

The Modern Life Course and the Ethics of the Art of Living

By Frits de Lange

'Easter 2004. Living is an Art', is the title that was given to the NCRV TV-guide around Easter of this year. In it Rev. Hans Visser, author Rosita Steenbeek and New Age entrepreneur Ronald Jan Heijn unfurl their thoughts about the art of living. TV-producer Karin de Groot, who is presenting a new program on the KRO network about the practical art of living entitled *What would you do?* (about 'dilemmas' in everyday life), is also featured:

*“For me the art of living is a quest to shape your life as well as possible. I consider it a responsibility of mine to practice the art of living, to make sure I do things as well and as pleasantly for myself and my surroundings. This can be pretty fuzzy, but also very practical. (...) Well, children sometimes have a problem and it will go away by itself and if not, they learn to live with it. But, boy, I can't do that at all. I have to read books about it, find solutions. (...) Occasionally I blow a fuse with this. It **has** to be good, it **has** to be fun, there just **can't** be a problem. When sometimes it's actually better to let go. I admire people that can do that. Now and then it's a very good thing to think: leave it. Why prepare for everything? I'm learning, but I'm not very good at it yet, to surrender to the unexpected.”*

Here, in a few sentences, the TV-producer actually articulates exactly what themes are at issue in the currently so very popular art of living. Our parents and grandparents seemed to be able to conduct their lives according to fixed rules, roles, and expectations; modern lives on the other hand are decreasingly a matter of course. For her, daily life is a concatenation of dilemmas, which constantly call for choices for which there is no blueprint at hand. A successful life, therefore, is impossible without making conscious choices, without strategic and rational planning, without trying to be in control of yourself and your

surroundings as much as possible. This is true for ambitious career-minded men, but also for women that want to combine work and taking care of children. With that the modern life course has become quite a job, a serious responsibility. At the same time – also according to De Groot – things do have to keep being 'fun' for us 21st century people. Merely observing the rules and regulations of a morality of duty no longer makes us happy; there must be something for ourselves to enjoy. Hence the forced paradox of her '*It has to be good, it has to be fun.*' The inability articulated by De Groot to take life as it comes (we often call someone, who is able to do that under all circumstances, a true master in the art of living) and her simultaneous attempt to take control of it as much as possible is also very familiar.

In spite of all the 'art of living' excesses in the happiness and well-being market, I do think that the term and the themes that it represents, point to an important need in our modern culture. The question of how to find a balance between control and surrender, obligation and happiness, the question how one can learn to make choices in the face of all the apparent dilemmas of modern life – they do indeed require a thorough answer that has a deeper profile than a life style magazine or talk show. In this article I want to briefly deal with the modern why of the art of living (I). Then I myself want to have a go at drawing up some ingredients for a small ethics of the art of living (II). Finally I want to ask myself what the art of living means for Christians. Does something like a Christian art of living exist and what would that entail?

I. The Modern Life Course and the Need for an Art of Living

In the late modern society of the 21st century the human life course increasingly seems to be becoming a matter of *individual construction*. The traditional institutional structures of upbringing, education, marriage and family, work and retirement, taken for granted until far into the twentieth century, are increasingly losing their normative regulating function. A process of de-institutionalization is taking place in the organization of the life course as well. How people organize their lives in time is no longer embedded in a compelling network of social expectations but is increasingly dependent on the choices and fortunes in their individual life courses. Sexual identity, marrying, having children and raising them, job and career, care-giving, schooling – they seem to have turned into life-style options one can either choose for or not. Am I going to be a heterosexual or a homosexual, am I going to live together with someone, or am I going to marry, do I opt for a l.a.t. -relationship (living apart together) or do I remain single? Do I stay with the partner I'm with now, or am I going to have a divorce? Do I choose for an

ambitious career for which I put everything else aside, or do I choose for the 'life of breadth' with a lot of leisure time or social responsibilities? Do I have children (or do we have them together)? And if so, with whom, when, and then how do we raise them? Important choices and dilemmas for which, however, tradition no longer furnishes a blueprint.

