

The best analects of Confucius (Kongzi) on the topic of wisdom

15.8 “Withholding wisdom from someone capable of learning is wasting a person. Sharing wisdom with someone incapable of learning is wasting words. The wise waste neither people nor words.”

16.9 “The very most noble people are wise by nature. The next most noble acquire wisdom by study. The next most noble acquire wisdom by overcoming their character flaws. The lowest people wallow in their failings; they never try to improve.”

19.7 Tzu-hsia said, “As a craftsman lives in his workshop to master his trade, so a good person studies to perfect wisdom.”

6.20 When Fan Ch'ih asked about wisdom, The Teacher answered: “Sincerely devote yourself to the needs of others and respect your religion without going to excess, this is wisdom. Next, he asked about goodness. The Teacher said, “The good person overcomes difficulties without cutting corners, not rushing for rewards. This is goodness.”

5.20 “As long as his country prospered, Ning Wu Tzu acted wisely. When his country fell on hard times, he acted foolishly. Others can achieve this kind of wisdom, but none can match this kind of foolishness.”