



The Common Sense Wisdom of Dr. Booker T. Washington

compiled by *The Booker T. Washington Society*
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If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else.

Great men cultivate love...

Only little men cherish a spirit of hatred.

I want to see my race live such high and useful lives that they will not be merely tolerated, but they shall actually be needed and wanted because of their usefulness to the community.

To be one with God is to be like God.

Our real religious striving then, should be to become one with God; sharing with Him in our poor humble way, His qualities and attributes.

I shall allow no man to belittle my soul by making me hate him.

I shall never permit myself to stoop so low as to hate any man.

You can't hold a man down without staying down with him.

Success is not measured by the position one has reached in life, rather by the obstacles overcome while trying to succeed.

No race can prosper till it learns there is as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem.

Few things can help an individual more than to place responsibility on him, and to let him know that you trust him.

A race, like an individual, lifts itself up by lifting others up.

The world cares very little about what a man knows; it is what a man is able to do that counts.

We do not want the men of another color for our brothers-in-law, but we do want them for our brothers.

I believe that any man's life will be filled with constant and unexpected encouragement, if he makes up his mind to do his level best each day, and as nearly as possible reaching the high water mark of pure and useful living.

We should not permit our grievances to overshadow our opportunities.

Opportunities never come a second time, nor do they wait for our leisure.

No greater injury can be done to any youth than to let him feel that because he belongs to this or that race he will be advanced in life regardless of his own merits or efforts.

No man, who continues to add something to the material, intellectual and moral well-being of the place in which he lives, is left long without proper reward.

We don't just borrow words; on occasion, English has pursued other languages down alleyways to beat them unconscious and rifle their pockets for new vocabulary.

What we should do in all our schools is to turn out fewer job seekers and more job-makers.

Anyone can seek a job, but it requires a person of rare ability to create a job.

I do not believe in waiting for the heaven of the future. If we imitate the life of Christ as nearly as possible, heaven will come about more and more right here on earth.

Leaders have devoted themselves to politics, little knowing, it seems, that political independence disappears without economic independence, that economic independence is the foundation of political independence.

I want to see you own land.

A whining crying race may be pitied but seldom respected.

The Negro has the right to study law, but success will come to the race sooner if it produces intelligent, thrifty farmers, mechanics, to support the lawyers.

Those who have accomplished the greatest results are those...who never grow excited or lose self-control, but are always calm, self-possessed, patient and polite.

There is a class of race problem solvers who make a business of keeping the troubles, the wrongs and the hardships of the Negro race before the public. ... Some of these people do not want the Negro to lose his grievances because they do not want to lose their jobs ... (they) don't want the patient to get well.