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# Quotes by Lincoln, Abraham

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Abraham Lincoln (February 12, 1809 April 15, 1865), sometimes called Abe Lincoln and nicknamed Honest Abe, the Rail Splitter, and the Great Emancipator, was the 16th President of the United States (1861 to 1865), and the first president from the Republican Party.

If you once forfeit the confidence of your fellow citizens, you can never regain their respect and esteem. You may fool all of the people some of the time; you can even fool some of the people all the time; but you can't fool all of the people all of the time.

- Lincoln, Abraham

You can fool some of the people all the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all the time.

- Lincoln, Abraham

As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy.

- Lincoln, Abraham

No man is good enough to govern another man without that other's consent.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Determine that the thing can and shall be done, and then we shall find the way.

- Lincoln, Abraham

How many legs does a dog have if you call the tail a leg? Four. Calling a tail a leg doesn't make it a leg.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I dream of a place and a time where America will once again be seen as the last best hope of earth.

- Lincoln, Abraham

The sense of obligation to continue is present in all of us. A duty to strive is the duty of us all. I felt a call to that duty.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Upon the subject of education, not presuming to dictate any plan or system respecting it, I can only say that I view it as the most important subject which we as a people may be engaged in. That everyone may receive at least a moderate education appears to be an objective of vital importance.

- Lincoln, Abraham

If elected I shall be thankful; if not, it will be all the same.

- Lincoln, Abraham

The best way to destroy your enemy is to make him your friend.

- Lincoln, Abraham

People who like this sort of thing will find this the sort of thing they like.

- Lincoln, Abraham

When I hear a man preach, I like to see him act as if he were fighting bees.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I never had a policy; I have just tried to do my very best each and every day.

- Lincoln, Abraham

We know nothing of what will happen in future, but by the analogy of experience.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Every man over forty is responsible for his face.

- Lincoln, Abraham

If I were two-faced, would I be wearing this one?

- Lincoln, Abraham

My great concern is not whether you have failed, but whether you are content with your failure.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us dare to do our duty as we understand it.

- Lincoln, Abraham

All I am, or can be, I owe to my angel mother.

- Lincoln, Abraham

A woman is the only thing I am afraid of that I know will not hurt me.

- Lincoln, Abraham

When I do good, I feel good. When I do bad, I feel bad. And that's my religion.

- Lincoln, Abraham

No matter how much the cats fight, there always seem to be plenty of kittens.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Better to remain silent and be thought a fool, than to speak and remove all doubt.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Freedom is the last, best hope of earth.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Freedom is not the right to do what we want, but what we ought. Let us have faith that right makes might and in that faith let us; to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it.

- Lincoln, Abraham

The shepherd drives the wolf from the sheep's throat, for which the sheep thanks the shepherd as his liberator, while the wolf denounces him for the same act as the destroyer of liberty.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Those who deny freedom to others, deserve it not for themselves.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Do not destroy that immortal emblem of humanity, the Declaration of Independence.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I desire to so conduct the affairs of this administration that if at the end, when I come to lay down the reins of power, I have lost every other friend on earth, I shall at least have one friend left, and that friend shall be down inside of me.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I don't like that man. I'm going to have to get to know him better.

- Lincoln, Abraham

A drop of honey catches more flies than a gallon of gal. So with men. If you would win a man to your cause, first convince him that you are his sincere friend. Therein is a drop of honey which catches his heart, which, say what he will, is the highroad to his reason.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Am I not destroying my enemies when I make friends of them?

- Lincoln, Abraham

The best thing about the future is that it comes only one day at a time.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Tell me what brand of whiskey that Grant drinks. I would like to send a barrel of it to my other generals.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Towering genius disdains a beaten path.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I believe, if we take habitual drunkards as a class, their heads and their hearts will bear an advantageous comparison with those of any other class. There seems ever to have been a proneness in the brilliant and warm-blooded to fall into this vice.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I fear explanations explanatory of things explained.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Those who write clearly have readers, those who write obscurely have commentators.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Every man is said to have his peculiar ambition.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I don't know who my grandfather was; I am much more concerned to know what his grandson will be.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Military glory --the attractive rainbow that rises in showers of blood.

- Lincoln, Abraham

It is difficult to make a man miserable while he feels he is worthy of himself and claims kindred to the great God who made him.

- Lincoln, Abraham

A Government of the people, by the people and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Whatever you are, be a good one.

- Lincoln, Abraham

A person will be just about as happy as they make up their minds to be.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Fellow citizens, we cannot escape history.

