

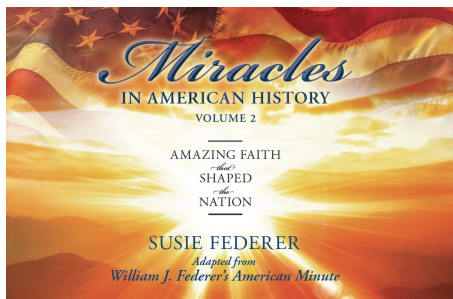
American Minute with Bill Federer

Booker T. Washington "The Bible should be read as a daily guide to right living & as a daily incentive to positive Christian service"

[Read American Minute](#)

Booker T. Washington, the founder of **Tuskegee Institute**, delivered an address at Memorial Hall in Columbus, Ohio, May 24, 1900 ... [continue reading...](#)

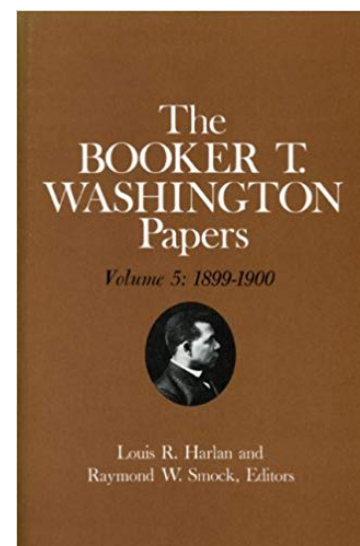
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[Booker T. Washington is featured in Miracles in American History-Volume TWO](#)

The description was recorded in ***The Booker T. Washington Papers***, Vol. 5: 1899-1900, (University of Illinois Press, 1976, p. 543-544):

"Dr. Washington walked on the stage at Memorial Hall with a firm, confident tread, as one sure of his ground.



... His shoulders are broad and six feet of stature gives strength and poise to command respect. His hair is close cut and gives him the aspect of a war dog with all its tenacious fighting spirit.

The eyes, however, gleam with kindness and they temper the appearance of the latent fighting forces ... His jaw has the firmness of one who has the courage to stand by his convictions ..."

The description of **Booker T. Washington** continued:

"'It's easy to see how that man succeeds,' whispered a delegate to the Bible students' conference after looking at the speaker.

John R. Mott, general secretary of the student movement of North America (and Y.M.C.A.), World Student Christian Federation presided at the afternoon meeting at Memorial Hall ... Mr. Mott announced **Dr. Washington's** subject as '**The Place of the Bible in the Uplifting of the Negro Race.**'"

The description ended:

"Dr. Washington began his address after a quartet sang.



He spoke of the 91 Y.M.C.A. Organizations for colored youths; of the 5000 colored men studying the Bible, and of the 640 Bible students at Tuskegee, and pointed these as living examples of the progress of the Negro.

He pleaded for two more secretaries to teach Bible in the South-land."

Booker T. Washington believed that to be great, one should read the Bible, (***The Booker T. Washington***

Papers, Vol. 3: 1889-95, ed., Louis R. Harlan, Univ. of Illinois Press, 1974, p. 93):

"As a rule a person should get into the **habit of reading his Bible.**

You never read in history of any great man whose influence has been lasting, who has not been **a reader of the Bible.** Take Abraham Lincoln and Gladstone. Their lives show that they have been **readers of the Bible.**

If you wish to properly direct your mind and necessarily your lives, **begin by reading the book of all books. Read your Bible every day,** and you will find how healthily you will grow."

