

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY  
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

George Washington Carver Day In Iowa  
Feb. 1, 2023

Readings On Carver's Work

Reading #1: For The Love Of The Peanut

"When I was young, I said to God, 'God, tell me the mystery of the universe.' But God answered, 'That knowledge is for me alone.' So I said, 'God, tell me the mystery of the peanut.' Then God said, 'Well, George, that's more nearly your size.' And he told me . . . There are certain things, often very little things, like the peanut, the little piece of clay, the little flower that cause you to look within — and then you see the soul of things."

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Peanut Soup: Cook peanuts until soft; remove skins, mash or grind until very fine; let milk come to a boil; add the peanuts; cook 20 minutes. Rub flour into a smooth paste with milk; add butter to the peanuts and milk; stir in flour; season with salt and pepper to taste; serve hot.

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"I carried the peanuts into my laboratory and the Creator told me to take them apart and resolve them into their elements. With such knowledge as I had of chemistry and physics, I set to work to take them apart. I separated the water, the fats, the oils, the gums, the resins, sugars, starches, pectoses and amino acids. There! I had the parts of the peanuts all spread out before me. I looked at God and God looked at me. 'Now you know what the peanut is,' He said. 'Why did you make the peanut?' I asked. The Creator said, 'I have given you three laws; namely, compatibility, temperature and pressure. All you have to do is take these constituents and put them all together, observing these laws and I will show you why I made the peanut.'"

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Peanut Sausage: Grind 1/2 pound of roasted peanuts, 1/2 pound pecans, 1 ounce hickory nuts, and 1/2 pound walnut meats. Mix with six very ripe bananas; pack in a mould and steam continuously for two hours; when done remove from lid of kettle or mould, and when mixture is cold, turn out and serve the same as roast meat sliced thin for sandwiches, or with cold tomato sauce or other sauce.

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"I remember a little boy that we have in our town. Well, he is a one of our professor's boys. He made up his Christmas budget, his Santa Claus budget. He started out with peanuts first, and then he would mention a house, and then peanuts, and then a dog, and then peanuts. Peanuts were the beginning and the ending. He eats peanuts all the time. So that it is a natural diet that was intended that everybody should use."

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"Since 1928, the welfare agencies of several sections of our country have sensed the need and have begun to study in a thoroughly scientific and systematic way the whole food problem as it relates to feeding the family, laying special stress upon the food expenditures for low-income families, in order to give them the maximum amount of nourishment at the minimum cost. With our unprecedented crops of wheat, corn, potatoes, fruits, vegetables, with milk, eggs, etc., etc., and last but by no means least in

yield or food value is the billion pound crop of peanuts of good quality. Taking the peanut pound for pound, I know of no other farm or garden or field crop that contains as many digestible nutrients pound for pound.”

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“The primary idea in all my work was to help the farmer and fill the poor man’s empty dinner pail . . . My idea is to help the ‘man farthest down,’ this is why I have made every process just as simple as I could to put it within his reach.”

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February 24, 1929. My Dear Mr. Andrews:

Our various, previous conversations, marvelous lectures, followed by our conference this morning, all convince me that a new day is dawning for India. I believe Mr. Gandhi’s physical strength can be greatly improved, by following out the ideas we discussed in the matter of foods. With the whole wheat flour, grits, hominy, graham flour, etc., etc., which can be made on the little mill shown you, and with the splendid native fruits and vegetables you have, properly compounded, will give you a splendid nourishing and palatable food stuff. You can use it in your school, they will in turn carry the message into the various communities from whence they came, bringing to my mind greater health, strength and economic independence to India. A peanut emulsion can be made in the same way as that recommended for the soy bean, and is a little richer in food nutrients. I am,

Yours very truly,

G.W. Carver

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July 27, 1935. My Beloved friend, Mr. Gandhi:

It is indeed a great pleasure and privilege to keep in touch with you. So many people have read your card, and have enjoyed it. You may be interested to know that I had a visit from the renown Dr. Glenn Clark, an unusually spiritual power, who picked out three great characters and wrote them asking for their prayers. You were one to whom he wrote. We sent up a prayer and remembered you and your work in a very special way. May God ever bless, keep and direct you in this marvelous work you are doing.

With great love and best wishes, I am affectionately yours,

G.W. Carver

## **Reading #2: Education and the Eight Virtues**

My dear Dr. Pammel: It is my understanding that you contemplate retiring from active service as Professor of Botany at Iowa State College. In this action, there comes to me a mingled feeling of joy and sorrow. Joy, because even though you officially retire, you will not wholly separate yourself from the Institution. Sorrow, because the many boys, girls, men and women, not only from Iowa and contiguous states; but all over the country, will sorely miss the love and inspiration as well as superior instruction from you, the Prince of Teachers. Just to walk through the campus occasionally, and let the students see the man who has meant so much to the state, the college, yea, the whole country, will enthuse and inspire many to do their very best. Personally, I have no words at my command that adequately express my gratefulness to you for the very personal interest you took in me, not only as a student, but it has followed me all through my career, and whatever success I have been able to attain is due, in a very large measure, to you, my beloved teacher, Christian gentleman, and friend. I pray that God’s richest blessings may continue to lead and guide you in whatever the future has in store for you.