- Lincoln, Abraham

The fiery trials through which we pass will light us down in honor or dishonor to the latest generation.

- Lincoln, Abraham

With high hope for the future, no prediction is ventured.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I can make a General in five minutes but a good horse is hard to replace.

- Lincoln, Abraham

God must love the common man, he made so many of them.

- Lincoln, Abraham

If this is coffee, please bring me some tea; but if this is tea, please bring me some coffee.

- Lincoln, Abraham

There are few things wholly evil or wholly good. Almost everything, especially of government policy, is an inseparable compound of the two, so that our best judgment of the preponderance between them is continually demanded.

- Lincoln, Abraham

If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could then better judge what to do, and how to do it.

- Lincoln, Abraham

The probability that we may fail in the struggle ought not to deter us from the support of a cause we believe to be just.

- Lincoln, Abraham

With the fearful strain that is on me night and day, if I did not laugh I should die.

- Lincoln, Abraham

A jury too often has at least one member more ready to hang the panel than to hang the traitor.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Let reverence for the laws be breathed by every American mother to the lisping babe that prattles on her lap. Let it be taught in schools, in seminaries, and in colleges. Let it be written in primers, spelling books, and in almanacs. Let it be preached from the pulpit, proclaimed in legislative halls, and enforced in the courts of justice. And, in short, let it become the political religion of the nation.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Public sentiment is everything, with it nothing can fail, without it nothing can succeed.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. We here highly resolve that the dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

- Lincoln, Abraham

No man has a good enough memory to make a successful liar.

- Lincoln, Abraham

And in the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years.

- Lincoln, Abraham

The Lord prefers common looking people. That is why he made so many of them.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Every person is responsible for his own looks after 40.

- Lincoln, Abraham

When I am getting ready to reason with a man, I spend one-third of my time thinking about myself and what I am going to say and two-thirds about him and what he is going to say.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Marriage is neither heaven nor hell, it is simply purgatory.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I have come to the conclusion never again to think of marrying, and for this reason, I can never be satisfied with anyone who would be blockhead enough to have me.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Force is all-conquering, but its victories are short-lived.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I am not concerned that you have fallen -- I am concerned that you arise.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I am a slow walker, but I never walk backwards.

- Lincoln, Abraham

You may fool all the people some of the time, you can even fool some of the people all of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all the time.

- Lincoln, Abraham

If you wish to win a man over to your ideas, first make him your friend.

- Lincoln, Abraham

We must ask where we are and whither we are tending.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Honest statesmanship is the wise employment of individual meanness for the public good.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Avoid popularity if you would have peace.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Few can be induced to labor exclusively for posterity; and none will do it enthusiastically. Posterity has done nothing for us; and theorize on it as we may, practically we shall do very little for it, unless we are made to think we are at the same time doing something for ourselves.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Let not him who is houseless pull down the house of another, but let him work diligently and build one for himself, thus by example assuring that his own shall be safe from violence when built.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Must a government be too strong for the liberties of its people or too weak to maintain its own existence?

- Lincoln, Abraham

All that I am or hope to be I owe to my angel mother. I remember my mother's prayers and they have always followed me. They have clung to me all my life.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I will prepare and some day my chance will come.

- Lincoln, Abraham

The power confided in me will be used to hold, occupy and possess the property and places belonging to the government, and to collect the duties and imposts.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Things may come to those who wait, but only the things left by those who hustle.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I walk slowly, but I never walk backward.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I'm a slow walker, but I never walk back.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Prohibition will work great injury to the cause of temperance. It is a species of intemperance within itself, for it goes beyond the bounds of reason in that it attempts to control a man's appetite by legislation, and makes a crime out of things that are not crimes. A Prohibition law strikes a blow at the very principles upon which our government was founded.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Whether or not the world would be vastly benefited by a total banishment from it of all intoxicating drinks seems not now an open question. Three-fourths of mankind confess the affirmative with their tongues, and I believe all the rest acknowledge it in their hearts.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Property is the fruit of labor; property is desirable; it is a positive good in the world.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Friends, I agree with you in Providence; but I believe in the Providence of the most men, the largest purse, and the longest cannon.

- Lincoln, Abraham

A universal feeling, whether well or ill founded, cannot be safely disregarded.

- Lincoln, Abraham

What kills the skunk is the publicity it gives itself.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Quarrel not at all. No man resolved to make the most of himself can spare time for personal contention. Still less can he afford to take all the consequences, including the vitiating of his temper and loss of self control. Yield larger things to which you can show no more than equal right; and yield lesser ones, though clearly your own. Better give your

path to a dog than be bitten by him in contesting for the right. Even killing the dog would not cure the bite.