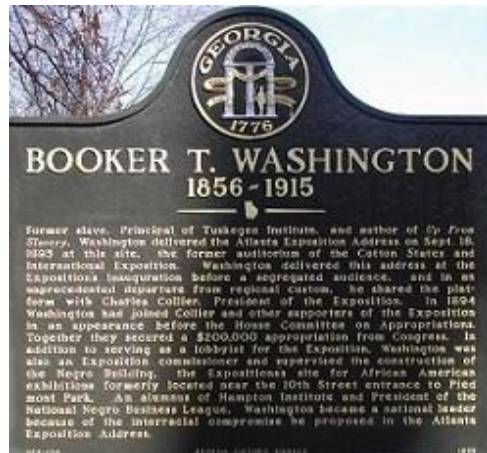
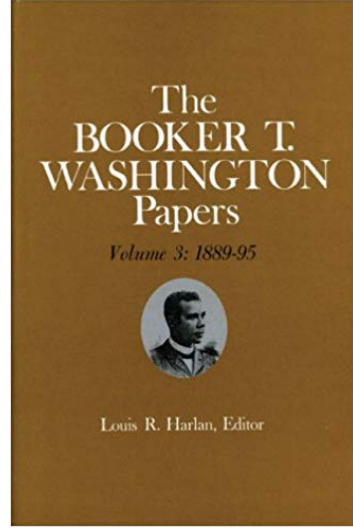
In his address at Memorial Hall in Columbus, Ohio, May 24, 1900, **Booker T. Washington** stated:

"The men doing the vital things of life are those who read the Bible and are Christians and not ashamed to let the world know it."

Washington wrote:

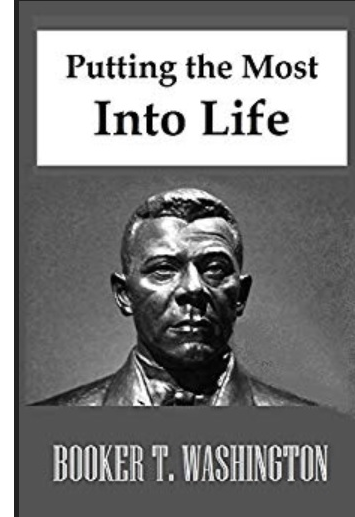
"Those who have accomplished the greatest results are those ... who never grow excited or lose self-control, but are always calm, self-possessed, patient and polite."

Booker T. Washington believed a religious life was key to freedom, usefulness and honor, as he wrote in *Putting the Most into Life* (NY:



Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., 1906, ch. "Making Religion a Vital Part of Living," p. 23-25):

"Educated men and women, especially those who are in college, very often get the idea that **religion** is fit only for the common people. No young man or woman can make a greater error than this ...



... My observation has taught me that the people who stand for the most in the educational and commercial world and in the uplifting of the people are in some real way connected with the religious life of the people among whom they reside.

This being true we ought to make the most of our religious life ..."

Washington continued:

"First the habit of regular attendance at some religious service should be cultivated. This is one of the outward helps toward **inward grace** ...

As you value your **spiritual life**, see to it that you do not lose the **spirit of reverence** for the **Most High** ...

Do not mistake denominationalism for reverence and religion. **Religion is life**, denominationalism is an aid to life."

He added:

"Systematic reading and prayerful study of the **Bible** is the second outward help which I would commend to those whom I wish to see make the most of their



spiritual life.

Many people regard the **Bible** as a wonderful piece of literature only ...

Nowhere in all literature can be found a finer bit of oratory than **St. Paul's defense** before King Agrippa. But praiseworthy as this kind of study is, I do not believe it is sufficient.

The **Bible** should be read as a daily guide to right living and as a daily incentive to positive **Christian service ...**"

Booker T. Washington went on:

"To live the **real religious life** is in some measure to share the character of **God**.



The word '**atonement**,' which occurs in the **Bible** again and again, means literally **at-one-ment**. To be at one with **God** is to be like **God**.

Our real religious striving, then, should be to become one with **God**, sharing with **Him** in our poor human way His qualities and attributes.

To do this, we must get **the inner life**, the heart right, and we shall then become stronger where we have been weak, wise where we have been foolish ..."

Washington concluded:

"We must learn to incorporate **God's laws** into our thoughts and words and acts.

Frequent reference is made in the **Bible** to the freedom that comes from

being a **Christian**. A man is free just in proportion as he learns to live within **God's laws** ...



As we learn **God's laws** and grow into His likeness we shall find our reward in this world in a life of usefulness and honor. To do this is to have found the **kingdom of God**, which is the kingdom of character and **righteousness and peace.**"

Booker T. Washington stated May 24, 1900:



"The Negro who does the shooting is uneducated and without **Christian training** ...

