



The Selected Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson

by *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Modern Library © 1992
864 pages

The Big Ideas

Enthusiasm

Invite God to your house.

Trust Thyself

Iron strings.

Be Godlike!

Cast off common motives.

Don't Follow

Lead. And leave a trail.

Cowards & God

Cowards needs not apply.

A Central Idea

What organizes your life?

Take Action!!

How's now?

Good Luck

And hard work.

Friendships.

Beautiful compensations.

Nature Isn't Capricious

Dream it. Do it.

Reaping a Destiny

Thoughts. Acts. Habits.

Character. Destiny.

Zigzag Lines

Learn to love 'em.

... And a LOT more

“The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well... To know that even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded.”

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

Ralph Waldo Emerson. The 19th century Transcendental philosopher.

In my spiritual family tree, Emerson occupies the great great+ grandfather slot (right there above Dyer and Maslow). :)

I truly love the man. You can feel his energy emanating from his powerful essays and if you haven't read his work yet, I highly recommend it. I'd suggest you start with *Self-Reliance* and then maybe *Nature*, *Compensation*, *Spiritual Laws*, *Heroism*, and *Circles*—all of which are available on the site for free download for members. To dive deeper, I recommend the hardcover Modern Library edition of *The Selected Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson*.

If you're like me, his eloquence, eminent quotability and passion for each of us to experience the transcendent joy that results from connecting to our Highest Self will often leave you in awe. So, without further adieu, I bring you my *Notes* on Emerson.

■ Enthusiasm

“Enthusiasm is one of the most powerful engines of success. When you do a thing, do it with all your might. Put your whole soul into it. Stamp it with your own personality. Be active, be energetic, be enthusiastic and faithful, and you will accomplish your object. Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.”

Enthusiasm. One of my absolute favorite words. Did you know that it comes from the Greek enthous “possessed by a god” (*theos* (God) and *en* (within))? I love that. So, when you're enthusiastic, GOD is within you. And, equally important, when you are NOT enthusiastic, God has left the building that is you.

Never forget Emerson's wisdom that “Every great and commanding movement in the annals of the world is due to the triumph of enthusiasm.”

Find the God within you. Get enthusiastic.