- Lincoln, Abraham

The shadow is what we think of it; the tree is the real thing.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any one thing.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Having thus chosen our course, without guile and with pure purpose, let us renew our trust in God, and go forward without fear and with manly hearts.

- Lincoln, Abraham

You cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Seriously, I do not think I fit for the presidency.

- Lincoln, Abraham

The way for a young man to rise is to improve himself in every way he can, never suspecting that anybody wishes to hinder him.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I don't think much of a man who is not wiser today than he was yesterday.

- Lincoln, Abraham

He who molds the public sentiment... makes statues and decisions possible or impossible to make.

- Lincoln, Abraham

To sin by silence when they should protest makes cowards of men.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Whenever I hear anyone arguing for slavery, I feel a strong impulse to see it tried on him personally.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Slavery is founded on the selfishness of man's nature -- opposition to it on his love of justice. These principles are in eternal antagonism; and when brought into collision so fiercely as slavery extension brings them, shocks and throes and convulsions must ceaselessly follow.

- Lincoln, Abraham

In giving freedom to the slave, we assure freedom to the free -- honorable alike in what

we give and what we preserve.

- Lincoln, Abraham

But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract.

- Lincoln, Abraham

The things I want to know are in books; my best friend is the man who'll get me a book I ain't read.

- Lincoln, Abraham

To correct the evils, great and small, which spring from want of sympathy and from positive enmity among strangers, as nations or as individuals, is one of the highest functions of civilization.

- Lincoln, Abraham

These capitalists generally act harmoniously and in concert, to fleece the people.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Labor is prior to, and independent of, capital. Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration. Capital has its rights, which are as worthy of protection as any other rights.

- Lincoln, Abraham

If you would win a man to your cause, first convince him that you are his sincere friend. Therein is a drop of honey that catches his heart, which, say what you will, is the great high-road to his reason, and which, when once gained, you will find but little trouble in convincing his judgment of the justice of your cause.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Character is like a tree and reputation like its shadow. The shadow is what we think of it; the tree is the real thing.

- Lincoln, Abraham

If I were to try to read, much less answer, all the attacks made on me, this shop might as well be closed for any other business. I do the very best I know how -- the very best I can. And I mean to keep on doing it to the end. If the end brings me out all right, what is said against me will not amount to anything. If the end brings me out all wrong, ten angels swearing I was right would make no difference.

- Lincoln, Abraham

We should be too big to take offense and too noble to give it.

- Lincoln, Abraham

With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us finish the work ;we are in.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Tact is the ability to describe others as they see themselves.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I laugh because I must not cry. That is all. That is all.

- Lincoln, Abraham

When I'm getting ready to reason with a man, I spend one-third of my time thinking about myself and what I am going to say and two-thirds thinking about him and what he is going to say.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Nothing valuable can be lost by taking time.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Let the people know the truth and the country is safe.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true. I am not bound to succeed but I am bound to live the best life that I have. I must stand with anybody that stands right and part from him when he goes wrong.

- Lincoln, Abraham

A house divided against itself cannot stand -- I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free.

- Lincoln, Abraham

It has been my experience that folks who have no vices have very few virtues.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Beware of rashness, but with energy, and sleepless vigilance, go forward and give us victories.

- Lincoln, Abraham

The ballot is stronger than the bullet.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Among free men there can be no successful appeal from the ballot to the bullet.

- Lincoln, Abraham

We must not promise what we ought not, lest we be called on to perform what we cannot.

- Lincoln, Abraham

That some should be rich, shows that others may become rich, and, hence, is just encouragement to industry and enterprise.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Will springs from the two elements of moral sense and self-interest.

- Lincoln, Abraham

My father taught me to work, but he did not teach me to love it.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Wanting to work is so rare a merit that it should be encouraged.

- Lincoln, Abraham

If I had eight hours to chop down a tree, I'd spend six sharpening my ax.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Do not worry; eat three square meals a day; say your prayers; be courteous to your creditors; keep your digestion good; exercise; go slow and easy. Maybe there are other things your special case requires to make you happy, but my friend, these I reckon will give you a good lift. -

- Lincoln, Abraham

Don't worry when you are not recognized, but strive to be worthy of recognition.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I want it said of me by those who knew me best, that I always plucked a thistle and planted a flower where I thought a flower would grow.

- Lincoln, Abraham

As our case is new, we must think and act anew.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere to go. My own wisdom, and that of all about me, seemed insufficient for the day.

