

# John Lancaster Spalding Quotes

*Men, Mind, Thinking, Littles, World, Soul, Mean, May, Interesting, Children,  
Opinion, Views, And Love, Self, Common, Knows, Exercise, Giving, Important,  
Body*

The highest courage is to dare to appear to be what one is

~John Lancaster Spalding

Women are aristocrats, and it is always the mother who makes us feel that we belong to the better sort.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Each forward step we take we leave some phantom of ourselves behind.

~John Lancaster Spalding

We are more disturbed by a calamity which threatens us than by one which has befallen us.

~John Lancaster Spalding

As memory may be a paradise from which we cannot be driven, it may also be a hell from which we cannot escape.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Dislike of another's opinions and beliefs neither justifies our own nor makes us more certain of them: and to transfer the repugnance to the person himself is a mark of a vulgar mind.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Your faith is what you believe, not what you know.

~John Lancaster Spalding

What we love to do we find time to do.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Those who believe in our ability do more than stimulate us. They create for us an atmosphere in which it becomes easier to succeed.

~John Lancaster Spalding

When we have not the strength or the courage to grasp a new truth, we persuade ourselves that it is not a truth at all.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Education would be a divine thing, if it did nothing more than help us to think and love great thoughts instead of little thoughts.

~John Lancaster Spalding

The doubt of an earnest, thoughtful, patient and laborious mind is worthy of respect. In such doubt may be found indeed more faith than in half the creeds.

~John Lancaster Spalding

It is difficult to be sure of our friends, but it is possible to be certain of our loyalty to them.

~John Lancaster Spalding

If thy words are wise, they will not seem so to the foolish: if they are deep the shallow will not appreciate them. Think not highly of thyself, then, when thou art praised by many.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Be suspicious of your sincerity when you are the advocate of that upon which your livelihood depends.

~John Lancaster Spalding

If there were nothing else to trouble us, the fate of the flowers would make us sad.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Our prejudices are like physical infirmities â€” we cannot do what they prevent us from doing.

~John Lancaster Spalding

The more we live with what we imagine others think of us, the less we live with truth.

~John Lancaster Spalding

The zest of life lies in right doing, not in the garnered harvest.

~John Lancaster Spalding

The able have no desire to appear to be so, and this is part of their ability.

~John Lancaster Spalding

In giving us dominion over the animal kingdom God has signified His will that we subdue the beast within ourselves.

~John Lancaster Spalding

We may avoid much disappointment and bitterness of soul by learning to understand how little necessary to our joy and peace are the things the multitude most desire and seek.

~John Lancaster Spalding

If all were gentle and contented as sheep, all would be as feeble and helpless.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Whoever has freed himself from envy and bitterness may begin to try to see things as they are.

~John Lancaster Spalding

The fields and the flowers and the beautiful faces are not ours, as the stars and the hills and the sunlight are not ours, but they give us fresh and happy thoughts.

~John Lancaster Spalding

The aim of education is to strengthen and multiply the powers and

activities of the mind rather than to increase its possessions.

~John Lancaster Spalding

The common man is impelled and controlled by interests; the superior, by ideas.

~John Lancaster Spalding

The world is chiefly a mental fact. From mind it receives the forms of time and space, the principle of casuality[sic], color, warmth, and beauty. Were there no mind, there would be no world.

~John Lancaster Spalding

It is a common error to imagine that to be stirring and voluble in a worthy cause is to be good and to do good.

~John Lancaster Spalding

What we think out for ourselves forms channels in which other thoughts will flow.

~John Lancaster Spalding

They whom trifles distract and nothing occupies are but children.

~John Lancaster Spalding

If we fail to interest, whether because we are dull and heavy, or because our hearers are so, we teach in vain.

~John Lancaster Spalding

In education, as in religion and love, compulsion thwarts the purpose for which it is employed.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Where it is the chief aim to teach many things, little education is given or received.

~John Lancaster Spalding

He who leaves school, knowing little, but with a longing for knowledge, will go farther than one who quits, knowing many things, but not caring to learn more.

~John Lancaster Spalding

The innocence which is simply ignorance is not virtue.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Reform the world within thyself, which is thy proper world.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Base thy life on principle, not on rules.

~John Lancaster Spalding

If ancient descent could confer nobility, the lower forms of life would possess it in a greater degree than man.

~John Lancaster Spalding

The common prejudice against philosophy is the result of the incapacity of the multitude to deal with the highest problems.

~John Lancaster Spalding

One may speak Latin and have but the mind of a peasant.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Inferior thinking and writing will make a name for a man among inferior people, who in all ages and countries, are the majority.

~John Lancaster Spalding

There is some lack either of sense or of character in one who becomes involved in difficulties with the worthless or the vicious.

~John Lancaster Spalding

It is unpleasant to turn back, though it be to take the right way.

~John Lancaster Spalding

The writers who accomplish most are those who compel thought on the highest and most profoundly interesting subjects.

~John Lancaster Spalding

If thou wouldst be interesting, keep thy personality in the background, and be great and strong in and through thy subject.

~John Lancaster Spalding

If there are but few who interest thee, why shouldst thou be disappointed if but few find thee interesting?

~John Lancaster Spalding

The will the one thing it is most important to educate we neglect.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Those subjects have the greatest educational value, which are richest in incentives to the noblest self-activity.

