

Our Knowledge Stands in the Way of Our Becoming Wise

by Francois Fenelon

To become wise, one must let go of knowledge and pride, and instead cultivate humility and a deep understanding of one's own limitations.

Scripture: Proverbs 3:5, Matthew 18:3, 1 Corinthians 1:27, Philippians 2:3, James 4:13

Topics: "Spiritual Detachment", "True Wisdom"

Description

Francois Fenelon preaches about the importance of living in peace without worrying about the future, as our lives truly belong to God and we must use them according to His will. He emphasizes the need to be detached from the world and to embrace lowliness, abandoning self and pride. Fenelon encourages simplicity in prayer, coming from pure love rather than intellect, and finding true wisdom in spoliation, deep recollection, and renouncing our own spirit.

Transcript

LETTER XV.

Our knowledge stands in the way of our becoming wise.

Live in peace, my dear young lady, without any thought for the future; perhaps there will be none for you. You have no present, even, of your own, for you must only use it in accordance with the designs of God, to whom it truly belongs. Continue the good works that occupy you, since you have an attraction that way, and can readily accomplish them. Avoid distractions, and the consequences of your excessive vivacity, and, above all things, be faithful to the present moment, and you will receive all necessary grace.

It is not enough to be detached from the world; we must become lowly also; in detachment, we renounce the things without, in lowliness, we abandon self. Every shadow of perceptible pride must be left behind, and the pride of wisdom and virtue is more dangerous than that of worldly fortune, as it has a show of right, and is more refined.

We must be lowly-minded in all points, and appropriate nothing to ourselves, our virtue and courage least of all. You rest too much in your own courage, disinterestedness, and uprightness. The babe owns nothing; it treats a diamond and an apple alike. Be a babe; have nothing of your own; forget yourself; give

way on all occasions; let the smallest be greater than you.

Pray simply from the heart, from pure love, and not from the head, from the intellect alone.

Your true instruction is to be found in spoliation, deep recollection, silence of the whole soul before God, in renouncing your own spirit, and, in the love of lowliness, obscurity, feebleness, and annihilation. This ignorance is the accomplished teacher of all truth; knowledge cannot attain to it, or can reach it but superficially.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/francois-fenelon/our-knowledge-stands-in-the-way-of-our-becoming-wise/>

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