- Lincoln, Abraham

When you have got an elephant by the hind legs and he is trying to run away, it's best to let him run.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Common looking people are the best in the world: that is the reason the Lord makes so many of them.

- Lincoln, Abraham

He can compress the most words into the smallest idea of any man I ever met.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Everybody likes a compliment.

- Lincoln, Abraham

If once you forfeit the confidence of your fellow-citizens, you can never regain their respect and esteem.

- Lincoln, Abraham

It is the eternal struggle between these two principles -- right and wrong. They are the two principles that have stood face to face from the beginning of time and will ever continue to struggle. It is the same spirit that says, You work and toil and earn bread, and I'll eat it.

- Lincoln, Abraham

What is conservatism? It is not adherence to the old and tried, but against the new and untried?

- Lincoln, Abraham

Prohibition goes beyond the bounds of reason in that it attempts to control a man's appetite by legislation and makes crimes out of things that are not crimes.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Be sure you put your feet in the right place, then stand firm.

- Lincoln, Abraham

What I do say is that no man is good enough to govern another man without that other's

consent.

- Lincoln, Abraham

He reminds me of the man who murdered both his parents, and then when the sentence was about to be pronounced, pleaded for mercy on the grounds that he was orphan.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I see in the near future a crisis approaching that unnerves me and causes me to tremble for the safety of my country. Corporations have been enthroned, an era of corruption in high places will follow, and the money-power of the country will endeavor to prolong its reign by working upon the prejudices of the people until the wealth is aggregated in a few hands and the Republic is destroyed.

- Lincoln, Abraham

If I care to listen to every criticism, let alone act on them, then this shop may as well be closed for all other businesses. I have learned to do my best, and if the end result is good then I do not care for any criticism, but if the end result is not good, then even the praise of ten angels would not make the difference.

- Lincoln, Abraham

If the end brings me out all right, what is said against me won't amount to anything. If the end brings me out wrong, then ten angels swearing I was right would make no difference.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I destroy my enemy when I make him my friend.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Die when I may, I want it said of me by those who knew me best, that I always plucked a thistle and planted a flower where I thought a flower would grow.

- Lincoln, Abraham

What has once happened, will invariably happen again, when the same circumstances which combined to produce it, shall again combine in the same way.

- Lincoln, Abraham

We meet this evening, not in sorrow, but in gladness of heart.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I think very much of the people, as an old friend said he thought of woman. He said when he lost his first wife, who had been a great help to him in his business, he thought he was ruined that he could never find another to fill her place. At length, however, he married another, who he found did quite as well as the first, and that his opinion now was that any woman would do well who was well done by. So I think of the whole people of this nation they will ever do well if well done by. We will try to do well by them in all parts of the country, North and South, with entire confidence that all will be well with all of us.

- Lincoln, Abraham

The legitimate object of government, is to do for a community of people, whatever they

need to have done, but can not do, at all, or can not, so well do, for themselves in their separate, and individual capacities. In all that the people can individually do as well for themselves, government ought not to interfere. The desirable things which the individuals of a people can not do, or can not well do, for themselves, fall into two classes: those which have relation to wrongs, and those which have not. Each of these branch off into an infinite variety of subdivisions. The first that in relation to wrongs embraces all crimes, misdemeanors, and nonperformance of contracts. The other embraces all which, in its nature, and without wrong, requires combined action, as public roads and highways, public schools, charities, pauperism, orphanage, estates of the deceased, and the machinery of government itself. From this it appears that if all men were just, there still would be some, though not so much, need for government.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Has it [popular sovereignty] not got down as thin as the homeopathic soup that was made by boiling the shadow of a pigeon that had starved to death?

- Lincoln, Abraham

Must a government, of necessity, be too strong for the liberties of its own people, or too weak to maintain its own existence?

- Lincoln, Abraham

There is an important sense in which government is distinctive from administration. One is perpetual, the other is temporary and changeable. A man may be loyal to his government and yet oppose the particular principles and methods of administration.

- Lincoln, Abraham

While the people retain their virtue, and vigilance, no administration, by any extreme of wickedness or folly, can very seriously injure the government, in the short space of four years.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I am struggling to maintain the government, not to overthrow it. I am struggling especially to prevent others from overthrowing it.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Gentlemen, suppose all the property you were worth was in gold, and you had put it in the hands of Blondin to carry across the Niagara River on a rope, would you shake the cable, or keep shouting out to him Blondin, stand up a little straighter Blondin, stoop a little more go a little faster lean a little more to the north lean a little more to the south? No, you would hold your breath as well as your tongue, and keep your hands off until he was safe over. The Government are carrying an immense weight. Untold treasures are in their hands. They are doing the very best they can. Dont badger them. Keep silence, and well get you safe across.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I know that the LORD is always on the side of the right. But it is my constant anxiety and prayer that I and this nation should be on the LORDS side.

