now are the hours of work, and tomorrow comes the harvest and the playtime.”
Sons of Black Folk

“I have always depended on the kindness of strangers.”

“Honest and earnest criticism from those whose interests are most nearly touched,- criticism of writers by readers, of government by those governed, of leaders by those led, - this is the soul of democracy and the safeguard of modern society”
Sons of Black Folk

“After the Egyptian and Indian, the Greek and Roman, the Teuton and Mongolian, the Negro is a sort of seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in this American world,—a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.”

“Here is the chance for young women and young men of devotion to lift again the banner of humanity and to walk toward a civilization which will be free and intelligent; which will be healthy and unafraid, and build in the world a culture led by black folk and joined by peoples of all colors and all races - without poverty, ignorance and disease!”

“But art is not simply works of art; it is the spirit that knows Beauty, that has music in its soul and the color of sunsets in its headkerchiefs; that can dance on a flaming world and make the world dance, too.”

“One ever feels his twoness - an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder”
Sons of Black Folk

“The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line.”
Sons of Black Folk

“To the real question, How does it feel to be a problem? I answer seldom a word.”
Sons of Black Folk

“The power of the ballot we need in sheer defense, else what shall save us from a second slavery?”

“The worker must work for the glory of his handiwork, not simply for pay; the thinker must think for truth, not for fame.”

“There are certain books in the world which every searcher for truth must know: the Bible, the Critique of Pure Reason, the Origin of Species, and Karl Marx's Capital.”

“The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife,—this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. He would not Africanize America, for America has too much to teach the world and Africa. He would not
bleach his Negro soul in a flood of white Americanism, for he knows that Negro blood has a message for the world. He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American, without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of Opportunity closed roughly in his face.”

“...in any land, in any country under modern free competition, to lay any class of weak and despised people, be they white, black, or blue, at the political mercy of their stronger, richer, and more resourceful fellows, is a temptation which human nature seldom has withstood and seldom will withstand.”

“But we do not merely protest; we make renewed demand for freedom in that vast kingdom of the human spirit where freedom has ever had the right to dwell: the expressing of thought to unstuffed ears; the dreaming of dreams by untwisted souls.”

“The growing spirit of kindliness and reconciliation between the North and South after the frightful differences of a generation ago ought to be a source of deep congratulation to all, and especially to those whose mistreatment caused the war; but if that reconciliation is to be marked by the industrial slavery and civic death of those same black men, with permanent legislation into a position of inferiority, then those black men, if they are really men, are called upon by every consideration of patriotism and loyalty to oppose such a course by all civilized methods, even though such opposition involves disagreement with Mr. Booker T. Washington. We have no right to sit silently by while the inevitable seeds are sown for a harvest of disaster to our children, black and white.”

“Herein lies the tragedy of the age: not that men are poor--all men know something of poverty. Not that men are wicked-- who is good? Not that men are ignorant--what is truth? Nay, but that men know so little of men.”

“The return from your work must be the satisfaction which that work brings you and the world's need of that work. With this, life is heaven, or as near heaven as you can get. Without this — with work which you despise, which bores you, and which the world does not need — this life is hell.”

“And yet not a dream, but a mighty reality- a glimpse of the higher life, the broader possibilities of humanity, which is granted to the man who, amid the rush and roar of living, pauses four short years to learn what living means”

“One ever feels his two-ness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder”

“We are training not isolated men but a living group of men, - nay, a group within a group. And the final product of our training must be neither a psychologist nor a brickmason, but a man. And to make men, we must have ideals, broad, pure, and inspiring ends of living, - not sordid money-getting, not apples of gold. The worker must work for the lory of his handiwork, not simply for pay; the thinker must think for truth, not for fame. And all this is gained only by human strife and longing; by ceaseless training and education; by founding Right on righteousness and Truth on the unhampered search for Truth...and weaving thus a system, not a distortion, and bringing a birth, not an abortion.”

“Joseph Stalin was a great man; few other men of the 20th century approach his stature. He was simple, calm and courageous. He seldom lost his poise; pondered his problems slowly, made his decisions clearly and firmly; never yielded to ostentation nor coyly refrained from holding his rightful place with dignity. He was the son of a serf but stood calmly before the great without hesitation or nerves. But also—and this was the highest proof of his greatness—he knew the common man, felt his problems, followed his fate.”

“But, back of this, still broods silently the deep religious feeling of the real Negro heart, the stirring, unguided might of powerful human souls who have lost the guiding star of the past and are seeking in the great night a new religious ideal. Some day the Awakening will come, when the pent-up vigor of 10,000,000 souls shall
sweep irresistibly toward the Goal, out of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, where all that makes life worth living - Liberty, Justice and Right - is marked "For White People Only."

“The equality in political, industrial and social life which modern men must have in order to live, is not to be confounded with sameness. On the contrary, in our case, it is rather insistence upon the right of diversity; - upon the right of a human being to be a man even if he does not wear the same cut of vest, the same curl of hair or the same color of skin. Human equality does not even entail, as it is sometimes said, absolute equality of opportunity; for certainly the natural inequalities of inherent genius and varying gift make this a dubious phrase. But there is more and more clearly recognized minimum of opportunity and maximum of freedom to be, to move and to think, which the modern world denies to no being which it recognizes as a real man.”
_Souls of Black Folk_

“You will not wonder at his weird pilgrimage,-who who in the swift whirl of living, amid its cold paradox and marvelous vision, have fronted life and asked its riddle face to face. And if you find that riddle hard to read, remember that yonder black boy finds it just a little harder; if it is difficult for you to find and face your duty, it is a shade more difficult for him; if your heart sickens in the blood and dust of battle, remember that to him the dust is thicker and the battle fiercer.”
_Souls of Black Folk_

"John," she said, "does it make every one unhappy when they study and learn lots of things"
He paused and smiled. “I am afraid it does,” he said.
"And, John, are you glad you studied?"
"Yes," came the answer, slowly but positively.
She watched the flickering lights upon the sea, and said thoughtfully, “I wish I was unhappy,—and—and,” putting both arms about his neck, “I think I am, a little, John.”
_Souls of Black Folk_

“Then, as the storm burst round him, he rose slowly to his feet and turned his closed eyes toward the Sea. And the world whistled in his ears.”
_Souls of Black Folk_

“How shall Integrity face Oppression? What shall Honesty do in the face of Deception, Decency in the face of Insult, Self-Defense before Blows? How shall Desert and Accomplishment meet Despising, Detraction, and Lies? What shall Virtue do to meet Brute Force? There are so many answers and so contradictory; and such differences for those on the one hand who meet questions similar to this once a year or once a decade, and those who face them hourly and daily.”