Of all the graduates from **Tuskegee** Institute only one had been since sentenced to the penitentiary ...

So the work today is to make **religion** the vital part of the Negro's life. But this is a stupendous task, as there is a nation of Negroes ..."

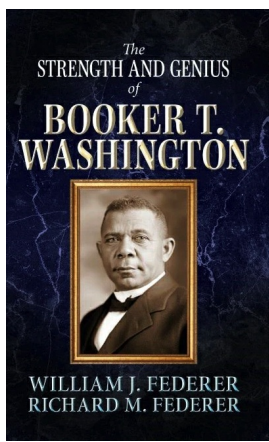
He added:



"Just remember that the Negro came out of Africa a few centuries ago ... chains upon his ankles and wrists.

He came out of that ... with a hammer and a saw in his hands and a **Bible** in his hands.

No man can read the **Bible** and be lazy. **Christianity** increases a man's ... capacity for labor. The Negro doesn't run from the **Bible**, either."



[The Strength and Genius of Booker T. Washington](#)

During **Booker T. Washington's** lifetime, **Tuskegee Institute** grew to 2,000 students and a faculty of 200 teaching 38 trades.

In 1896, **Booker T. Washington** was awarded an honorary master's degree from **Harvard**, the first New England university to confer an honorary degree upon a black man.



Harvard President Charles W. Eliot wrote May 28, 1896:.

"President Booker T. Washington,
My Dear Sir,
Harvard University desires to



confer on you at the approaching Commencement **an honorary degree**; but it is our custom to confer degrees only on gentlemen who are present.

Our Commencement occurs this year on June 24, and your presence would be desirable from about noon till about five o'clock in the afternoon.

Would it be possible for you to be in Cambridge on that day?

Believe me, with great regard,

Very truly yours,
Charles W. Eliot."

Dartmouth awarded **Booker T. Washington** an honorary doctorate in 1901.

In November of 1897, **Booker T. Washington** arrived at the White House and met **President William McKinley**. He wrote:

"In a few minutes word came from **Mr. McKinley** that he would see me. How any man can see so many people ... and still keep himself calm, patient, and fresh for each visitor in the way that **President McKinley** does, I cannot understand.

When I saw the **President** he kindly thanked me for the work which we were doing at **Tuskegee** for the interests of the country.

I then told him, briefly, the object of my visit. I impressed upon him the fact that **a visit from the Chief Executive of the Nation** would not only encourage our students and teachers, but would help the entire race."

Washington wrote further:

"I went to Washington again and saw him, with a view of getting him to extend **his trip to Tuskegee**.

On this second visit Mr. Charles W. Hare, **a prominent white citizen of Tuskegee**, kindly volunteered to accompany me, to reenforce my invitation with one from the white people of **Tuskegee** and the vicinity ...

I saw the **President** ... I perceived that his heart was greatly burdened by reason of these race disturbances.

Although there were many people waiting to see him, he detained me for some time, discussing the condition and

prospects of the race.

He remarked several times that he was determined to show his interest and faith in the race, not merely in words, but by acts."

Washington continued:

"While I was with the **President, a white citizen of Atlanta, a Democrat and an ex-slaveholder, came into the room**, and the President asked his opinion as to the wisdom of his going to **Tuskegee. Without hesitation the Atlanta man replied that it was the proper thing for him to do ...**

The **President** promised that he would visit our school on the 16th of December ...

When it became known that the **President** was going to visit our school, **the white citizens of the town of Tuskegee** — a mile distant from the school — were as much pleased as were our students and teachers.

The white people of the town, including both men and women, began arranging to decorate the town ...

I think I never realized before this how much **the white people of Tuskegee** and vicinity thought of our institution ... Dozens of these people came to me and said ... if there was anything they could do to help, or to relieve me personally, I had but to intimate it and they would be only too glad to assist ...

The thing that touched me almost as deeply as the visit of the **President** itself was the deep pride which all classes of citizens in Alabama seemed to take in our work."

