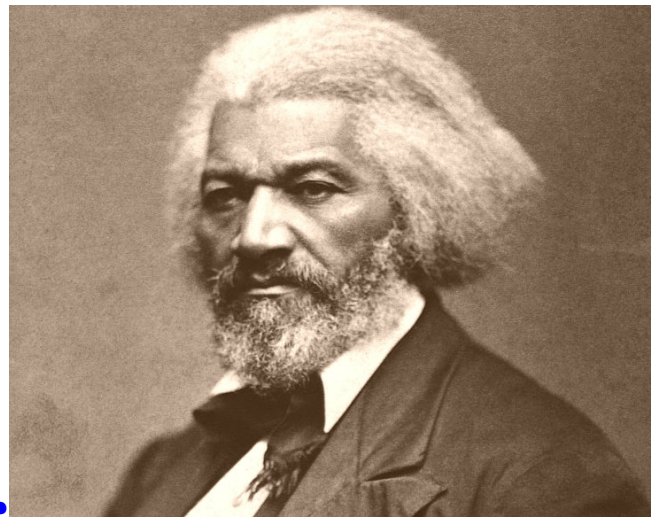


Soulful Songs and Stories



With a song and your stories, we co-create a soft place for hard conversations and a brave space for personal and spiritual growth.

Hi Soulful Song Lovers and Story Tellers,

Songs and Stories on struggle, anger, a trolley, and (non-)violence.

Conundrums? • *No one can make you inferior without your consent. –Eleanor Roosevelt*
• *When an individual is kept in a situation of inferiority, the fact is he or she becomes inferior. –Simone de Beauvoir*
• *We should deal with injustice because it's not just, not because it's expensive. –Jonathan Kozol*
• *Moral Arguments only work on moral people. –Adam Urbanski*
• *Every institution is finally destroyed by an excess of its own first principle. –Lord Acton*
• *The deterioration of every government begins with the decay of the principles on which it was founded. –Montesquieu*

If there is no struggle there is no progress. *Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground, they want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters. This struggle may be a moral one, or it may be a physical one, and it may be both moral and physical, but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will. Find out just what any people will quietly submit to and you have found out the exact measure of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them, and these will continue till they are resisted with either words or blows, or with both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress.... If we ever get free from the oppressions and wrongs heaped upon us, we must pay for their removal. We must do this by labor, by suffering, by sacrifice, and if needs be, by our lives and the lives of others. — Frederick Douglass, “West India Emancipation,” August 3, 1857, Canandaigua, NY <https://youtu.be/ZwMVMbmQBug>*

“We’re Not Gonna Take It,” Twisted Sister

w/lyrics: <https://youtu.be/CQ0ftoiIQxU?t=74:12> live: <https://youtu.be/ujsYUMZQPdw> 4:33

“A Change Is Gonna Come,” Sam Cooke

<https://youtu.be/wEBlaMOmKV4> 3:10

I don't have to tell you things are bad. *Everybody knows things are bad. It's a depression. Everybody's out of work or scared of losing their job. The dollar buys a nickel's worth, banks are going bust, shopkeepers keep a gun under the counter. Punks are running wild in the street and there's nobody anywhere who seems to know what to do, and there's no end to it. We know the air is unfit to breathe and our food is unfit to eat, and we sit watching our TV's while some local newscaster tells us that today we had fifteen homicides and sixty-three violent crimes, as if that's the way it's supposed to be. We know things are bad—worse than bad. They're crazy. It's like everything everywhere is going crazy, so we don't go out anymore. We sit in the house, and slowly the world we are living in is getting smaller, and all we say is, "Please, at least leave us alone in our living rooms. Let me have my toaster and my TV and my steel-belted radials and I won't say anything. Just leave us alone." Well, I'm not gonna leave you alone. I want you to get mad! I don't want you to protest. I don't want you to riot—I don't want you to write to your congressman because I wouldn't know what to tell you to write. I don't know what to do about the depression and the inflation and the Russians and the crime in the street. All I know is that first you've got to get mad. You've got to say, "I'm a human being, God damn it! My life has value!" So I want you to get up now. I want all of you to get up out of your chairs. I want you to get up right now and go to the window. Open it, and stick your head out, and yell, "I'm as mad as hell, and i'm not going to take this anymore!" Things have got to change. But first, you've gotta get mad!*

—The character Howard Beale in the film *Network* by Paddy Chayefsky, 1976

<https://youtu.be/ZwMVMbmQBug> 3:49

“Woyaya (We Are Going),” Osibisa

<https://youtu.be/BwckMpR9V-Q> 4:55

“Jumpin’ At The Woodside,” Count Basie and Oscar Peterson <https://youtu.be/XIs1vcoPQbw> 3:04

“In The Wee Small Hours Of The Morning,” David Mann, Bob Hilliard/Wynton Marsalis <https://youtu.be/FsacsT97VXo> 1:56

