

## **Jan Amos Komenský's List Of Principles Of Moral Wisdom @Richard L. Smith, PhD**

One of my heroes is Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius, 1592-1670). He was a second generation, Protestant Reformer in what is now the Czech Republic. He is widely recognized, also, as the "father" of modern education.



The Christian worldview affected every area of his life, especially his pedagogy. To Komenský God's world is skewed by sin and transformed into a labyrinth of deception from which the only exit is education -- a lifelong process. He viewed the acquisition of knowledge, in fact of all of life's experiences, to be a spiritual exercise. "As the whole world is a school for the human race ... so every individual's lifetime is a school from the cradle to the grave."

Komenský believed that the goal of education, even all of life, is the acquisition of wisdom, which is comprised of learning, morality, and faith. "Men must be taught eternal things, because being destined for eternity they cannot be ignorant of their end without risk of eternal loss." The aim of wisdom, therefore, is the knowledge of God: "to know oneself (and with oneself all things), to rule oneself, and to direct oneself to God."

The following is a "Short List of Principles of Moral Wisdom" written by Komenský for primary school moral formation, but clearly applicable to adults as well.

1. Do not covet everything you see and you will be wise.
2. Do not believe everything you hear and you will be wise.
3. Do not say everything you know and you will be wise.
4. Do not do everything that you can and you will be wise.

Likewise:

5. Do not befriend everyone you happen to know.
6. See that you trust the right people.
7. Have no regrets over what you have lost.
8. Do not let your past troubles disturb or torment you.
9. Look to your front and not behind.
10. Concern yourself not with what is done but with what remains to be done.