Washington continued:

"The morning of December 16th brought to the little city of **Tuskegee** such a crowd as it had never seen before.

With the **President** came **Mrs. McKinley** and all of the Cabinet officers but one; and most of them brought their wives or some members of their families ...

There was also a host of newspaper correspondents. The **Alabama Legislature** was in session at Montgomery at this time. This body passed a resolution to adjourn for the purpose of visiting **Tuskegee** ...

... The citizens of **Tuskegee** had decorated the town from the station to the school in a generous manner. In order to economize in the matter of time, we arranged to have the whole school pass in review before the **President**.

... Each student carried a stalk of sugar-cane with some open bolls of cotton fastened to the end of it.

Following the students the work of all departments of the school passed in review, displayed on 'floats' drawn by horses, mules, and oxen ...

... In his address in our large, new chapel, which the students had recently completed, the **President** said:

"Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute is ideal in its conception, and has already a large and growing reputation in the country, and is not unknown abroad.

I congratulate all who are associated in this undertaking for the good work which it is doing in the education of its students to lead lives of honor and usefulness, thus exalting the race for which it was established ...

To speak of **Tuskegee** without paying special tribute to **Booker T. Washington's** genius and perseverance would be impossible.

The inception of this noble enterprise was his, and he deserves high credit for it. His was the enthusiasm and enterprise which made its steady progress possible and established in the institution its present high standard of accomplishment.

He has won a worthy reputation as one of the great leaders of his race, widely known and much respected at home and abroad as an accomplished educator, a great orator, and a true philanthropist."

Secretary of the Navy John D. Long then spoke in honor of **Booker T. Washington** at **Tuskegee**:

"I cannot make a speech to-day. My heart is too full-full of hope, admiration, and pride for my countrymen of both sections and both colors.

I am filled with gratitude and admiration for your work, and from this time forward I shall have absolute confidence in your progress and in the solution of the problem in which you are engaged. The problem, I say, has been solved ..."

Long continued:

"A picture has been presented to-day which should be put upon canvas with the pictures of **Washington** and **Lincoln**, and transmitted to future time and generations - a picture which the press of the country should spread broadcast over the land, a most dramatic picture, and that picture is this:

'The President of the United States standing on this platform; on one side the **Governor of Alabama**, on the other, completing the trinity, a representative of a race only a few years ago in bondage, the colored **President of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute.**'"

Secretary of the Navy John D. Long concluded:

"God bless the President under whose majesty such a scene as that is presented to the American people.

God bless the state of Alabama, which is showing that it can deal with this problem for itself.



God bless the orator, philanthropist, and **disciple of the Great Master** — who, if he were on earth, would be doing the same work — **Booker T. Washington."**

Secretary of the Navy John D. Long wrote to his wife, Agnes Pierce Long, during the **Spanish-American War**, October 9, 1898:



Some of our brave colored Boys who helped to free Cuba.

"The Tenth Regular Infantry ... is composed, with the exception of the officers, **entirely of colored men.** It is one of the regiments which **did the very best work** in the **Santiago campaign,** and **no soldiers fought better ...**

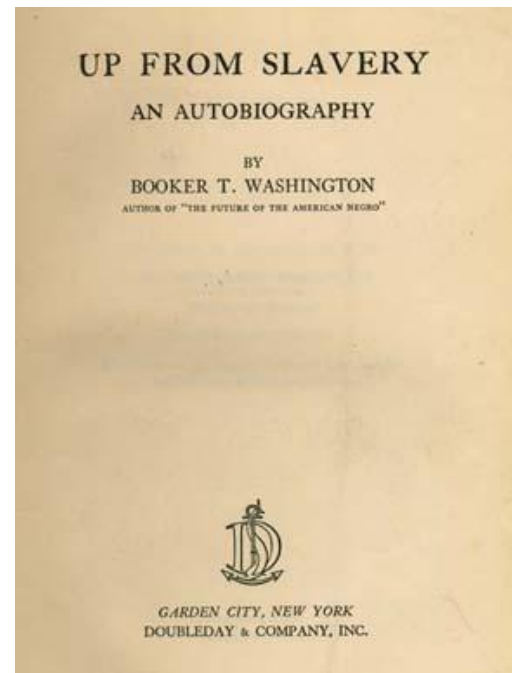
They marched with a easy light step; they had the faces of their race. It was a great day for them and for the colored people who cheered them on the way ...