- Lincoln, Abraham

When someone asked Abraham Lincoln, after he was elected president, what he was going to do about his enemies, he replied, I am going to destroy them. I am going to make them my friends.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Our cause, then, must be intrusted to, and conducted by, its own undoubted friends those whose hands are free, whose hearts are in the work who do care for the result. Two years ago the Republicans of the nation mustered over thirteen hundred thousand strong. We did this under the single impulse of resistance to a common danger, with every external circumstance against us. Of strange, discordant, and even, hostile elements, we gathered from the four winds, and formed and fought the battle through, under the constant hot fire of a disciplined, proud, and pampered enemy. Did we brave all then to falter now? now when that same enemy is wavering, dissevered, and belligerent? The result is not doubtful. We shall not fail if we stand firm, we shall not fail. Wise councils may accelerate or mistakes delay it, but, sooner or later, the victory is sure to come.

- Lincoln, Abraham

This is a world of compensation; and he who would be no slave must consent to have no slave. Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves, and, under a just God, cannot long retain it.

- Lincoln, Abraham

You may fool all the people some of the time; you can even fool some of the people all the time; but you cant fool all of the people all the time.

- Lincoln, Abraham

The true rule, in determining to embrace, or reject any thing, is not whether it have any evil in it; but whether it have more of evil, than of good. There are few things wholly evil, or wholly good. Almost every thing, especially of governmental policy, is an inseparable compound of the two; so that our best judgment of the preponderance between them is continually demanded.

- Lincoln, Abraham

We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power, as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us!

- Lincoln, Abraham

At what point then is the approach of danger to be expected? I answer, if it ever reach us, it must spring up amongst us. It cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen, we must live through all time, or die by suicide.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I am superstitious. I have scarcely known a party, preceding an election, to call in help from the neighboring states, but they lost the state.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I have very large ideas of the mineral wealth of our Nation. I believe it practically inexhaustible. It abounds all over the western country, from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific, and its development has scarcely commenced. Immigration, which even the war has not stopped, will land upon our shores hundred of thousands more per year from overcrowded Europe. I intend to point them to the gold and silver that waits for them in the West. Tell the miners from me, that I shall promote their interests to the utmost of my ability; because their prosperity is the prosperity of the Nation, and we shall prove in a very few years that we are indeed the treasury of the world.

- Lincoln, Abraham

All the armies of Europe, Asia and Africa combined, with all the treasure of the earth in their military chest; with a Buonaparte for a commander, could not by force take a drink from the Ohio or make a track on the Blue Ridge in a trial of a thousand years.

- Lincoln, Abraham

He said that he felt like the boy that stumped his toe, it hurt too bad to laugh, and he was too big to cry.

- Lincoln, Abraham

As an individual who undertakes to live by borrowing, soon finds his original means

devoured by interest, and next no one left to borrow from so must it be with a government.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Dear Madam, I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant General of Massachusetts, that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours, to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of Freedom. Yours, very sincerely and respectfully.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I believe, if we take habitual drunkards as a class, their heads and their hearts will bear an advantageous comparison with those of any other class.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Don't interfere with anything in the Constitution. That must be maintained, for it is the only safeguard of our liberties.

- Lincoln, Abraham

To give the victory to the right, not bloody bullets, but peaceful ballots only, are necessary.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I am exceedingly anxious that this Union, the Constitution, and the liberties of the people shall be perpetuated in accordance with the original idea for which that struggle was made, and I shall be most happy indeed if I shall be an humble instrument in the hands of the Almighty, and of this, his almost chosen people, for perpetuating the object of that great struggle.

- Lincoln, Abraham

A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure, permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved I do not expect the house to fall but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I am glad to know that there is a system of labor where the laborer can strike if he wants to! I would to God that such a system prevailed all over the world.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I believe each individual is naturally entitled to do as he pleases with himself and the fruit of his labor, so far as it in no wise interferes with any other mans rights that each community, as a State, has a right to do exactly as it pleases with all the concerns within that State that interfere with the right of no other State, and that the general government, upon principle, has no right to interfere with anything other than that general class of

things that does concern the whole.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Singular indeed that the people should be writhing under oppression and injury, and yet not one among them to be found, to raise the voice of complaint.