~John Lancaster Spalding

The doctrine of the utter vanity of life is a doctrine of despair, and life is hope.

~John Lancaster Spalding

The important thing is how we know, not what or how much.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Thy money, thy office, thy reputation are nothing; put away these phantom clothings, and stand like an athlete stripped for the battle.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Passion is begotten of passion, and it easily happens, as with the children of great men, that the base is the offspring of the noble.

~John Lancaster Spalding

We are not masters of the truth which is borne in upon us: it overpowers us.

~John Lancaster Spalding

If we are disappointed that men give little heed to what we utter is it for their sake or our own?

~John Lancaster Spalding

Say not thou lackest talent. What talent had any of the greatest, but passionate faith in the efficacy of work?

~John Lancaster Spalding

Unless we consent to lack the common things which men call success, we shall hardly become heroes or saints, philosophers or poets.

~John Lancaster Spalding

When we know and love the best we are content to lack the approval of the many.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Though what we accept be true, it is a prejudice unless we ourselves have considered and understood why and how it is true.

~John Lancaster Spalding

To think profoundly, to seek and speak truth, to love justice and denounce wrong is to draw upon one's self the ill will of many.

~John Lancaster Spalding

We shrink from the contemplation of our dead bodies, forgetting that when dead they are no longer ours, and concern us as little as the hairs that have fallen from our heads.

~John Lancaster Spalding



The ploughman knows how many acres he shall upturn from dawn to sunset: but the thinker knows not what a day may bring forth.

~John Lancaster Spalding

There are few things it is more important to learn than how to live on little and be therewith content: for the less we need what is without, the more leisure have we to live within.

~John Lancaster Spalding

The power of free will is developed and confirmed by increasing the number of worthy motives which influence conduct.

~John Lancaster Spalding

States of soul rightly expressed, as the poet expresses them in moments of pure inspiration, retain forever the power of creating like states. It is this that makes genuine literature a vital force.

~John Lancaster Spalding

When guests enter the room their entertainers rise to receive them; and in all meetings men should ascend into their higher selves, imparting to one another only the best they know and love.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Whom little things occupy and keep busy, are little men.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Work, mental or manual, is the means whereby attention is compelled, it is the instrument of all knowledge and virtue, the root whence all excellence springs.

~John Lancaster Spalding

They who can no longer unlearn have lost the power to learn.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Make thyself perfect; others, happy.

~John Lancaster Spalding

If thou wouldst be implacable, be so with thyself.

~John Lancaster Spalding

As our power over others increases, we become less free; for to retain it, we must make ourselves its servants.

~John Lancaster Spalding

If thou need money, get it in an honest way by keeping books, if thou wilt, but not by writing books.

~John Lancaster Spalding

When we have attained success, we see how inferior it is to the hope, yearning and enthusiasm with which we started forth in life's morning.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Insight makes argument ridiculous.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Contradiction is the salt which keeps truth from corruption

~John Lancaster Spalding

Worry, whatever its source, weakens, takes away courage, and shortens life.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Do definite good; first of all to yourself, then to definite persons.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Leave each one his touch of folly; it helps to lighten life's burden which, if he could see himself as he is, might be too heavy to carry.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Agitators and declaimers may heat the blood, but they do not illumine the mind.

~John Lancaster Spalding

It is the business of the teacher ... to fortify reason and to make conscience sovereign.

~John Lancaster Spalding

If we attempt to sink the soul in matter, its light is quenched.

~John Lancaster Spalding

The world is a mirror into which we look, and see our own image.

~John Lancaster Spalding

If I am not pleased with myself, but should wish to be other than I am, why should I think highly of the influences which have made me what I am?

~John Lancaster Spalding

In the world of thought a man's rank is determined, not by his average work, but by his highest achievement.

~John Lancaster Spalding

We may outgrow the things of children, without acquiring sense and relish for those which become a man.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Liberty is more precious than money or office; and we should be vigilant lest we purchase wealth or place at the price of inner freedom.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Nothing requires so little mental effort as to narrate or follow a story. Hence everybody tells stories and the readers of stories outnumber all others.

~John Lancaster Spalding

To learn the worth of a man's religion, do business with him.

~John Lancaster Spalding

As the visit of one we love makes the whole day pleasant, so is it illumined and made fair by a brave and beautiful thought.

~John Lancaster Spalding

A hobby is the result of a distorted view of things. It is putting a planet in the place of a sun.

~John Lancaster Spalding

As children must have the hooping cough, the college youth must pass through the stage of conceit in which he holds in slight esteem the wisdom of the best.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Exercise of body and exercise of mind are supplementary, and both may be made recreative and educative.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Be watchful lest thou lose the power of desiring and loving what appeals to the soul this is the miser's curse this the chain and ball the sensualist drags.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Folly will run its course and it is the part of wisdom not to take it too seriously.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Break not the will of the young, but guide it to right ends.

~John Lancaster Spalding

Language should be pure, noble and graceful, as the body should be so: for both are vestures of the Soul.

~John Lancaster Spalding

The noblest are they who turning from the things the vulgar crave, seek the source of a blessed life in worlds to which the senses do not lead.

~John Lancaster Spalding

The first requisite of a gentleman is to be true, brave and noble, and to be therefore a rebuke and scandal to venal and vulgar souls.

~John Lancaster Spalding

They who see through the eyes of others are controlled by the will of others.

~John Lancaster Spalding

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