

Denis Diderot

Quotes

*Men, Literature, Order, Atheism, People, Philosophy, Religion, Giving, Doe,
Religious, Firsts, Running, Genius, May, Character, Steps, Passion,
Inspirational, Science, Heart*

Man will never be free until the last king is strangled with the entrails of the last priest.

~Denis Diderot

We swallow greedily any lie that flatters us, but we sip only little by little at a truth we find bitter.

~Denis Diderot

All things must be examined, debated, investigated without exception and without regard for anyone's feelings.

~Denis Diderot

Those who fear the facts will forever try to discredit the fact-finders.

~Denis Diderot

Disturbances in society are never more fearful than when those who are stirring up the trouble can use the pretext of religion to mask their true designs.

~Denis Diderot

Only passions, great passions, can elevate the soul to great things.

~Denis Diderot

Skepticism is the first step on the road to philosophy.

~Denis Diderot

Oh! how near are genius and madness! Men imprison them and chain them, or raise statues to them.

~Denis Diderot

In general, children, like men, and men, like children, prefer entertainment to education.

~Denis Diderot

Pithy sentences are like sharp nails which force truth upon our memory.

~Denis Diderot

Although a man may wear fine clothing, if he lives peacefully; and is good, self-possessed, has faith and is pure; and if he does not hurt any living being, he is a holy man.

~Denis Diderot

Doctors are always working to preserve our health and cooks to destroy it, but the latter are the more often successful.

~Denis Diderot

From fanaticism to barbarism is only one step.

~Denis Diderot

No man has received from nature the right to command his fellow human beings.

~Denis Diderot

Happiest are the people who give most happiness to others.

~Denis Diderot

The philosopher has never killed any priests, whereas the priest has killed a great many philosophers.

~Denis Diderot

Give, but, if possible, spare the poor man the shame of begging.

~Denis Diderot

Only the bad man is alone.

~Denis Diderot

A nation which thinks that it is belief in God and not good law which

makes people honest does not seem to me very advanced.

~Denis Diderot

There is only one passion, the passion for happiness.

~Denis Diderot

There are things I can't force. I must adjust. There are times when the greatest change needed is a change of my viewpoint.

~Denis Diderot

To describe women, the pen should be dipped in the humid colors of the rainbow, and the paper dried with the dust gathered from the wings of a butterfly.

~Denis Diderot

Instinct guides the animal better than the man. In the animal it is pure, in man it is led astray by his reason and intelligence.

~Denis Diderot

My ideas are my whores.

~Denis Diderot

Our observation of nature must be diligent, our reflection profound, and our experiments exact. We rarely see these three means combined; and for this reason, creative geniuses are not common.

~Denis Diderot

Watch out for the fellow who talks about putting things in order! Putting things in order always means getting other people under your control.

~Denis Diderot

First move me, astonish me, break my heart, let me tremble, weep, stare, be enraged-only then regale my eyes.

~Denis Diderot

The man who first pronounced the barbarous word God ought to have been immediately destroyed.

~Denis Diderot

To prove the Gospels by a miracle is to prove an absurdity by something contrary to nature.

~Denis Diderot

You have to make it happen.

~Denis Diderot

The most dangerous madmen are those created by religion, and people whose aim is to disrupt society always know how to make good use of them on occasion.

~Denis Diderot

Une danse est un poe' me. A dance is a poem.

~Denis Diderot

Genius is present in every age, but the men carrying it within them remain benumbed unless extraordinary events occur to heat up and melt the mass so that it flows forth.

~Denis Diderot

The Christian religion teaches us to imitate a God that is cruel, insidious, jealous, and implacable in his wrath.

~Denis Diderot

Poetry must have something in it that is barbaric, vast and wild.

~Denis Diderot

First of all move me, surprise me, rend my heart; make me tremble, weep, shudder; outrage me; delight my eyes afterwards if you can.

~Denis Diderot

Gratitude is a burden, and every burden is made to be shaken off.

~Denis Diderot

Scepticism is the first step towards truth.

~Denis Diderot

Isn't it better to have men being ungrateful than to miss a chance to do good?

~Denis Diderot

I like better for one to say some foolish thing upon important matters than to be silent. That becomes the subject of discussion and dispute, and the truth is discovered.

~Denis Diderot

The best mannered people make the most absurd lovers.

~Denis Diderot

Distance is a great promoter of admiration.

~Denis Diderot

There is no kind of harassment that a man may not inflict on a woman with impunity in civilized societies.

~Denis Diderot

All children are essentially criminal.

~Denis Diderot

Morals are in all countries the result of legislation and government; they are not African or Asian or European: they are good or bad.

~Denis Diderot

You risk just as much in being credulous as in being suspicious.

~Denis Diderot

It is not human nature we should accuse but the despicable conventions that pervert it.

~Denis Diderot

It is said that desire is a product of the will, but the converse is in fact true: will is a product of desire.

~Denis Diderot

It is very important not to mistake hemlock for parsley, but to believe or not believe in God is not important at all.

~Denis Diderot

Evil always turns up in this world through some genius or other.

~Denis Diderot

What a fine comedy this world would be if one did not play a part in it.

~Denis Diderot

You can be sure that a painter reveals himself in his work as much as and more than a writer does in his.

~Denis Diderot

He whom we call a gentleman is no longer the man of Nature.