- Lincoln, Abraham

This extraordinary war in which we are engaged falls heavily upon all classes of people, but the most heavily upon the soldier. For it has been said, all that a man hath will he give for his life; and while all contribute of their substance the soldier puts his life at stake, and often yields it up in his countrys cause. The highest merit, then, is due to the soldier.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Honor to the Soldier, and Sailor everywhere, who bravely bears his countrys cause. Honor also to the citizen who cares for his brother in the field, and serves, as he best can, the same cause honor to him, only less than to him, who braves, for the common good, the storms of heaven and the storms of battle.

- Lincoln, Abraham

The principles of Jefferson are the definitions and axioms of free society.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Whenever [I] hear any one, arguing for slavery I feel a strong impulse to see it tried on him personally.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Those arguments that are made, that the inferior race are to be treated with as much allowance as they are capable of enjoying; that as much is to be done for them as their condition will allow. What are these arguments? They are the arguments that kings have made for enslaving the people in all ages of the world. You will find that all the arguments in favor of kingcraft were of this class; they always bestrode the necks of the people, not that they wanted to do it, but because the people were better off for being ridden. That is their argument, and this argument of the Judge is the same old serpent that says you work and I eat, you toil and I will enjoy the fruits of it. Turn in whatever way you will whether it comes from the mouth of a King, an excuse for enslaving the people of his country, or from the mouth of men of one race as a reason for enslaving the men of another race, it is all the same old serpent, and I hold if that course of argumentation that is made for the purpose of convincing the public mind that we should not care about this, should be granted, it does not stop with the negro.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I do not understand that because I do not want a negro woman for a slave I must necessarily want her for a wife. My understanding is that I can just let her alone.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Fellow-citizens, we cannot escape history. We of this Congress and this administration, will be remembered in spite of ourselves. No personal significance, or insignificance, can spare one or another of us. The fiery trial through which we pass, will light us down, in honor or dishonor, to the latest generation. We say we are for the Union. The world will

not forget that we say this. We know how to save the Union. The world knows we do know how to save it. We even we here hold the power, and bear the responsibility. In giving freedom to the slave, we assure freedom to the free honorable alike in what we give, and what we preserve. We shall nobly save, or meanly lose, the last best, hope of earth.

- Lincoln, Abraham

It is my ambition and desire to so administer the affairs of the government while I remain President that if at the end I have lost every other friend on earth I shall at least have one friend remaining and that one shall be down inside me.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Stand with anybody that stands right. Stand with him while he is right and part with him when he goes wrong.

- Lincoln, Abraham

You may burn my body to ashes, and scatter them to the winds of heaven; you may drag my soul down to the regions of darkness and despair to be tormented forever; but you will never get me to support a measure which I believe to be wrong, although by doing so I may accomplish that which I believe to be right.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I take it that it is best for all to leave each man free to acquire property as fast as he can. Some will get wealthy. I don't believe in a law to prevent a man from getting rich; it would do more harm than good.

- Lincoln, Abraham

If people see the Capitol going on, it is a sign we intend the Union shall go on.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I will say then that I am not, nor ever have been in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races, that I am not nor ever have been in favor of making voters or jurors of negroes, nor of qualifying them to hold office, nor to intermarry with white people; and I will say in addition to this that there is a physical difference between the white and black races which I believe will forever forbid the two races living together on terms of social and political equality. And inasmuch as they cannot so live, while they do remain together there must be the position of superior and inferior, and I as much as any other man am in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race.

- Lincoln, Abraham

In this and like communities, public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Property is the fruit of labor property is desirable is a positive good in the world. That some should be rich, shows that others may become rich, and hence is just encouragement to industry and enterprise. Let not him who is houseless pull down the house of another; but let him labor diligently and build one for himself, thus by example assuring that his own

shall be safe from violence when built.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Next came the Patent laws. These began in England in 1624; and, in this country, with the adoption of our constitution. Before then [these?], any man might instantly use what another had invented; so that the inventor had no special advantage from his own invention. The patent system changed this; secured to the inventor, for a limited time, the exclusive use of his invention; and thereby added the fuel of interest to the fire of genius, in the discovery and production of new and useful things.

- Lincoln, Abraham

My friends I now leave, not knowing when, or whether ever, I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being, who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail.

- Lincoln, Abraham

You have heard the story, havent you, about the man who was tarred and feathered and carried out of town on a rail? A man in the crowd asked him how he liked it. His reply was that if it was not for the honor of the thing, he would much rather walk.

- Lincoln, Abraham

In a certain sense, and to a certain extent, he [the president] is the representative of the people. He is elected by them, as well as congress is. But can he, in the nature [of] things,

know the wants of the people, as well as three hundred other men, coming from all the various localities of the nation? If so, where is the propriety of having a congress?

