

Opening Statement of William Lloyd Garrison's June 1831 Address

I never rise to address a colored audience, without being ashamed of my own color; ashamed of being identified with a race of men who have done you so much injustice, and who yet retain so large a portion of your brethren in servile chains. To make atonement, in part, for this conduct, I have solemnly dedicated my health, and strength, and life, to your service. I love to plan to work for your social, intellectual, political and spiritual advancement. My happiness is augmented with yours: in your sufferings I participate.

Henceforth I am ready on all days, . . . to plead the cause of my colored countrymen in particular, or of human rights in general. . . .

Countrymen and Friends! I wish to gladden your hearts, and to invigorate your hopes. Be assured, your cause is going onward—right onward.

William Lloyd Garrison