

# Russell Kirk

## Quotes

*Men, Order, Christian, Religious, Conservative, Law, Mind, Character, Real, Thinking, Organization, Past, Class, Interesting, Justice, Ambition, Civilization, Government, School, Giving*

Men cannot improve a society by setting fire to it: they must seek out its old virtues, and bring them back into the light.

~Russell Kirk

If you want to have order in the commonwealth, you first have to have order in the individual soul.

~Russell Kirk

I am a conservative. Quite possibly I am on the losing side; often I think so. Yet, out of a curious perversity I had rather lose with Socrates, let us say, than win with Lenin.

~Russell Kirk

We ought not to endeavor to revise history according to our latter day notions of what things ought to have been, or upon the theory that the past is simply a reflection of the present

~Russell Kirk

Every right is married to a duty, every freedom owes a corresponding responsibility.

~Russell Kirk

If the state - and within the state, the judiciary particularly - harasses and undermines the Church, in any society the state undoes itself.

~Russell Kirk

Sudden and slashing reforms are as perilous as sudden and slashing surgery.

~Russell Kirk

Real literature is something much better than a harmless instrument for getting through idle hours. The purpose of great literature is to help us to develop into full human beings.

~Russell Kirk

A just government maintains a healthy tension between the claims of authority and the claims of liberty.

~Russell Kirk

The Secular City, having legislated and litigated itself out of any entanglement with the City of God, would be a hell upon earth .

~Russell Kirk

Privilege, in any society, is the reward of duties performed.

~Russell Kirk

Schooling deprived of religious insights is wretched education.

~Russell Kirk

The ACLU has been able to harass out of existence public expressions of faith.

~Russell Kirk

Nothing is more conservative than conservation

~Russell Kirk

Not by force of arms are civilizations held together, but by subtle threads of moral and intellectual principle.

~Russell Kirk

...only the unscrupulous or shortsighted can defend pollution and degradation of the countryside.

~Russell Kirk

Individualism is a denial that life has any meaning except the gratification of the ego; in politics it must end in anarchy. It is not possible for one man to be both Christian and Individualist.

~Russell Kirk

Locke contended that government originates out of the necessity for protecting property.

~Russell Kirk

Life is for action, and if we desire to know anything, we must make up our minds to be ignorant about much.

~Russell Kirk

Despite much talk in this land about religious freedom, churches and their schools now confront grave difficulties.

~Russell Kirk

Principle #6: Recognition that change and reform are not identical, and that innovation is a devouring conflagration more often than it is a torch of progress.

~Russell Kirk

There are no lost causes because there are no gained causes.

~Russell Kirk

We cannot make a heaven on earth, though we may make a hell.

~Russell Kirk

And Burke, could he see our century, never would concede that a consumption-society, so near to suicide, is the end for which Providence has prepared man.

~Russell Kirk

...so mankind is now trapped by the failure of its energies and by the depletion of those natural resources that men have plundered wantonly.

~Russell Kirk

The natural law is an instrument for progress, not a weapon of

revolution.

~Russell Kirk

Common Reader for Everyday Ecologists

~Russell Kirk

Ordinary human laws are the means - however imperfect - by which we express our understanding of the enduring moral law.

~Russell Kirk

A society which denies the heart its role becomes, in very short order, a heartless society.

~Russell Kirk

The aim of any good constitution is to achieve in a society a high degree of political harmony, so that order and justice and freedom may be maintained.

~Russell Kirk

...ambition without pious restraint must end in failure, often involving in its ruin that beautiful reverence which solaces common men for the obscurity and poverty of their lot.

~Russell Kirk

Politics moves upward into ethics, and ethics ascends to theology.

~Russell Kirk

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