

# Quotations from Queen Elizabeth II



Evidence of her faith



These quotations from Queen Elizabeth II have been chosen to illustrate the depth of her Christian faith and her trust in Jesus Christ. She was happy to stand up and declare her faith in public. We should also be happy to emulate her example in our daily lives

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Firstly, let's look at some general statements from the Queen about her faith.

## TRUST

In 2002 she said:

*"I know just how much I rely on my faith to guide me through the good times and the bad. Each day is a new beginning. I know that the only way to live my life is to try to do what is right, to take the long view, to give of my best in all that the day brings .... I draw strength from the message of hope in the Christian Gospel"*

Obviously, this expresses the depth of her trust in God.

Early on, before she became queen in 1939, she took a few lines of a poem by Minnie Louise Haskins. She handed them to her father, George VI, when he was about to address the nation at Christmas:

*"I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown'. And he replies: 'Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light, and safer than a known way'"*

Again, a call to the same simple trust in God.



At the age of 21 (in the picture) she said this, now famous, quote. It was, in fact, before she was Queen, but she was dedicating her life even then:

*“I declare before you all that my whole life whether it be long or short shall be devoted to your service and the service of our great family to which we all belong. But I shall not have strength to carry out this resolution alone unless you join in it with me, as I now invite you to do: I know that your support will be unfailingly given.*

*God help me to make good my vow, and God bless all of you who are willing to share in it.”*

It has been said that this shows the Queen as a woman who, for almost her entire life, looked in two directions: upwards towards God and outwards towards her people.

## THE CHRISTMAS BROADCASTS



She **always** included a Christian message within her speech. And what Evangelist wouldn't crave for the audience that she had for her Christmas Day speeches! She didn't **have** to mention Jesus in her Christmas addresses, but she did! – and usually as the climax of the broadcast. Here are a few extracts of her Christmas broadcasts:

In 2008:

*"I hope that, like me, you will be comforted by the example of Jesus of Nazareth who, often in circumstances of great adversity, managed to live an outgoing, unselfish and sacrificial life. He makes it clear that genuine human happiness and satisfaction lie more in giving than receiving; more in serving than in being served. We can surely be grateful that, two thousand years after the birth of Jesus, so many of us are able to draw inspiration from his life and message, and to find in him a source of strength and courage"*

## **CARING**

In 2012:

*"This is the time of year when we remember that God sent his only Son 'to serve, not to be served' He restored love and service to the centre of our lives in the person of Jesus Christ. It is my prayer this Christmas Day that his example and teaching will continue to bring people together to give the best of themselves in the service of others."*

In 1986:

*"His (Jesus's) life began in humble surroundings, in fact in a stable, but he was to have a profound influence on the course of history, and on the lives of generations of his followers. You don't have to be rich or powerful in order to change things for the better, and each of us in our own way, can make a contribution"*

Caring for one's neighbour was a recurring theme in the Queen's broadcasts. Many times, she has praised people who do just that.

In 1975 she said of Jesus:

*"His simple message of love has been turning the world upside down ever since. He showed what people are and what they do, does matter and does make a difference.*

*We are all different, but each of us has his own best to offer. The responsibility for the way we live life with all its challenges, sadness and joy is ours alone. If we do this well, it will also be good for our neighbours.*

*If you throw a stone into a pool, the ripples go on spreading outward. A big stone causes waves, but even the smallest pebble changes the whole pattern of the water. Our daily actions are like those ripples, each one makes a difference, even the smallest.*

*..... We may feel powerless alone, but the joint efforts of individuals can defeat the evils of our time. Together they can create a stable, free and considerate society”*

## **FORGIVENESS**

In 2011:

*“Although we are capable of great acts of kindness, history teaches us that we sometimes need saving from ourselves – from our recklessness or our greed. God sent into the world a unique person – neither a philosopher nor a general (important though they are) – but a Saviour, with the power to forgive. Forgiveness lies at the heart of the Christian faith. It can heal broken families; it can restore friendships and it can reconcile divided communities. It is in forgiveness that we feel the power of God’s love”*

## **FAITH**

There are many things that we don’t know about the queen. Nowadays, we are besieged daily with almost every aspect of the lives of celebrities, but she kept most of her thoughts to herself. She may have had many strongly held opinions about a great many matters, but we don’t know what they were. .... BUT that is not the case about her faith in Jesus. She



was remarkably open about what she believed.

