

Ralph Waldo Emerson

The spirit only can teach. Not any profane man, not any sensual, not any liar, not any slave can teach, but only he can give, who has; he only can create, who is. The man on whom the soul descends, through whom the soul speaks, alone can teach. Courage, piety, love, wisdom, can teach; and every man can open his door to these angels, and they shall bring him the gift of tongues. But the man who aims to speak as books enable, as synods use, as the fashion guides, and as interest commands, babbles. Let him hush.

It is the office of a true teacher to show us that God is, not was; that He speaketh, not spake.

I hate quotations. Tell me what you know.

Is it so bad, then, to be misunderstood? Pythagoras was misunderstood, and Socrates, and Jesus, and Luther, and Copernicus, and Galileo, and Newton, and every pure and wise spirit that ever took flesh. To be great is to be misunderstood.

The only way to have a friend is to be one.

The reward of a thing well done, is to have done it.

What lies behind us and what lies before us are small matters compared to what lies within us.

A man is what he thinks about all day long.

Adopt the pace of nature: her secret is patience.

The transcendentalist, Emerson states, believes in miracles, conceived as “the perpetual openness of the human mind to new influx of light and power...”

It is one of the blessings of old friends that you can afford to be stupid with them.

Little minds have little worries, big minds have no time for worries.

Nature hates calculators.

No change of circumstances can repair a defect of character.

No man ever prayed heartily without learning something.

Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind.

The reason why the world lacks unity, and lies broken and in heaps, is, because man is disunited with himself.

The revelation of thought takes men out of servitude into freedom.

The sky is the daily bread of the eyes.

The sum of wisdom is that time is never lost that is devoted to work.

Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us or we find it not.

Trust your instinct to the end, though you can render no reason.

We are always getting ready to live but never living.

We are born believing. A man bears beliefs as a tree bears apples.

We are wiser than we know.

We gain the strength of the temptation we resist.

Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.

Earth laughs in flowers.

Enthusiasm is the mother of effort, and without it nothing great was ever achieved.

Every artist was first an amateur.

Every book is a quotation; and every house is a quotation out of all forests, and mines, and stone quarries; and every man is a quotation from all his ancestors.

Every mind must make its choice between truth and repose. It cannot have both.

Every natural fact is a symbol of some spiritual fact.

God enters by a private door into every individual.

Great men are they who see that spiritual is stronger than any material force - that thoughts rule the world.

I have no hostility to nature, but a child's love to it. I expand and live in the warm day like corn and melons.

Henry David Thoreau

Rather than love, than money, than fame, give me truth.

Most of the luxuries and many of the so-called comforts of life are not only not indispensable, but positive hindrances to the elevation of mankind.

On tops of mountains, as everywhere to hopeful souls, it is always morning.

All this worldly wisdom was once the amiable heresy of some wise man.

Many go fishing all their lives without knowing that it is not fish they are after.

Wherever a man goes, men will pursue him and paw him with their dirty institutions, and, if they can, constrain him to belong to their desperate oddfellow society.

A man is rich in proportion to the number of things he can afford to let alone.

A man's interest in a single bluebird is worth more than a complete but dry list of the fauna and flora of a town.

A truly good book teaches me better than to read it. I must soon lay it down, and commence living on its hint. What I began by reading, I must finish by acting.

Aim above morality. Be not simply good, be good for something.

An early-morning walk is a blessing for the whole day.

There is no value in life except what you choose to place upon it and no happiness in any place except what you bring to it yourself.

As a single footstep will not make a path on the earth, so a single thought will not make a pathway in the mind. To make a deep physical path, we walk again and again. To make a deep mental path, we must think over and over the kind of thoughts we wish to dominate our lives.

As if you could kill time without injuring eternity.

Money is not required to buy one necessity of the soul.

Nature is full of genius, full of the divinity; so that not a snowflake escapes its fashioning hand.

Nature will bear the closest inspection. She invites us to lay our eye level with her smallest leaf, and take an insect view of its plain.

Nay, be a Columbus to whole new continents and worlds within you, opening new channels, not of trade, but of thought.

The language of excitement is at best picturesque merely. You must be calm before you can utter oracles.

The price of anything is the amount of life you exchange for it.

There are old heads in the world who cannot help me by their example or advice to live worthily and satisfactorily to myself; but I believe that it is in my power to elevate myself this very hour above the common level of my life.

There is no more fatal blunderer than he who consumes the greater part of his life getting his living.