

## False Knowledge

**Proverbs 19:27** Cease, my son, to hear the instruction *that causeth* to err from the words of knowledge.

**Isaiah 5:20-21** Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto *them that are* wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!

Solomon intimates that there is a kind of learning productive of evil rather than good:—"Cease, my son," says he, "to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge?" [Proverbs 19:27]

The Prophet denounces, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil: that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" and adverting to one main cause of this perversion of the understanding, he adds, "Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight." [Isaiah 5:20-21]

False knowledge is, in many respects, worse than entire ignorance. It not only leaves the possessor uninformed as to what it most behoves him to know; but it shuts up the avenues to better instruction. It preoccupies the space which should be more worthily filled. It inverts the order in which our several faculties were intended to exercise their functions.

It renders reason the slave of passion, appetite the arbiter of the will. It dethrones the judgment, and sets up imagination in its stead. It bewilders the mind with false views of human life, leads it to expectations never to be realized, and, after a series of anxieties and disappointments, gives up its victims to vexation, despondency, and all the hateful passions which feelings undisciplined by religious control are wont to press upon the mind with overwhelming force.

(True and False Knowledge Compared: A Sermon... by William Van Mildert, London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1850, 8, e-book, Text and paragraph structure modified)