- Lincoln, Abraham

Allow the President to invade a neighboring nation, whenever he shall deem it necessary to repel an invasion, and you allow him to do so, whenever he may choose to say he deems it necessary for such purpose and you allow him to make war at pleasure. Study to see if you can fix any limit to his power in this respect, after you have given him so much as you propose. If, to-day, he should choose to say he thinks it necessary to invade Canada, to prevent the British from invading us, how could you stop him? You may say to him, I see no probability of the British invading us but he will say to you be silent; I see it, if you dont. The provision of the Constitution giving the war-making power to Congress, was dictated, as I understand it, by the following reasons. Kings had always been involving and impoverishing their people in wars, pretending generally, if not always, that the good of the people was the object. This, our Convention understood to be the most oppressive of all Kingly oppressions; and they resolved to so frame the Constitution that no one man should hold the power of bringing this oppression upon us. But your view destroys the whole matter, and places our President where kings have always stood.

- Lincoln, Abraham

The President to-night has a dream: He was in a party of plain people, and, as it became known who he was, they began to comment on his appearance. One of them said: He is a very common-looking man. The President replied: The Lord prefers common-looking people. That is the reason he makes so many of them.

- Lincoln, Abraham

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nations wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan to do all which may achieve and cherish a just, and a lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Senator [Stephen] Douglas is of world-wide renown. All the anxious politicians of his party, or who have been of his party for years past, have been looking upon him as certainly, at no distant day, to be the President of the United States. They have seen in his round, jolly, fruitful face, postoffices, landoffices, marshalships, and cabinet appointments, chargeships and foreign missions, bursting and sprouting out in wonderful exuberance ready to be laid hold of by their greedy hands.

- Lincoln, Abraham

The dogmas of the quiet past, are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew and act anew. We must disenthrall ourselves, and then we shall save our country.

- Lincoln, Abraham

We cannot ask a man what he will do, and if we should, and he should answer us, we should despise him for it. Therefore we must take a man whose opinions are known.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I have got you together to hear what I have written down. I do not wish your advice about the main matter for that I have determined for myself.

- Lincoln, Abraham

All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother.

- Lincoln, Abraham

It is said an Eastern monarch once charged his wise men to invent him a sentence, to be ever in view, and which should be true and appropriate in all times and situations. They presented him the words: And this, too, shall pass away. How much it expresses! How chastening in the hour of pride! how consoling in the depth of affliction!

- Lincoln, Abraham

I could as easily bail out the Potomac River with a teaspoon as attend to all the details of the army.

- Lincoln, Abraham

1. You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift. 2. You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong. 3. You cannot help small men up by tearing big men down. 4. You cannot help the poor by destroying the rich. 5. You cannot lift the wage-earner up by pulling the wage-payer down. 6. You cannot keep out of trouble by spending more than your income. 7. You cannot further the brotherhood of man by inciting

class hatred. 8. You cannot establish sound social security on borrowed money. 9. You cannot build character and courage by taking away a mans initiative and independence. 10. You cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they could and should do for themselves.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I do the very best I know how the very best I can; and I mean to keep doing so until the end. If the end brings me out all right, what is said against me wont amount to anything. If the end brings me out wrong, ten angels swearing I was right would make no difference.

- Lincoln, Abraham

The world has never had a good definition of the word liberty, and the American people, just now, are much in want of one. We all declare for liberty; but in using the same word we do not all mean the same thing. With some the word liberty may mean for each man to do as he pleases with himself, and the product of his labor; while with others the same word may mean for some men to do as they please with other men, and the product of other mens labor. Here are two, not only different, but incompatable things, called by the same nameliberty. And it follows that each of the things is, by the respective parties, called by two different and incompatable namesliberty and tyranny.

- Lincoln, Abraham

The Democracy of to-day hold the liberty of one man to be absolutely nothing, when in conflict with another mans right of property. Republicans, on the contrary, are for both the man and the dollar; but in cases of conflict, the man before the dollar.

- Lincoln, Abraham

What constitutes the bulwark of our own liberty and independence? It is not our frowning battlements, our bristling sea coasts, the guns of our war steamers, or the strength of our gallant and disciplined army. These are not our reliance against a resumption of tyranny in our fair land. All of them may be turned against our liberties, without making us stronger or weaker for the struggle. Our reliance is in the love of liberty which God has planted in our bosoms. Our defense is in the preservation of the spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of all men, in all lands, every where. Destroy this spirit, and you have planted the seeds of despotism around your own doors.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I know there is a God, and that He hates injustice and slavery. I see the storm coming, and I know that His hand is in it. If he has a place and work for me and I think He has I believe I am ready.