Thus the individual life seems to have become an impossible assignment which will quickly cause one's life to fall apart if things are not going well. In this connection critical comments are certainly warranted with regard to the all-determining role that is ascribed to making conscious choices in this view of the life course (see, e.g., the report 'Verkenning Levensloop' [Investigation Life Course], 2002; cf. De Lange, 2004). After all people are indeed *jointly* responsible for their existence, but that doesn't mean that the entire burden of what happens to them can be passed on to them completely. In public policy dealing with social and economic legislation and regulations this ideology of a 'biography of choice' (the expression is from the German sociologist Ulrich Beck) furnishes a convenient alibi for the retreating state to rid itself of its own responsibility with regard to health care, social services, care-giving, pensions, etc. for its citizens. After all in many cases the idea that people have made conscious choices at crossroads in their lives is an interpretation after the fact, with which they (and others!) appropriate events that happened to them and attribute them to themselves.

Yet, in spite of all the criticism one can level at these sociological sketches, there is the inescapably compelling suggestion that for a large part our life indeed looks like this: like a void that must be filled, that will have been in vain if we won't have shaped it ourselves. We must *do* something with our life; otherwise it will come to nothing (cf. Giddens, 1991).

The ethics of the art of living is an attempt to fill this void. It is born out of necessity and is certainly no redundant luxury. But it will not be able to accept the instant solutions of whatever guru or therapist comes along first. It will want to dig deeper and consult the rich tradition of philosophy. What does it mean to live well and wisely under the circumstances of modernity? By now a rich philosophical current of thought has emerged about this following the French philosopher Michel Foucault (1926-1984), who stood at the cradle of the recent revival of the philosophy of the art of living (see Dohmen, 2003). Foucault discovered the art of living as he was researching the history of sexuality. He was thrilled by the argument in favor of the 'care for oneself' which he

encountered in the classical writings of the Greeks and the Romans. They did not want to be the slave of their needs and their passions, of someone else, or of the caprice of the city-state. They practiced self-examination and thought about their lives, their principles and their weaknesses. They spent their time doing spiritual exercises and engaging in activities geared toward personal progress and perfection. Hence they practiced asceticism and meditation, read books, had conversations about everything that seemed important to them, and recorded them in diaries. Their art of living was a social practice to the extent it was taught in schools and as it was cultivated among friends and family as well (see Dohmen, 2004; Hadot, 2004).

II. A Small Ethics of the Art of Living

True art of living requires in-depth self-examination on the basis of which one arrives at existential choices: this is the way I want to live, that is what I want to go for. So some contemporary philosophers want us to get to work on that and develop a kind of individual life plan (J. Rawls), or choose a fundamental project that we can commit ourselves to (B. Williams). Somewhere in our life course a red thread must be visible that we ourselves have woven with conviction, if our lives are to be called successful. Others take a contrary tack against the modern pressure to shape one's biography and argue for a 'post-modern' surrender to the gratuitousness of life: deliberately not wanting to pursue personal coherence and continuity but joyfully surrendering to existence as it comes. They are arguing for a hedonistic ethics of the moment, an aesthetics of existence, which turns the distress of our fragmented existence into a virtue (Michel Onfray). Take life as it presents itself today, enjoy it, make it into something 'nice'. People should not ask for more.

I myself would like to argue for something in the middle: for life as a kind of *cybernetics*, the art of navigation. The art of *self-direction* is the first art of living one must master in order to have a successful life. With self-direction I mean the ability to shape our own existence in the course of our life in such a way that we come closer to the ideals we have set for

ourselves (cf. De Lange, 2003). Self-direction is not sufficient to achieve a good life. (2) We also need the art of friendship, as well as (3) the art of surrender. These three make up my small ethics of the art of living that I want to develop here. But more about these last two arts later on.

1. The Art of Self-direction

The art of self-direction is best compared to the navigational art of somebody sailing or surfing, who sets out a course in the midst of wind and waves over which he has no control, but which he 'overcomes' by way of his artful navigation, so that he comes closer to the goal he set himself. For the comparison of self-direction to the art of navigation I can appeal to an old Greek tradition. Consequently I understand the notion of 'art' in 'art of navigation' in the Greek sense of the word: as a *techne*, a creative skill that resembles the trades of old. This skill or technique is not only learned by copying the art from others (that's how it starts), but by practicing it oneself.

