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Quotes by Tolstoy, Count Leo

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But the peasants -- how do the peasants die?

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

Though it is possible to utter words only with the intention to fulfill the will of God, it is very difficult not to think about the impression which they will produce on men and not to form them accordingly. But deeds you can do quite unknown to men, only for God. And such deeds are the greatest joy that a man can experience.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

All happy families resemble one another; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

He never chooses an opinion, he just wears whatever happens to be in style.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

The best generals I have known were... stupid or absent-minded men. Not only does a good army commander not need any special qualities, on the contrary he needs the absence of the highest and best human attributes -- love, poetry, tenderness, and

philosophic inquiring doubt. He should be limited, firmly convinced that what he is doing is very important (otherwise he will not have sufficient patience), and only then will he be a brave leader. God forbid that he should be humane, should love, or pity, or think of what is just and unjust.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

In quiet and untroubled times it seems to every administrator that it is only by his efforts that the whole population under his rule is kept going, and in this consciousness of being indispensable every administrator finds the chief reward of his labor and efforts. While the sea of history remains calm the ruler-administrator in his frail bark, holding on with a boat hook to the ship of the people and himself moving, naturally imagines that his efforts move the ship he is holding on to. But as soon as a storm arises and the sea begins to heave and the ship to move, such a delusion is no longer possible. The ship moves independently with its own enormous motion, the boat hook no longer reaches the moving vessel, and suddenly the administrator, instead of appearing a ruler and a source of power, becomes an insignificant, useless, feeble man.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

In historic events, the so-called great men are labels giving names to events, and like labels they have but the smallest connection with the event itself. Every act of theirs, which appears to them an act of their own will, is in an historical sense involuntary and is related to the whole course of history and predestined from eternity.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

There is no greatness where there is not simplicity, goodness and truth.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

Man lives consciously for himself, but is an unconscious instrument in the attainment of the historic, universal, aims of humanity.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

Hypocrisy in anything whatever may deceive the cleverest and most penetrating man, but the least wide-awake of children recognizes it, and is revolted by it, however ingeniously it may be disguised.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

The sobs and tears of joy he had not foreseen rose with such force within him that his whole body shook and for a long time prevented him from speaking. Falling on his knees by her bed. He held his wife's hand to his lips and kissed it, and her hand responded to his kisses with weak movement of finger. Meanwhile, at the foot of the bed, in the midwife's expert hands, like the flame of a lamp, flickered the life of a human being who had never existed before...

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

I sit on a man's back, choking him and making him carry me, and yet assure myself and others that I am very sorry for him and wish to ease his lot by all possible means -- except by getting off his back.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

Only those live who do good.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

Love is life. All, everything that I understand, I understand only because I love. Everything is, everything exists, only because I love. Everything is united by it alone. Love is God, and to die means that I, a particle of love, shall return to the general and eternal source.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

All, everything that I understand, I understand only because I love.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

Music is the shorthand of emotion.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

To say that a work of art is good, but incomprehensible to the majority of men, is the same as saying of some kind of food that it is very good but that most people can't eat it.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

We lost because we told ourselves we lost.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

There is only one time that is important -- NOW! It is the most important time because it is the only time that we have any power.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

Without knowing what I am and why I am here, life is impossible.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

True science investigates and brings to human perception such truths and such knowledge as the people of a given time and society consider most important. Art transmits these truths from the region of perception to the region of emotion.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

I am always with myself and it is I who am my tormentor.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

Joy can be real only if people look on their life as a service, and have a definite object in life outside themselves and their personal happiness.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

It is amazing how complete is the delusion that beauty is goodness.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

The Brahmins say that in their books there are many predictions of times in which it will rain. But press those books as strongly as you can, you can not get out of them a drop of water. So you can not get out of all the books that contain the best precepts the smallest

good deed.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

Boredom: the desire for desires.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

True life is lived when tiny changes occur.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

The changes in our life must come from the impossibility to live otherwise than according to the demands of our conscience not from our mental resolution to try a new form of life.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

A man is like a fraction whose numerator is what he is and whose denominator is what he thinks of himself. The larger the denominator the smaller the fraction.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

Everything that I understand, I understand only because I love.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

The only thing that we know is that we know nothing and that is the highest flight of human wisdom.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

A writer is dear and necessary for us only in the measure of which he reveals to us the inner workings of his very soul.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

The chief difference between words and deeds is that words are always intended for men for their approbation, but deeds can be done only for God.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

Christianity, with its doctrine of humility, of forgiveness, of love, is incompatible with the state, with its haughtiness, its violence, its punishment and its wars.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

A Frenchman is self-assured because he regards himself personally both in mind and body as irresistibly attractive to men and women. An Englishman is self-assured as being a citizen of the best-organized state in the world and therefore, as an Englishman, always knows what he should do and knows that all he does as an Englishman is undoubtedly correct. An Italian is self-assured because he is excitable and easily forgets himself and other people. A Russian is self-assured just because he knows nothing and does not want to know anything, since he does not believe that anything can be known. The German's self-assurance is worst of all, stronger and more repulsive than any other, because he

imagines that he knows the truth -- science -- which he himself has invented but which is for him the absolute truth.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo

Conceit is incompatible with understanding.

- Tolstoy, Count Leo



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