The Trolley Problem In October 2015, the *New York Times* magazine polled its readers and found that 42% of them would kill baby Hitler, while 30% said no, and 28% weren't sure. (Why is the question always about *baby* Hitler?) This is basically a variation of the trolley problem, in which a person must choose between a speeding trolley killing five people or diverting its course to kill one. **Please watch** at least the first 17 minutes of episode 1 of **Justice**, <https://youtu.be/kBdfcR-8hEY?t=32>, one of the most popular courses in Harvard University's history. Nearly one thousand students pack Harvard's historic Sanders Theatre to hear Professor Michael Sandel talk about justice, equality, democracy, and citizenship. (See all 24 lectures at <http://justiceharvard.org/justicecourse> or on YouTube. Also see Evan Mandery's article in *Politico*: <http://j.mp/EMwteiatm>)

“You Don’t Love God if You Don’t Love Your Neighbor”

Tommy Coley and Philip “Shorty” Sullivan

Rhonda Vincent & The Rage <https://youtu.be/IR2rpVd5Lwo?t=25> 4:51

UU Congregation of Gwinnett <https://youtu.be/xOTvLFB1ipI?t=9> 4:11

What it really means to “turn the other cheek.” *Human evolution has provided the species with two deeply instinctual responses to violence: flight or fight. Jesus offers a third way: nonviolent direct action. The classic text is Matt. 5:38–39:*

You have heard that it was said, “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.” But I say to you, Do no resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also. *Christians have, on the whole, simply ignored this teaching. It seemed impractical, masochistic, suicidal—an invitation to bullies and spouse-beaters to wipe up the floor with their supine Christian victims. Some have understood it to mean nonresistance: let the oppressor perpetrate evil unopposed. Interpreted thus, the passage has become the basis for systematic training in cowardice, as Christians are taught to acquiesce to evil.*

“If anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also.” Why the right cheek? A blow by the right fist in the right-handed world would land on the left cheek of the opponent. An open-handed slap would also strike the left cheek. To hit the right cheek with a fist would require using the left hand, but in that society the left hand was used only for unclean tasks. Even to gesture with the left hand at Qumran carried the penalty of ten days’ penance. The only way one could naturally strike the right cheek with the right hand would be with the back of the hand. We are dealing here with insult, not a fistfight. The intention is clearly not to injure but to humiliate, to put someone in his or her place. One normally did not strike a peer thus, and if one did the fine was exorbitant. The mishnaic tractate Baba Kamma specifies the various fines for striking an equal: 4 zuz (a zuz was a day’s wage) for slugging with a fist; for slapping, 200 zuz; if struck with the back of his hand he must pay him 400 zuz. But damages for indignity were not paid to slaves who were struck.

A backhand slap was the usual way of admonishing inferiors. Masters backhanded slaves; husbands, wives; parents, children; men, women; Romans, Jews. We have here a set of unequal relations, in each of which retaliation would invite retribution. The only normal response would be cowering submission. Why then does Jesus counsel these already humiliated people to turn the other cheek? Because this action robs the oppressor of the power to humiliate. The person who turns the other cheek is saying, in effect, “Try again. Your first blow failed. I deny you the power to humiliate me. I am a human being just like you. Your status does not alter that fact. You cannot demean me.” —Walter Wink, *Engaging the Powers*, ISBN 080062646X, 1998

<https://www.cpt.org/files/BN%20-%20Jesus%27%20Third%20Way.pdf>

Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think on these things.

—Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, 4:8

Music to think on these things:

**“Mercy,” Max Richter/Max Richter, Piano;
Mari Samuelsen, Violin** <https://youtu.be/uWrc6ihmaE0> 5:29

**“Three Small Pieces: Clair de Lune,” Augusta Holmes/
Juliette Hurel, flute, H el ene Couvert, piano**
<https://youtu.be/AlmWSRoKlYE> 3:31

“Un Piano Sur La Mer,” Andre Gagnon
https://youtu.be/F_CqCBWnclA 5:45

“Solitude,” Duke Ellington <https://youtu.be/RvGZyq3mvAU> 4:41

“Hymn to Freedom,” Oscar Peterson
<https://youtu.be/tCrrZ1NnCuM?t=15> 6:38

**“Gift Every Voice and Sing,” James Weldon Johnson & J. Rosamond Johnson
Stanford Talisman Choir** <https://youtu.be/o8pGp7N9bG8?t=27> 6:44
Brian Horton, Sax <https://youtu.be/J53SyM67Kng> 6:24

“To Be Young, Gifted & Black,” Nina Simone
<https://youtu.be/ZelQEmnkulc> 5:44 *a Nina-related story:*
<https://www.oxfordamerican.org/magazine/item/1993-nina-is-everywhere-i-go>

“Oh Freedom,” The Sojourners <https://youtu.be/Lc8DvicTmQo> 2:30
The Orrin Evans Trio <https://livesessions.npr.org/videos/orrin-evans-oh-freedom> 7:10
Orrin Evans, piano; Luques Curtis, bass; and Mark Whitfield Jr., drums. Special guests: Morgan Guerin, sax; Ruth Naomi Floyd vocal.

“Don’t Stop,” Jon Batiste; Alicia Graf Mack, dancer
Don’t stop believin’ / So with all you’ve got, don’t stop <https://youtu.be/rJmgg3ol1MY> 3:58

“Someday We’ll All Be Free,” Donny Hathaway
Take it from me, someday we’ll all be free / Hey, just wait and see
Gregory Porter https://youtu.be/9Hdd_8v1LpY 3:48
Lenny Wee and Kenya Hathaway <https://youtu.be/ZTYIAkCl94M> 3:53

