

Voltaire (1694 - 1778)

French author, humanist, rationalist, & satirist

- Doubt is not a pleasant condition, but certainty is absurd.
- History is a pack of lies we play on the dead.
- It is dangerous to be right when the government is wrong.
- It is forbidden to kill; therefore all murderers are punished unless they kill in large numbers and to the sound of trumpets.
- Judge of a man by his questions rather than by his answers.
- Men are equal; it is not birth but virtue that makes the difference.
- The secret of being boring is to say everything.
- There is a wide difference between speaking to deceive, and being silent to be impenetrable.
- Those who can make you believe absurdities can make you commit atrocities.
- To succeed in the world it is not enough to be stupid, you must also be well-mannered.
- You despise books; you whose lives are absorbed in the vanities of ambition, the pursuit of pleasure or indolence; but remember that all the known world, excepting only savage nations, is governed by books.
- Think for yourselves and let others enjoy the privilege to do so too.
- Monsieur l'abbé, I detest what you write, but I would give my life to make it possible for you to continue to write.