

# Chief Joseph Quotes

*Men, Native American, Country, Heart, People, White Man, Father, White, War, Brother, Mother, Race, Children, Home, Land, Law, Believe, Tired, Giving, Want*

It does not require many words to speak the truth.

~Chief Joseph

I believe much trouble would be saved if we opened our hearts more.

~Chief Joseph

I do not believe that the Great Spirit Chief gave one kind of men the right to tell another kind of men what they must do.

~Chief Joseph

Our chiefs are killed. . . . The little children are freezing to death. . . . My people have no blankets, no food. . . . My heart is sick and sad. . . . I will fight no more forever.

~Chief Joseph

The earth is the mother of all people, and all people should have equal rights upon it.

~Chief Joseph

I have asked some of the great white chiefs where they get their authority to say to the Indian that he shall stay in one place, while he sees white men going where they please. They cannot tell me.

~Chief Joseph

Good words do not last long unless they amount to something.

~Chief Joseph

Treat all men alike. Give them the same law. Give them an even chance to live and grow.

~Chief Joseph

Hear me, my chiefs! I am tired. My heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands, I will fight no more forever.

~Chief Joseph

It makes my heart sick when I remember all the good words and the broken promises.

~Chief Joseph

We gave up some of our country to the white men, thinking that then we could have peace. We were mistaken. The white man would not let us alone.

~Chief Joseph

The eye tells what the tongue would hide.

~Chief Joseph

The earth and myself are of one mind. The measure of the land and the measure of our bodies are the same

~Chief Joseph

We soon found that the white men were growing rich very fast, and were greedy.

~Chief Joseph

We were contented to let things remain as the Great Spirit Chief made them. They were not; and would change the rivers and mountains if they did not suit them.

~Chief Joseph

The earth was created by the assistance of the sun, and it should be left as it was. The country was made without lines of demarcation, and it is no man's business to divide it.

~Chief Joseph

It takes few words to tell the truth.

~Chief Joseph

We are going by you without fighting if you will let us, but we are going

by you anyhow!

~Chief Joseph

General Howard informed me, in a haughty spirit, that he would give my people 30 days to go back home, collect all their stock, and move onto the reservation.

~Chief Joseph

The Great Spirit Chief who rules above all will smile upon this land... and this time the Indian race is waiting and praying.

~Chief Joseph

An Indian respects a brave man, but he despises a coward.

~Chief Joseph

I pressed my father's hand and told him I would protect his grave with my life. My father smiled and passed away to the spirit land.

~Chief Joseph

We do not want churches. They will teach us to quarrel about God.

~Chief Joseph

Our people could not talk with these white-faced men, but they used signs which all people understand.

~Chief Joseph

Big name often stands on small legs.

~Chief Joseph

All men were made by the Great Spirit Chief. They are all brothers.

~Chief Joseph

For a short time we lived quietly. But this could not last. White men had found gold in the mountains around the land of winding water.

~Chief Joseph

You might as well expect rivers to run backwards as any man born free to be contented penned up.

~Chief Joseph

The first white men of your people who came to our country were named Lewis and Clark.

~Chief Joseph

I am tired of talk that comes to nothing.

~Chief Joseph

I cannot tell how much my heart suffered for my people while at Leavenworth.

~Chief Joseph

I only ask of the Government to be treated as all other men are treated. If I cannot go to my own home, let me have a home in a country where my people will not die so fast.

~Chief Joseph

Look twice at a two-faced man.

~Chief Joseph

My father was the first to see through the schemes of the white man.

~Chief Joseph

I will speak with a straight tongue.

~Chief Joseph

We were like deer. They were like grizzly bear.

~Chief Joseph

The earth is our mother. She should not be disturbed by hoe or plough. We want only to subsist on what she freely gives us.

~Chief Joseph

My father... had sharper eyes than the rest of our people.

~Chief Joseph

Let me be a free man - free to travel, free to stop, free to work.

~Chief Joseph

The Indian race is waiting and praying.

~Chief Joseph

From where the sun now stands I will fight no more.

~Chief Joseph

We damaged all the big guns we could, and carried away the powder and the lead.

~Chief Joseph

I labored hard to avoid trouble and bloodshed.

~Chief Joseph

All people should be treated the same way on earth.

~Chief Joseph

Some of you think an Indian is like a wild animal. This is a great mistake.

~Chief Joseph

I did not want my people killed. I did not want bloodshed.

~Chief Joseph

I hope that no more groans of wounded men and women will ever go to

the ear of the Great Spirit Chief above, and that all people may be one people.

~Chief Joseph

A chief called Lawyer, because he was a great talker, took the lead in the council, and sold nearly all the Nez Perce country.

~Chief Joseph

I saw clearly that war was upon us when I learned that my young men had been secretly buying ammunition.

~Chief Joseph

If the white man wants to live in peace with the Indian he can live in peace.

~Chief Joseph

I will obey every law, or submit to the penalty.

~Chief Joseph

If the white man wants to live in peace with the Indian, he can live in peace. There need be no trouble. Treat all men alike. Give them all the same law. Give them all an even chance to live and grow.

~Chief Joseph

We gathered all the stock we could find, and made an attempt to move. We left many of our horses and cattle in Wallowa. We lost several hundred in crossing the river.

~Chief Joseph

We had a great many horses, of which we gave Lewis and Clark what they needed, and they gave us guns and tobacco in return.

~Chief Joseph

A man who would not love his father's grave is worse than a wild

animal.

~Chief Joseph

The white men told lies for each other. They drove off a great many of our cattle. Some branded our young cattle so they could claim them.

~Chief Joseph

We had good white friends who advised us against taking the war path. My friend and brother, Mr. Chapman, told us just how the war would end.

~Chief Joseph

I would have given my own life if I could have undone the killing of white men by my people.

~Chief Joseph

My people were divided about surrendering.

~Chief Joseph

We ask to be recognized as men.

~Chief Joseph

I said in my heart that, rather than have war, I would give up my country.

~Chief Joseph

Good words will not give me back my children.

~Chief Joseph

I have heard talk and talk, but nothing is done.

~Chief Joseph

Our fathers gave us many laws which they had learned from their fathers. These laws were good.



~Chief Joseph

When an Indian fights, he only shoots to kill.

~Chief Joseph

Lawyer acted without authority from our band. He had no right to sell the Wallowa country.

~Chief Joseph

Words do not pay for my dead people.

~Chief Joseph

War can be avoided, and it ought to be avoided. I want no war.

~Chief Joseph

We did not know there were other people besides the Indian until about one hundred winters ago, when some men with white faces came to our country.

~Chief Joseph

I am not a child, I think for myself. No man can think for me.

~Chief Joseph

When I think of our condition, my heart is heavy. I see men of my own race treated as outlaws and driven from country to country, or shot down like animals.

~Chief Joseph

It required a strong heart to stand up against such talk, but I urged my people to be quiet and not to begin a war.

~Chief Joseph

We ask only that the law shall work alike on all men.

~Chief Joseph

I saw that the war could not be prevented. The time had passed.

~Chief Joseph

When my young men began the killing, my heart was hurt.

~Chief Joseph

Finest fur may cover toughest meat.

~Chief Joseph

Cursed be he that scalps the reputation of the dead.

~Chief Joseph

I only ask of the government to be treated as all other men are treated.

~Chief Joseph

I know that my race must change.

~Chief Joseph

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