**J.F.K. Quotations**

**Children**

"Children are the world's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future."  --"Re: United States Committee for UNICEF July 25, 1963," Box 11, President's Outgoing Executive Correspondence Series, White House Central Chronological File, Presidential Papers, Papers of John F. Kennedy.

"We can say with some assurance that, although children may be the victims of fate, they will not be the victims of our neglect."  --"Remarks upon signing the Maternal and Child Health and Mental Retardation Planning Bill (434)," October 24, 1963, *Public Papers of the President: John F. Kennedy, 1963.*

**Civil Service**

"I have pledged myself and my colleagues in the cabinet to a continuous encouragement of initiative, responsibility and energy in serving the public interest. Let every public servant know, whether his post is high or low, that a man's rank and reputation in this Administration will be determined by the size of the job he does, and not by the size of his staff, his office or his budget. Let it be clear that this Administration recognizes the value of dissent and daring -- that we greet healthy controversy as the hallmark of healthy change. Let the public service be a proud and lively career. And let every man and woman who works in any area of our national government, in any branch, at any level, be able to say with pride and with honor in future years: 'I served the United States Government in that hour of our nation's need.'"  --"Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union (11)," January 30, 1961, *Public Papers of the President: John F. Kennedy, 1961.*

"The success of this Government, and thus the success of our Nation, depends in the last analysis upon the quality.of our career services. The legislation enacted by the Congress, as well as the decisions made by me and by the department and agency heads, must all be implemented by the career men and women in the Federal service. In foreign affairs, national defense, science and technology, and a host of other fields, they face problems of unprecedented importance and perplexity. We are all dependent on their sense of loyalty and responsibility as well as their competence and energy."  --"Special Message to the Congress on Federal Pay Reform (55)," February 20, 1962,*Public Papers of the President: John F. Kennedy, 1962*.

**Goals, National**

"For one true measure of a nation is its success in fulfilling the promise of a better life for each of its members. Let this be the measure of our nation."  --"Special message to the Congress on National Health Needs (65)," February 27, 1962, *Public Papers of the President: John F. Kennedy, 1962*.

"Our deep spiritual confidence that this nation will survive the perils of today - which may well be with us for decades to come - compels us to invest in our nation's future, to consider and meet our obligations to our children and the numberless generations that will follow."  --"Special message to the Congress on Conservation (69)," March 1, 1962, *Public Papers of the President: John F. Kennedy, 1962*.

"I have seen in many places housing which has been developed under government influences, but I have never seen any projects in which governments have played their part which have fountains and statues and grass and trees, which are as important to the concept of the home as the roof itself."  --"Remarks at the Unidad Independencia Housing Project, City of Mexico (269)," June 30, 1962, *Public Papers of the President: John F. Kennedy, 1962.*

"It's only when they join together in a forward movement that this country moves ahead..."  --"Remarks at Los Banos, CA at the Groundbreaking Ceremonies for the San Luis Dam (337),"August 18, 1962, *Public Papers of the President: John F. Kennedy, 1962* .

"Our goal is not the victory of might but the vindication of right...not peace at the expense of freedom, but both peace and freedom, here in this hemisphere, and, we hope, around the world. God willing, that goal will be achieved."  --Radio and Television Report to the American People on the Soviet Arms Build-up in Cuba (485)," October 22, 1962. *Public Papers of the President: John F. Kennedy, 1962*

"This country cannot afford to be materially rich and spiritually poor."  -- "Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union (12)," January 14, 1963, *Public Papers of the President: John F. Kennedy, 1963.*

"And if we cannot end now our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity. For, in the final analysis, our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this small planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal."  --"Commencement Address at American University in Washington DC (232)," June 10, 1963, *Public Papers of the President: John F. Kennedy, 1963*.

**History**

"We celebrate the past to awaken the future".  --"Remarks at the 25th Anniversary of the Signing of the Social Security Act," Hyde Park, New York August 14, 1960, box 910, Senate Speech Files, John F. Kennedy Papers, Pre-Presidential Papers, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library.

"A nation reveals itself not only by the men it produces but also by the men it honors, the men it remembers. (439)"  --"Remarks at Amherst College upon receiving an Honorary Degree (439)," October 26, 1963, *Public Papers of the President: John F. Kennedy, 1963*.

 **Perseverance**

"...what really counts is not the immediate act of courage or of valor, but those who bear the struggle day in and day out - not the sunshine patriots but those who are willing to stand for a long period of time."  --"Remarks at the White House to Members of the American Legion (70)," March 1, 1962, *Public Papers of the Presidents: John F. Kennedy, 1962*.

[**Profiles in Courage Quotations**](http://www.jfklibrary.org/Research/Research-Aids/Ready-Reference/JFK-Quotations/Profiles-in-Courage-quotations.aspx)

**Responsibility**

"For I can assure you that we love our country, not for what it was, though it has always been great -- not for what it is, though of this we are deeply proud -- but for what it someday can, and, through the efforts of us all, someday will be."  --"Address at a Luncheon Meeting of the National Industrial Conference Board (33)," February 13, 1961, Public Papers of the Presidents: John F. Kennedy, 1961

"Never before has man had such capacity to control his own environment, to end thirst and hunger, to conquer poverty and disease, to banish illiteracy and massive human misery. We have the power to make this the best generation of mankind in the history of the world - or make it the last." --"Address before the 18th General Assembly of the United Nations (366)," September 20, 1963, *Public Papers of the Presidents: John F. Kennedy, 1963*.