- Lincoln, Abraham

If the policy of the government, upon vital questions affecting the whole people, is to be irrevocably fixed by decisions of the Supreme Court, the people will have ceased, to be their own rulers, having, to that extent, practically resigned their government into the hands of that eminent tribunal. Nor is there, in this view, any assault upon the court, or the judges. It is a duty, from which they may not shrink, to decide cases properly brought before them; and it is no fault of theirs, if others seek to turn their decisions to political purposes.

- Lincoln, Abraham

I agree with you, Mr. Chairman, that the working men are the basis of all governments, for the plain reason that they are the more numerous, and as you added that those were the sentiments of the gentlemen present, representing not only the working class, but citizens of other callings than those of the mechanic, I am happy to concur with you in these sentiments, not only of the native born citizens, but also of the Germans and foreigners from other countries.

- Lincoln, Abraham

In the early days of the world, the Almighty said to the first of our race In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread; and since then, if we except the light and the air of heaven, no good thing has been, or can be enjoyed by us, without having first cost labour. And inasmuch [as] most good things are produced by labour, it follows that [all] such things of right belong to those whose labour has produced them. But it has so happened in all ages of the world, that some have labored, and others have, without labour, enjoyed a large proportion of the fruits. This is wrong, and should not continue. To [secure] to each labourer the whole product of his labour, or as nearly as possible, is a most worthy object of any good government.

- Lincoln, Abraham

It is better, then, to save the work while it is begun. You have done the labor; maintain itkeep it. If men choose to serve you, go with them; but as you have made up your organization upon principle, stand by it; for, as surely as God reigns over you, and has inspired your mind, and given you a sense of propriety, and continues to give you hope, so surely will you still cling to these ideas, and you will at last come back after your

wanderings, merely to do your work over again.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Labor is prior to, and independent of, capital. Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration.

- Lincoln, Abraham

The most notable feature of a disturbance in your city last summer, was the hanging of some working people by other working people. It should never be so. The strongest bond of human sympathy, outside of the family relation, should be one uniting all working people, of all nations, and tongues, and kindreds.

- Lincoln, Abraham

A man is about as happy as he makes his mind up to be.

- Lincoln, Abraham

Nearly all men can stand adversity. If you want to test a man's character, give him power.

- Lincoln, Abraham

He will have to learn, I know,

that all men are not just,

all men are not true.

But teach him also that

for every scoundrel there is a hero;  
that for every selfish Politician,  
there is a dedicated leader...  
Teach him for every enemy there is a friend,

Steer him away from envy,  
if you can,  
teach him the secret of  
quiet laughter.

Let him learn early that  
the bullies are the easiest to lick...  
Teach him, if you can,  
the wonder of books...  
But also give him quiet time  
to ponder the eternal mystery of birds in the sky,  
bees in the sun,  
and the flowers on a green hillside.

In the school teach him  
it is far honourable to fail  
than to cheat...  
Teach him to have faith  
in his own ideas,  
even if everyone tells him

they are wrong...

Teach him to be gentle

with gentle people,

and tough with the tough.

Try to give my son

the strength not to follow the crowd

when everyone is getting on the band wagon...

Teach him to listen to all men...

but teach him also to filter

all he hears on a screen of truth,

and take only the good

that comes through.

Teach him if you can,

how to laugh when he is sad...

Teach him there is no shame in tears,

Teach him to scoff at cynics

and to beware of too much sweetness...

Teach him to sell his brawn

and brain to the highest bidders

but never to put a price-tag

on his heart and soul.

Teach him to close his ears

to a howling mob  
and to stand and fight  
if he thinks he's right.  
Treat him gently,  
but do not cuddle him,  
because only the test  
of fire makes fine steel.

Let him have the courage  
to be impatient...  
let him have the patience to be brave.  
Teach him always  
to have sublime faith in himself,  
because then he will have  
sublime faith in mankind.

This is a big order,  
but see what you can do...  
He is such a fine little fellow,  
my son!

- Lincoln, Abraham

Lincoln's Letter to his Son's Teacher

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that all men are not just,  
all men are not true.

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sublime faith in mankind.

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but see what you can do...  
He is such a fine little fellow,  
my son!

~ Abraham Lincoln

- Lincoln, Abraham

I cannot imagine anyone looking at the sky and denying God.

- Lincoln, Abraham





QuotationsBook