I could not help thinking of this race a few years ago in slavery and today freemen and citizens.

How barbarous seems the color discrimination, when in every walk of life they are making the same progress as the white man; when their **Booker T. Washington is,**

perhaps, the finest orator in the country and these troops the best fighting soldiers of the war."

Booker T. Washington spoke from **New Hampshire** to **California**, **Minnesota** to **Florida**.



In 1899, he and his wife traveled to Europe, where they met many dignitaries, including being honored by an invitation to **Windsor Castle** in **England** for tea with **Queen Victoria**.



Booker T. Washington wrote in his autobiography ***Up From Slavery***, 1901:

"Through the kindness of Lady Aberdeen, my wife and I were enabled ... to see **Queen Victoria**, at **Windsor Castle**, where, afterward, **we were all the guests of her Majesty at tea**.

In our party was **Miss Susan B. Anthony**, and I was deeply impressed with the fact that one did not often get an opportunity to see, during the same hour, **two women so remarkable in different ways as Susan B. Anthony and Queen Victoria**."

Ten years before

the U.S. Chamber of Commerce was formed, **Booker T. Washington** founded the **National Negro Business League** in 1900, growing it to 600 chapters.



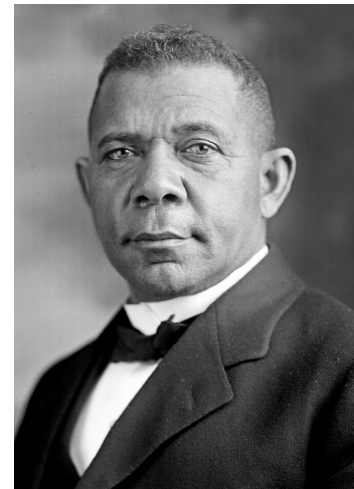
Harvard President Charles W. Eliot spoke at **Tuskegee's 25th anniversary** in 1906, stating:

"By 1905, **Tuskegee** produced more self-made millionaires than Harvard, Yale and Princeton combined."

Booker T. Washington stated:

"Anyone can seek a job, but it requires a person of rare ability to **create a job ...**

What we should do in our schools is to turn out fewer job seekers and **more job creators.**"



Visitors came to **Tuskegee** from 16 countries, including **Africa, India, China, Japan, Poland and Russia.**



Booker T. Washington sent **Tuskegee graduates** to **Liberia, West Africa.**

He even sent his personal envoy, Emmitt Scott, to discourage France from annexing **Liberia**, helping to preserve **Liberia's independence.**

Booker T. Washington was the

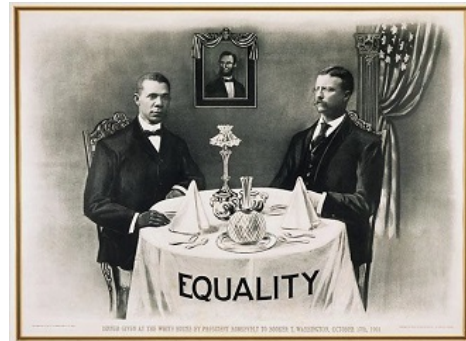
first African American to have his image on a **U.S. postage stamp**, 1940.



In 1945, he was the first African American elected to the **Hall of Fame**, and in 1946, his image was placed on a **U.S. Coin**.



To the protests of some Democrats, **Republican President Theodore Roosevelt** had **Booker T. Washington** as an honored guest for dinner at the **White House**, October 16, 1901.



The **Southern Democrat newspaper** *The Memphis Scimitar* printed:

"The most damnable outrage which has ever been perpetrated by any citizen of the United States was committed yesterday by the President, when he invited a n----- to dine with him at the White House.