The word *techne* can be translated as 'trade', 'art', 'science'. Building houses, making shoes, weaving, riding horses, playing the flute, dancing, acting and making poems, the art of healing, mathematics and astronomy – for the Greeks they all are accepted forms of *techne*. The original sense of *techne* can best be approached by distinguishing it from the sense of *tuche* (chance, fate). Living by the grace of *tuche* is being subject to the caprice of fate, a life with *techne* implies the possibility of living a more controlled, safer life. *Techne* assumes the ability to make practical judgments, to think ahead, to plan, to predict. The person living with *techne* is not overtaken by events, does not blindly depend on them, but has a kind of systematic grasp of things, knows how to arrange them in such a way that he is prepared for new situations.

So I want to keep the association of the art of living with modern aesthetics and the seductive, glossy, 'beautiful' life far away from this. The art of living is different than providing your life with an attractive design. On the other hand the *techne* of the good life is also much more than a trick you can learn from a book or at school. It is not a skill you can acquire in a short course, but an art one can only acquire through

experience (For Aristotle that was a reason to only reticently speak of life as a technique. He preferred to speak of virtues).

What does the art of self-direction entail? Total control of one's life course is an illusion, of course; life plans and projects are usually thwarted by unexpected events. The fact is, life is not 'shapeable', not completely controllable. But that doesn't mean that one should allow one's life agenda to be set by what just coincidentally happens to one. We are not only victims of events, we are also involved in them ourselves. Just in the way we *respond* to what happens to that is already the case. So it's not a strained ethics of total responsibility that's at issue. People have limits, also with regard to insight into their limits. However, there is such a thing as the discovery – J. Dohmen, the best known art of living philosopher in the Netherlands even speaks of a 'conversion' – 'that one can play an important part in one's own life course. That realization is the beginning of becoming aware of the fact that one is co-responsible for one's own existence and that of others.' (Dohmen, 2004:15). So both complete self-determination is a myth ('the myth of autonomy'), as well as total victimhood ('the myth of the plaything') (J. Dohmen, 2004: 12). The art of living is about learning to play the game of both mastering and letting go, purposefully looking for a way of one's own as well as realizing one's own inability to always walk that way, shapeability and resignation.

In the metaphor of the sailor – as old as classical philosophy itself – both come together: the activity, the mastering technique, the navigating, and the yielding to the uncontrollable and unpredictable wind and waves. The sailor plots his course by taking waves and wind as they are; at the same time he deprives them of their capriciousness and fickleness with his art of navigation and manages to set his own course. Activity and passivity, life as a project and life as gift and fate – they are caught in this one image. The art of living is the art of navigating, a conscious yielding to the elements. Ethics is at the same time theory of navigation and sailing technique: the reasoned account and the practical knowledge that knows how to give direction to the life that has been given. A form of knowledge that includes both the 'know how' as well as the 'know that', the knowledge of wind and water and the sophisticated little tricks to deal with them on a day to day basis.

Self-direction in turn consists of a number of enduring attitudes that are supposed to make it possible. In the first place we must have (a) commitments and *ideals*. If one doesn't go for something (ideals) and is

not committed to anything (commitments), one is a rudderless ship. One has no goal, no orientation and thus cannot set a course. People can go for a career, or unconditionally choose for their family or for a social or religious movement, you can choose art or big money – but you have to go for something. Wanting nothing means death in the pot. So you must set up a ranking order, set priorities, develop a hierarchy of values. What's the most important thing in my life, and what is less important? We cannot want and wish everything equally. Many so-called 'dilemmas of choice' cease to be that once it becomes clear where our priorities lie. Next we also need to have (b) *self-knowledge*. Do the ideals fit us, are they perhaps just a size too big, or are they possibly at odds with the traditions I grew up in? We must be able to make a reasonable assessment of whether we will at least be able come close to the ideals we choose for ourselves. *Self-control* (c) is a third requirement. Through self control we must be able to find an equilibrium between what we rationally realize and our passionate desires, the quick gratification of natural needs or its postponement that in the end brings the realization of our ideals closer. In the fourth place (d) we must develop a *moral sensitivity* to the fate of others who are themselves in the process of giving direction to their own lives, just like we are. Whether they are competing or cooperating in the realization of our life plan(s), they need to be visible on our social radar as other selves. We don't sail alone on the sea of life but sometimes are in the same boat with others. This sensitivity is imparted to us by being reared in the moral traditions with which we are raised and in which we partake through education. They also supply the terminology with which we sharpen our eyes for what is good for ourselves and for our neighbor. They teach us what empathy is, the ability to morally identify with someone else. Finally we need to have the virtue with which we can integrate all these separate virtues into one competence which enables us to decisively set our course. We can call this ability to proceed correctly in a given situation *wisdom* (e). *Wisdom* is the carpenter's eye of the master in the art of living.