In 2000 she pulled all the stops out!

*“Christmas is the traditional, if not the actual, birthday of a man who was destined to change the course of our history. And today we are celebrating the fact that Jesus Christ was born two thousand years ago. The simple facts of Jesus’ life give us a little clue as to the influence he was to have on the world. As a boy he learned his father’s trade as a carpenter. He then became a preacher, recruiting twelve supporters to help him. But his ministry only lasted a few years and he himself never wrote anything down. In his early thirties he was arrested, tortured and crucified with two criminals. His death might have been the end of the story, but then came the resurrection and with it the foundation of the Christian faith.*

*Even in our very material age the impact of Christ’s life is all around us. If you want to see an expression of Christian faith you have only to look at our awe-inspiring cathedrals and abbeys, listen to their music, or look at their stained-glass windows, their books and their pictures.*

*But the true measure of Jesus’ simple but powerful teaching is not only in the lives of the saints but also in the good works done quietly by millions of man and women day in day out throughout the centuries.*

*Many will have been inspired by Jesus’ simple but powerful teaching: love God and love thy neighbour as thyself – in other words treat others as you would like them to treat you. His great emphasis was to give spirituality a practical purpose”*

Now that sounds like the basis of Christianity, expressed, not in flowery terms, but in simple everyday words which anybody can understand. It sounds like her version of the Creed.

Her trust in Jesus Christ was central to her. She didn’t have to, but she invited a different church minister every weekend of her Balmoral holiday to spend time with her family. She didn’t have to go to church every week, but she did.



In 1978 she said:

*“Christians have the compelling example of the life and teaching of Christ and, for myself, I would like nothing more than that my grandchildren should hold dear to his ideals which have helped and inspired so many previous generations”*

It is likely that this statement lay behind the fact that after Princess Diana’s death she took her two grandsons to their local church in Balmoral. She was criticised for doing that, but it illustrates that in times of pressure or tragic loss, or death, if you believe in a living, loving God, it is precisely to him and to fellow believers that you turn for strength and comfort and prayer.

## RECONCILIATION

In 2014 :

*“For me, the life of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, whose birth we celebrate today, is an inspiration and an anchor in my life. A role-model of reconciliation and forgiveness, he stretched out his hands in love, acceptance and healing. Christ’s example has taught me to seek to respect the value of people of whatever faith or none”*

The Queen didn’t believe that all faiths are the same – she **was** a devoted Christian after all. But it was her combination of integrity and generous hospitality that made her so popular among people of all faiths and none.



Rabbi Sachs put it this way:

*“Jews have a deep respect for the Queen and the Royal Family ... Something similar, in my experience, is true of other minority faiths in Britain. They value the Queen because they know she values them. She makes them feel, not strangers in a strange land, but respected citizens at home.*

*Her presence and her family’s role as the human face of national identity is one of the driving forces in Britain, a unity we need all the more, the more diverse religiously and culturally we become”*

## SUMMARY

**Here are three short quotes that sum up her Christian ethos:**

In 2013:

*“For Christians, as for all people of faith, reflection, meditation and prayer help us to renew ourselves in God’s love, as we strive daily to become better people. The Christmas message shows us that this love is for everyone. There is no one beyond its reach”*

In 2015:

*“Despite being displaced and persecuted throughout his short life, Christ’s message was not one of revenge or violence but simply that we should love one another”*



In 2014

*‘For me, the life of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, whose birth we*

*celebrate today, is an inspiration and an anchor in my life. A role-model of reconciliation and forgiveness, he stretched out his hands in love, acceptance and healing. Christ's example has taught me to seek to respect and value all people of whatever faith or none.'*

Clearly, Queen Elizabeth II was a person who wore her faith on her sleeve for all to see. She wasn't afraid to tell people about Jesus and she strove to live her life in his mould. She was prepared to stand up in front of millions, if not billions of people, to declare her faith and her trust in Jesus.

She enjoyed life and she was humorous, when it was appropriate.

If we talk in URC terms she 'Walked the Way,' she lived the life of Jesus Christ every day.