~Denis Diderot

When we know to read our own hearts, we acquire wisdom of the hearts of others.

~Denis Diderot

There is no true sovereign except the nation; there can be no true legislator except the people.

~Denis Diderot

The general interest of the masses might take the place of the insight of

genius if it were allowed freedom of action.

~Denis Diderot

Patriotism is an ephemeral motive that scarcely ever outlasts the particular threat to society that aroused it.

~Denis Diderot

If you want me to believe in God, you must make me touch him.

~Denis Diderot

And his hands would plait the priest's entrails, For want of a rope, to strangle kings.

~Denis Diderot

Are we not madder than those first inhabitants of the plain of Sennar? We know that the distance separating the earth from the sky is infinite, and yet we do not stop building our tower.

~Denis Diderot

La poe sie veutquelque chose d'e norme, debarbare et de sauvage. Poetry needs something on the scale of the grand, the barbarous, the savage.

~Denis Diderot

When superstition is allowed to perform the task of old age in dulling the human temperament, we can say goodbye to all excellence in poetry, in painting, and in music.

~Denis Diderot

What has not been examined impartially has not been well examined. Skepticism is therefore the first step towards truth.

~Denis Diderot

There's a bit of testicle at the bottom of our most sublime feelings and

our purest tenderness.

~Denis Diderot

I am wholly yours - you are everything to me; we will sustain each other in all the ills of life it may please fate to inflict upon us; you will soothe my troubles; I will comfort you in yours.

~Denis Diderot

There is less harm to be suffered in being mad among madmen than in being sane all by oneself.

~Denis Diderot

The bad gives rise to the good, the good inspires the better, the better produces the excellent, the excellent is followed by the bizarre

~Denis Diderot

People praise virtue, but they hate it, they run away from it. It freezes you to death, and in this world you've got to keep your feet warm.

~Denis Diderot

Only a very bad theologian would confuse the certainty that follows revelation with the truths that are revealed. They are entirely different things.

~Denis Diderot

Power acquired by violence is only a usurpation, and lasts only as long as the force of him who commands prevails over that of those who obey.

~Denis Diderot

Superstition is more injurious to God than atheism.

~Denis Diderot

Fanaticism is just one step away from barbarism.

~Denis Diderot

Only passions, and great passions, can raise the soul to great things. Without them there is no sublimity, either in morals or in creativity. Art returns to infancy, and virtue becomes small-minded.

~Denis Diderot

Every man has his dignity. I'm willing to forget mine, but at my own discretion and not when someone else tells me to.

~Denis Diderot

Bad company is as instructive as licentiousness. One makes up for the loss of one's innocence with the loss of one's prejudices.

~Denis Diderot

For me, my thoughts are my prostitutes.

~Denis Diderot

I have not the hope of being immortal, because the desire of it has not given me that vanity.

~Denis Diderot

If there are one hundred thousand damned souls for one saved soul, the devil has always the advantage without having given up his son to death.

~Denis Diderot

If there is one realm in which it is essential to be sublime, it is in wickedness. You spit on a petty thief, but you can't deny a kind of respect for the great criminal.

~Denis Diderot

There is only one virtue, justice; only one duty, to be happy; only one corollary, not to overvalue life and not to fear death.

~Denis Diderot

In order to shake a hypothesis, it is sometimes not necessary to do anything more than push it as far as it will go.

~Denis Diderot

We are far more liable to catch the vices than the virtues of our associates.

~Denis Diderot

There is no good father who would want to resemble our Heavenly Father.

~Denis Diderot

I discuss with myself questions of politics, love, taste, or philosophy. I let my mind rove wantonly, give it free rein to follow any idea, wise or mad that may present itself. My ideas are my harlots.

~Denis Diderot

A thing is not proved because no one has ever questioned it...
Skepticism is the first step toward truth.

~Denis Diderot

Gaiety is a quality of ordinary men. Genius always presupposes some disorder in the machine.

~Denis Diderot

Justice is the first virtue of those who command, and stops the complaints of those who obey.

~Denis Diderot

The world is the house of the strong.

~Denis Diderot

If a misplaced admiration shows imbecility, an affected criticism shows vice of character. Expose thyself rather to appear a beast than false.

~Denis Diderot

The best doctor is the one you run to and can't find.

~Denis Diderot

We swallow with one gulp the lie that flatters us, and drink drop by drop the truth which is bitter to us.

~Denis Diderot

There is no moral precept that does not have something inconvenient about it.

~Denis Diderot

All abstract sciences are nothing but the study of relations between signs.

~Denis Diderot

The infant runs toward it with its eyes closed, the adult is stationary, the old man approaches it with his back turned.

~Denis Diderot

We are all instruments endowed with feeling and memory. Our senses are so many strings that are struck by surrounding objects and that also frequently strike themselves.

~Denis Diderot

Does not vanity itself cease to be blamable, is it not even ennobled, when it is directed to laudable objects, when it confines itself to prompting us to great and generous actions?

~Denis Diderot

The pit of a theatre is the one place where the tears of virtuous and

wicked men alike are mingled.

~Denis Diderot

If you disturb the colors of the rainbow, the rainbow is no longer beautiful.

~Denis Diderot

Scepticism is the first step toward truth.

~Denis Diderot

One composition is meagre, though it has many figures; another is rich, though it has few.

~Denis Diderot

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