2. *The Art of Friendship*

I mention a second art I think one needs to learn in order to be able to live a successful life in our society: the art of *friendship*. Art of life philosophy is generally pretty individualistic, in the sense that it pays particular attention to the self. But that doesn't mean that its ethic must be egoistic. After all, the social is part of the essence of the self. Without intimate connection with others the good life is impossible.

Not all art of living ethics is convinced of this. Sometimes it seems as if the art of living can be cultivated in social isolation apart from others. I think that introducing the art of friendship can prevent philosophical navel gazing. This art must somewhat compensate for the loss of 'old' institutions like marriage and family.

Most young people still dream of getting married and starting a stable and lasting family. Marriage is still the most popular lifestyle. At the same time it is more an ideal than a reality. With regard to the lifestyles marriage and family, a de-traditionalization and individualization is taking place as well, and at the same time a pluralization of alternative lifestyles is emerging. One in three marriages end up in divorce. However, a colorful variety of variants present itself as an alternative to marriage. Living Apart Together, living together, the one parent family, the patchwork family (divorced and remarried again), widows and widowers, homosexual couples, singles. In contemporary society the *single* seems to be almost the most stable lifestyle. In any case, people need to reckon with living alone and independently for relatively long or for several periods in their life course. This is also manifesting itself with young people that postpone entering into permanent relationships until after the age of thirty and with the growing number of widowers and (especially) widows.

The art of friendship is a necessary virtue that people must acquire in order not to become lonely and in order to develop the ability to enter into intimate and lasting relationships, including relationships different from traditional matrimony. In our culture intimate relationships are almost exclusively evaluated from the point of view of the romantic and vulnerable ideal of the erotic (the desire of a person in love). It would be better to also evaluate the relationship between lovers from the point of view of the ideal of friendship.

Friendships are informal, voluntary, mutual relationships between people that wish the good for each other and see each other as equals in that. Friendships, according to the first philosopher that developed a theory of friendship, Aristotle, are sometimes entered into solely for the benefit that friends mutually provide each other. And sometimes people enter into friendships because it is pleasant for both parties. It's ok to call all that friendship as well. Real friendship, on the other hand, can contain both – benefit and pleasure – but has a different basis. Friends wish each other what is good, not only because this yields something for both (benefit or pleasure), but because they wish each other what is good for the sake of themselves. 'People that wish their friends the good for the sake of themselves are friends par excellence' The one persons cares

about the other not because of certain features or characteristics, but is a friend of the other 'to the extent that he is who he is' (*Nicomachian Ethics* 1156b12, 247). In addition to this (wishing the good for the sake of itself) Aristotle mentions four other characteristics of friendship. Friends wish for each other, (2) that they stay alive, that they exist for their own and each other's sake. They also (3) like to spend time with each other. And (4) they share the same wishes and share joys and sorrows, good or bad fortune with each other.

A friend, according to Aristotle, is like a 'second self' (*allos autos*). (NE 1166 a 31) With that he is pointing to an analogy that exists between these five characteristics of good friendship with others and the relationship that a good person has with himself (cf. NE 1166a 10-30). A good self also wishes that things be well with him, that he stays alive. He also likes to spend time with himself and has no contradicting wishes in his inner self. Finally he is also consistent and enduring in what he interprets as his own joys and his own sorrows. So friendship with oneself is structurally comparable to friendship with others.

Paul Ricoeur interprets this analogy in his *Soi-même comme un autre* (1990) thus, that the other must also be seen as a 'self', just as conversely I myself am 'an other' to myself. At the heart of the relationship we have with ourselves the dialogical is implied. We are never only a self, but always also an other for ourselves. We have a social relationship with ourselves. With that the other is included in the core of the relationship with ourselves, and our self is also at stake in the relationship with others.

If we continue to think along these lines, friendship is not an encore to an otherwise also successful life, but an essential component of it. A self is social to its core. Every person not only longs for friends, but '...a happy person thus needs friends' (Aristotle NE 1169 b 23).