Your very grateful pupil,

George W. Carver

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“Education is the key to unlock the golden door of freedom.” It is needless for me to keep saying, I hope, except for emphasis, that each one of my children will rise to the full height of your possibilities, which means the possession of these eight cardinal virtues which constitutes a lady or gentleman.”

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1. Be clean both inside and out.

“Most people search high and wide for the key to success. If they only knew, the key to their dreams lies within.”

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2. Neither look up to the rich or down on the poor.

“Fear of something is at the root of hate for others, and hate within will eventually destroy the hater. Keep your thoughts free from hate, and you need have no fear from those who hate you.”

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3. Lose, if need be, without squealing.

“Ninety-nine percent of the failures come from people who have the habit of making excuses . . . There is no short cut to achievement. Life requires thorough preparation — veneer isn’t worth anything.”

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4. Win without bragging.

“When you do the common things in life in an uncommon way, you will command the attention of the world.”

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5. Always be considerate of women, children, and older people.

“How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant of the weak and strong. Because someday in your life you will have been all of these.” . . . “Education, in the broadest of truest sense, will make an individual seek to help all people, regardless of race, regardless of color, regardless of condition.”

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6. Be too brave to lie.

“Where there is no vision, there is no hope.”

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7. Be too generous to cheat.

“It is simply service that measures success.” . . . “One of the things that has helped me as much as any other is not how long I am going to live, but how much I can do while living.”

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8. Take your share of the world and let others take theirs.

“Start where you are, with what you have. Make something of it and never be satisfied.” . . . “I know of nothing more inspiring than that of making discoveries for one’s self.” . . . “No individual has any right to come into the world and go out of it without leaving behind him distinct and legitimate reasons for having passed through it.”

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“May God help you carry out these eight cardinal virtues and peace and prosperity be yours through life.”

### Reading #3: Life, Nature and Love of Humanity

“As nearly as I can trace my history, I was about two weeks old when the war closed. My parents were both slaves. Father was killed shortly after my birth while hauling wood to town on an ox wagon. I had 3 sisters and one brother. Two sisters and my brother I know to be dead only as history tells me. Yet I do not doubt it as they are buried in the family burying ground. My sister, mother and myself were Ku-Clucked, and sold in Arkansas. And there are now so many conflicting reports concerning them, I dare not say if they are dead or alive.”

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“Mr. Carver, the gentleman who owned my mother, sent a man for us, but only I was brought back, nearly dead with whooping cough, with the report that mother and sister was dead, although some say they saw them afterwards going north with the soldiers. My home was near Neosho, Newton Co., Missouri, where I remained until I was about 9 years old . . . My body was very feeble and it was a constant warfare between life and death to see who would gain the mastery . . .”

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“. . . From a child I had an inordinate desire for knowledge, and especially music, painting, flowers and the sciences. Algebra being one of my favorite studies. Day after day I spent in the woods alone in order to collect my floral beauties, and put them in my little garden I had hidden in brush not far from the house. As it was considered foolishness in that neighborhood to waste time on flowers. And many are the tears I have shed because I would break the roots or flower off some of my pets while removing them from the ground, and, strange to say, all sorts of vegetation seemed to thrive under my touch until I was styled the Plant Doctor, and plants from all over the country would be brought to me for treatment. At this time I had never heard of botany and could scarcely read.”

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“Rocks had an equal fascination for me and many are the basketsful that I have been compelled to remove from the outside chimney corner of that old log house, with the injunction to throw them downhill. I obeyed, but picked up the choicest ones and hid them in another place. And somehow that same chimney corner would, in a few days or weeks, be running over again to suffer the same fate. I have some of the specimens in my collection now and consider them the choicest of the lot.”

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“Mr. and Mrs. Carver were very kind to me and I thank them so much for my home training. They encouraged me to secure knowledge, helping me all they could, but this was quite limited. As we lived in the country, no colored schools were available. So I was permitted to go eight miles to a school at town . . . This simply sharpened my appetite for more knowledge.”

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“I wanted to know the name of every stone and flower and insect and bird and beast . . . I wanted to know where it got its color, where it got its life — but there was no one to tell me . . . Young people, I want to beg of you, always keep your eyes open to what Mother Nature has to teach you. By so doing, you will learn many valuable things every day of your life . . . Nothing is more beautiful than the loveliness of the woods before sunrise . . . I love to think of nature as an unlimited broadcasting station, through which God speaks to us every hour, if we will only tune in.”

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“God is going to reveal to us things He never revealed before, if we put our hands in His. No books ever go into my laboratory. The thing I am to do and the way of doing it are revealed to me. I never have to grope for methods. The method is revealed to me the moment I am inspired to create something new. Without God to draw aside the curtain I would be helpless.”

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“Anything will give up its secrets if you love it enough. Not only have I found that when I talk to the little flower or to the little peanut they will give up their secrets, but I have found that when I silently commune with people they give up their secrets also — if you love them enough.”