"In seeking the help of the Congress and our countrymen, I pledged no easy answers. I pledged, and asked, only toil and dedication. These the Congress and the people have given in good measure."  --"Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union," January 14, 1963, *Public Papers of the Presidents: John F. Kennedy, 1963*.

"When at some future date the high court of history sits in judgment on each of us...our success or failure...will be measured by the answers to four questions: First, were we truly men of courage...? Secondly, were we truly men of judgment...? Third, were we truly men of integrity...? Finally, were we truly men of dedication...?"  --"Address to the Massachusetts State Legislature,  January 9, 1961," box 34, Speech Files, President's Office Files, John F. Kennedy Paper, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library.

"...victory has 100 fathers and defeat is an orphan..."  --"President's News Conference of April 21, 1961 (139)," *Public Papers of the Presidents: John F. Kennedy, 1961*.

"We must use time as a tool, not as a couch"  --"Address in New York City to the National Association of Manufacturers (496)," December 5, 1961, *Public Papers of the Presidents: John F. Kennedy, 1961*.

"...we must think and act not only for the moment but for our time. I am reminded of the story of the great French Marshal Lyautey, who once asked his gardener to plant a tree. The gardener objected that the tree was slow-growing and would not reach maturity for a hundred years. The Marshal replied, 'In that case, there is no time to lose, plant it this afternoon.'"  --"Address in Berkeley at the University of California, (109)," March 23, 1962 *Public Papers of the Presidents: John F. Kennedy, 1962.*

"of those to whom much is given, much is required".  --"Remarks in Nashville at the 90th Anniversary Convocation of Vanderbilt University (192)," May 18, 1963, *Public Papers of the Presidents: John F. Kennedy, 1963* (President Kennedy was quoting from the Bible, Gospel of Luke, Chapter 12, verse 48).

**Students**

"No country can possibly move ahead, no free society can possibly be sustained, unless it has an educated citizenry whose qualities of mind and heart permit it to take part in the complicated and increasingly sophisticated decisions that pour not only upon the President and upon the Congress, but upon all the citizens who exercise the ultimate power...Quite obviously, there is a higher purpose, and that is the hope that you will turn to the service of the State the scholarship, the education, the qualities which society has helped develop in you; that you will render on the community level, or on the state level, or on the national level, or render on the community level, or on the state level, or on the national level, or the international level a contribution to the maintenance of freedom and peace and the security of our country and those associated with it in a most critical time."  --"Commencement Address at San Diego State College (226)," June 6, 1963, *Public Papers of the Presidents: John F. Kennedy, 1963*.

"This is a great country and requires a good deal of all of us, so I can imagine nothing more important than for all of you to continue to work in public affairs and be interested in them, not only to bring up a family, but also give part of your time to your community, your state, and your country."  --"Remarks to the Delegates of Girls Nation (322)," August 2, 1963 *Public Papers of the Presidents: John F. Kennedy, 1963*.

"I can assure you that there is no career which you will adopt when you leave college that will bring you a more and greater sense of satisfaction and a greater feeling of participation in a great effort than will your work here or in your state or in your community...this generation of Americans - you here who will be in positions of responsibility for the rest of this century - will deal with the most difficult, sensitive, and dangerous problems that any society of people has ever dealt with at any age...The Greeks defined happiness as the full use of your powers along the lines of excellence, and I can imagine no place where you can use your powers more fully along lines more excellent in the 1960's than to be in the service of the United States." --"Remarks to Student Participants in the White House Seminar in Government (334)," August 27, 1963,  *Public Papers of the Presidents: John F. Kennedy, 1963*.

"What we seek to advance, what we seek to develop in all of our colleges and universities, are educated men and women who can bear the burdens of responsible citizenship, who can make judgments about life as it is, and as it must be, and encourage the people to make those decisions which can bring not only prosperity and security, but happiness to the people of the United Sates and those who depend upon it."  --"Address at the University of North Dakota (379)," September 25, 1963, *Public Papers of the Presidents: John F. Kennedy, 1963.*

"I hope that all of you who are students here will recognize the great opportunity that lies before you in this decade, and in the decades to come, to be of service to our country. The Greeks once defined happiness as full use of your powers along lines of excellence, and I can assure you that there is no area of life where you will have an opportunity to use whatever powers you have, and to use them along more excellent lines, bringing ultimately, I think, happiness to you and those whom you serve."  --"Address at the University of Wyoming (381)," September 25, 1963, *Public Papers of the Presidents: John F. Kennedy, 1963*.

"I ask particularly that those of you who are now in school will prepare yourselves to bear the burden of leadership over the next 40 years here in the United States, and make sure that the United States - which I believe almost alone has maintained watch and ward for freedom - that the United States meet its responsibility. That is a wonderful challenge for us as a people."  --"Remarks at the Cheney Stadium in Tacoma, Washington (387)," September 27, 1963  *Public Papers of the Presidents: John F. Kennedy, 1963*.

"...I come here today...not just because you are doing well and because you are outstanding students, but because we expect something of you. And unless in this free country of ours we are able to demonstrate that we are able to make this society work and progress, unless we can hope that from you we are going to get back all of the talents which society has helped develop in you, then, quite obviously, all the hopes of all of us that freedom will not only endure but prevail, of course, will be disappointed. So we ask the best of you...I congratulate you on what you have done, and most of all I congratulate you on what you are going to do."  --"Remarks in New York City to the National Convention of the Catholic Youth Organization (463),"November 15, 1963,  *Public Papers of the Presidents: John F. Kennedy, 1963*.

*Source: JFK Library*