Although one person has more talent for friendship than the other, the art of friendship is a virtue to which there is no short road. It must be developed. One must learn to be a friend, friendship must be practiced.

3. The Art of Surrender

A third virtue completes my small ethics of the art of living. That is the art of *surrender*. The model of the I as a reflexive project (Giddens, 1991) assumes that we make conscious choices, arrive at an optimal plan, actively take advantage of new events. The art of self-direction assumes that we master the art of sailing. Doing that, we take into account that we can neither control nor predict either wind or waves. Nevertheless we find equilibrium. But what if the wind suddenly shifts and turns into a storm, or – the other way – completely dies down? What if night falls and we can see nothing anymore? The mast can break, we can be shipwrecked. ‘Your rigging hangs loose: The mast is not held secure, the sail is not spread,’ we read in Isaiah 33: 23. Art of living meets its limits when the ground is removed from under our feet.

We can endlessly draw out the metaphor. At *fateful moments* (Giddens) all kinds of things can go wrong in a human life and especially if it is under such a high biographical construction pressure as ours is nowadays. The biography of choice gives talented lucky devils exciting possibilities; but how do we deal with the failures, the wrong choices we have made, the calamities that happen to us? The self that experiences his/her life course as a project is focussing on telling a coherent life story. But sometimes the chinks in it are so deep that they cannot be repaired any more. Is a form of the art of living still possible then, or does that spell the end of the art of living?

The art of surrender tries to develop an attitude to the things that so elude us, over which we have so little control that we are in danger of being thrown out of balance.

In this connection the Greek philosophers spoke of the virtue of equanimity (Schmid, 1999) The Stoics in particular tried to practice the art of surrender with this concept. Elementary in their philosophy is that one learns to distinguish between what is in one’s power to change and what is completely outside of that realm. Facing the latter – the event that happens to you through no fault of yours - you are powerless, it is true. But not quite: for what you can still do then is work on your inner *attitude* regarding the event. With a view to that the Stoics practiced the *praemeditatio*, which consists of imagining the horrid things that could happen to you and then anticipating them in the meantime. Because these horrible things are only imaginary, this exercise strengthens the realization that only what happens right now really touches us. Future misery is not yet true misery, just like past misery already no longer is. The goal of this exercise is to retain your peace of mind even in adversity. This kind of attitude to life can lead to equanimity, a term picked up again by Heidegger in the 20th century. Equanimity is being free of

restlessness, the desired *ataraxia* of the Epicureans and the Stoa. They are interested in developing an attitude of equanimity (*aequanimitas*) toward anything that may happen to you. Then you are no longer tossed to and fro by events. Out of an inner balance you respond in a *steady* way, even to unforeseeable calamities. Even the catastrophe of one's own failure can then finally be endured as an unexpected event.

However, in our activity oriented culture that kind of equanimity is a defect rather than a virtue. We are living in the culture of the *homo faber*, who equates passivity with laziness. Labor has been a highest value since the beginning of the modern era. And in the 21st century we now seem to have become the last labor project of modernity: art of living as *working* at ourselves. In the mean time we can barely master the art of 'Let it Be' any more. For that we must draw from ancient traditions that have become marginal in our culture or that have lost much of their vitality: the Stoa, the religions of the East, and also: Christianity.

As a theologian and a Christian I prefer to speak of the art of surrender rather than of equanimity, even though one should not play those terms out against each other. But there are differences. Equanimity suggests that one takes distance from things, becomes a spectator to the event, also and in particular to one's own life. From a kind of a bird's eye perspective one is able to see oneself in perspective then: 'oh, those things happen, I'm not the only one ...' That links equanimity to an irony, which can easily result in indifference. Christian faith, conversely, speaks rather of acquiescence, of surrender. The point here is not so much a change of perspective on reality, but growing in one's personal relationship to reality. 'You must be able to let go of it ...' is a winged expression from reformed orthodoxy that is characteristic for this. But is that really possible? Yes, though not without a struggle. For in harsh and cruel reality itself *eventually, in the end*, the hand of the good God is in fact assumed and recognized. When the sails have to be lowered, or one has foundered – then one has peace with it and one acquiesces with one's lot. Acquiescing in one's lot in this way then in the end is surrendering to God.