It would not be worth more than a passing notice if Theodore Roosevelt had sat down to dinner in his own home with a Pullman car porter, but Roosevelt the individual and Roosevelt the President are not to be viewed in the same light."

The next President, **Republican William Howard Taft** met with **Booker T. Washington**.

Widowed twice, his third wife outlived him.

He had one daughter, **Portia**, and two sons, **Booker T. Washington Jr.** and **Ernest Davidson Washington**.

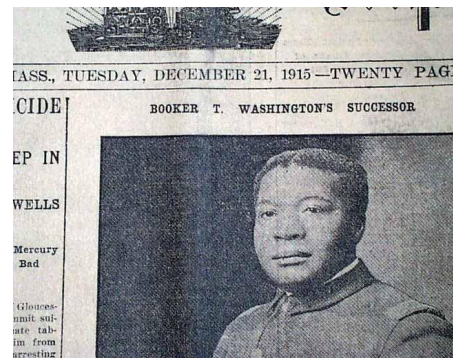
When **Booker T. Washington** died on NOVEMBER 14, 1915, industrialist **Andrew Carnegie** stated:

"I mourn with you today as one who shares your sorrow. America has lost one of her best and greatest citizens. **History is to tell of two Washingtons.**

One the leader of his country and the other the leader of his race."

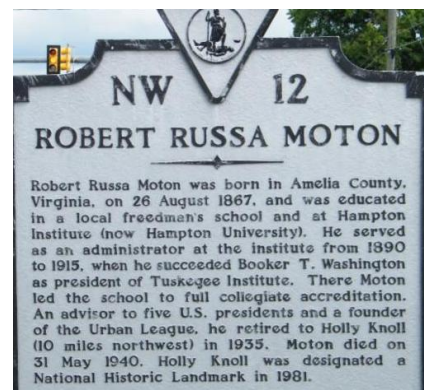
After **Booker T. Washington's** death, **Republican Vice-President Calvin Coolidge** traveled to **Tuskegee** in 1923.

He met with **Robert Russa Moton**, who succeeded Booker T. Washington as the principal of **Tuskegee Institute**.



After becoming President of the United States, **Calvin Coolidge** received **Robert Russa Moton** at a meeting in the **White House** in 1924.

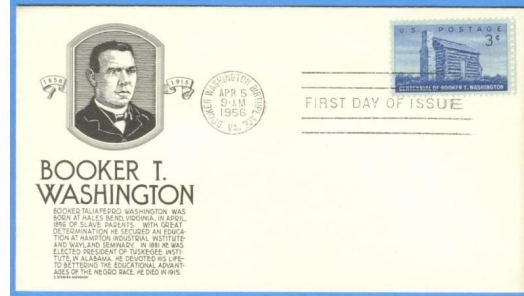
Robert Russa Moton went on to be an advisor to five U.S. Presidents.



Booker T. Washington stated:

"If you want to lift yourself up, **lift up someone else.**"

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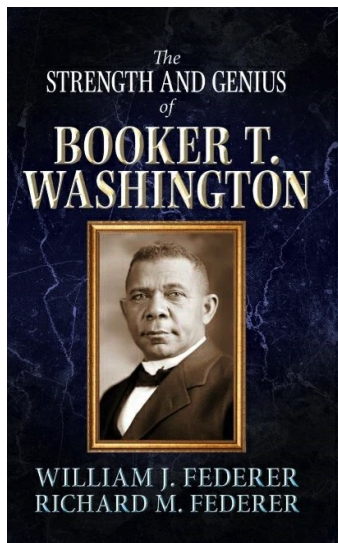
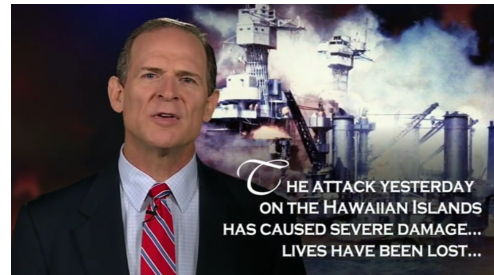


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