

# Words of Wisdom from Jane Austen

“It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife.” (the opening lines from *Pride and Prejudice*)

“I cannot fix on the hour, or the spot, or the look, or the words, which laid the foundation. It is too long ago. I was in the middle before I knew that I *had* begun.” (Mr. Darcy from *Pride and Prejudice*)

“If a woman doubts as to whether she should accept a man or not, she certainly ought to refuse him. If she can hesitate as to ‘Yes,’ she ought to say ‘No’ directly. It is not a state to be safely entered into without doubtful feelings, with a half a heart.” (Emma Woodhouse from *Emma*)

“How little of permanent happiness could belong to a couple who were brought together because their passions were stronger than their virtue.” (speaking of Mr. Wickham’s and Lydia Bennet’s chances of a happy marriage from *Pride and Prejudice*)

“It is not time or opportunity that is to determine intimacy; it is disposition alone. Seven years would be insufficient to make some people acquainted with each other, and seven days are more than enough for others.” (Marianne Dashwood from *Sense and Sensibility*)

“One man’s ways may be as good as another’s, but we all like our own best.” (Admiral Croft from *Persuasion*)

“If I loved you less, I might be able to talk about it more.” (Mr. Knightley from *Emma*)

“Wisdom is better than wit, and in the long run will certainly have the laugh on her side.” (Austen in a letter to her niece, Fanny Knight)

“We have all a better guide in ourselves, if we would attend to it, than any other person can be.” (Fanny Price from *Mansfield Park*)

“My idea of good company is the company of clever, well-informed people who have a great deal of conversation; that is what I call good company.” (Anne Elliot from *Persuasion*)

“Friendship is certainly the finest balm for the pangs of disappointed love.” (Catherine thinks of Mr. Tilney from *Northanger Abbey*)

“Vanity and pride are different things, though the words are often used synonymously. A person may be proud without being vain. Pride relates more to our opinion of ourselves; vanity, to what we would have others think of us.” (Mary Bennet from *Pride and Prejudice*)

“Selfishness must always be forgiven you know, because there is no hope of a cure.” (Mary Crawford from *Mansfield Park*)

“There are people, who the more you do for them, the less they will do for themselves.” (Emma Woodhouse’s thoughts regarding Mr. Elton from *Emma*)

“I consider everybody as having a right to marry once in their lives for love, if they can.” (Austen in a letter to her sister Cassandra)

“Those who do not complain are never pitied.” (Mrs. Bennet from *Pride and Prejudice*)

“The person, be it gentleman or lady, who has not pleasure in a good novel, must be intolerably stupid.” (Henry Tilney from *Northanger Abbey*)

“There will be little rubs and disappointments everywhere, and we are all apt to expect too much; but then, if one scheme of happiness fails, human nature turns to another; if the first calculation is

wrong, we make a second better: We find comfort somewhere.” (Mrs. Grant from *Mansfield Park*)