It is important not to read this last sentence as a verifiable statement of faith, but as an act of faith, a bold exercise in the religious art of living. For that something ultimately good can be discovered in one's seemingly indifferent lot to which one can surrender oneself, that is not obvious. It is based on the confidence that the relationship between reality and us ultimately is not one of indifference but geared to friendship.

III. A Christian Art of Living?

Is this little ethics of the art of living also intended for Christians?

Certainly. At first sight the secular art of living philosophy in its orientation to the Greeks seems so strongly focussed on 'taking care of oneself' that it seems to contradict the Christian 'love your neighbor as yourself'. Should not caring for the other be primary, after all? But here the danger looms of a double misunderstanding. Most art of life philosophy does have an ethics in which caring for the other gets ample attention, and conversely in Christian ethics there should be room for paying attention to the self.

Hence in the first centuries [AD?] the church fathers interpreted the Christian faith as a continuation of and an alternative to Greek philosophy. The Christian faith was being presented as *the* philosophy, and philosophy as a way of life 'that teaches us to behave in such a way that we resemble God and to see the divine plan as the governing principle of all our education.' (Clement of Alexandria, 3rd century, quoted in Hadot, 2004: 237). In the monastic tradition this Christian art of living was developed further. 'Attention to oneself, an orientation toward the present, and thinking about death will always be closely connected to each other in the monastic tradition, just like in secular philosophies', Pierre Hadot writes in his description of this early Christian period. Soul-searching, asceticism, reflection on one's coming death were elements of this 'attention to the self'. Gregory of Nazianzus describes it as 'concentrating on oneself.' Another Christian master in the art of living, Dorotheus of Gaza, warns his pupils and fellow monastics: 'Let us pay attention to ourselves, brothers, let us be vigilant as long as we have the time.' (Hadot, 2004: 240).

Continuing to think along the lines of this tradition it seems to me to be a misunderstanding that Christians should not, yea, are not allowed to pay attention to themselves. The double command 'love your neighbor as yourself' rather assumes that people have made friends with themselves (see above). Charity is not self-sacrifice, but implies an ethics of equal regard and respect (*equal regard*, cf. Browning, 1996). When speaking of self-sacrifice, it serves a restoration of equality, not its abolition.

However, within the Christian tradition 'spiritual care of one's own soul' (a rare title in Christian circles, from a brochure by the man of missions

J.H. Bavinck) has been severely neglected. In my opinion it is due for a reassessment. A Christian ethics of the art of living will speak a different language than the secular one. But the three elements from the ethics of the art of living that were developed above each have their Christian equivalent.

1. With regard to self-direction I would want to speak of *conversion* and sanctification. Both concepts deserve a reassessment in the practice of the Christian life, also within the established churches. After all, conversion stands for the process of transformation in which a Christian is involved if he or she has chosen to devote their lives to following Christ. Based on this existential choice for and commitment to an ideal, one organizes one's life and arranges and rearranges one's priorities in it. What Jesus deemed important, becomes important: the joyful life out of the hand of God, compassion with the weak, hoping that everybody, no-one excluded, can live a life of peace (the Kingdom of God). Conversion is nothing more and nothing less than another word for Christian self-direction.

2. The art of friendship then becomes an ethics of *charity*. In terms of content it does not differ from the classical views of friendship, like that of Aristotle (it too has love as its core), but it does differ in scope. Charity robs friendship of its exclusivity and its tendency toward isolation. The Christian ideal implies that we follow Jesus in making friendships, if possible with everyone, even with our enemies. Charity stretches the circle of friendship. Of course that can't go on endlessly. Everybody's friend is no man's friend. But the ideal of compassion keeps drawing us and protects us from the exclusivity of favoritism.

3. Finally the art of *surrender* as such is already the most 'religious' of the three. In that too Jesus is himself *the* great example to be followed. His boundless enthusiasm – geestdrift - caused him to be able to unconditionally surrender to the dynamism of the Kingdom of God , the ideal that he stood for, to the very end. Nowhere does it become clearer to me what this surrender means than in the Sermon on the Mount, the Christian manual for the ethics of the art of living par excellence:

"31 So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'"

³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

³³ *But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

³⁴ *Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.* "(^{NIV} Matthew 6)

One cannot understand these sentences by reading them with one's eyes; only by learning them through practice can one gradually appropriate them.

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