IV. O youth, the advice is easy, the difficulty is accepting it, since it is bitter in the taste of the follower of passionate desire, because prohibited things are cherished in their hearts; especially whoever is seeking formal knowledge, and is busying himself about excellence of [science and] the improvement of the soul [and jurisprudence] and the praises of the present world, for he accounts that knowledge alone is a means in which will be his safety and his salvation, and that he can get along without work; and this is the belief of the philosophers. Praise the Great God! he does not know this much, that when he acquires knowledge, if he does not work according to it, the indictment against him is certain. As the Apostle of Allah, Allah bless him and give him peace, said “The person most severely punished in the day of resurrection is the learned one whom Allah the Exalted does not benefit by reason of his knowledge.”

V. O youth, do not be bankrupt of works, nor empty of states; be assured that knowledge alone does not strengthen the hand: a parable of this is, if a man in the wilderness wore ten Indian swords and other weapons, and the man were brave and a warrior, and a terrifying lion attacked him, what do you think? would the weapons ward off the evil from him without his using them and thrusting with them? it is perfectly obvious that they would not ward (it) off, except by activity. Just so, though a man read a hundred thousand scientific questions and understood them or learned them they do not benefit him except by working. And similarly, if a man had fever and jaundice, his cure is in oxymel and barley broth, and he will not regain his health except in their use.

Though thou measure two thousand rottles of wine,
Unless thou drink, no thrill is thine.

Knowledge is the tree, and working is its fruit; and though you studied a hundred years and collected a thousand books, you would not be prepared for the mercy of Allah the Exalted, except by working, as Allah the Exalted said, “And verily nothing (shall be reckoned) to man but that for which he made effort.”

VII. O youth, how many nights you have remained awake repeating science and poring over books and have denied yourself sleep! I do not know what the purpose of it was. If it was attaining worldly ends and securing its vanities and acquiring its dignities and surpassing your con-temporaries, and such like, woe to you, and again woe; but if your purpose in it was the vitalizing of the Law of the Prophet, Allah bless him and grant him...
peace, and the training of your character, and breaking the soul commanding to evil, then
blessed are you and again blessed.

X. O youth, knowledge without work is insanity and work without knowledge is vanity
(lit., cannot be).

XV. O youth, the substance of knowledge is to learn what are obedience and worship.
Know that obedience and worship are conforming to the law in commands and
prohibitions in word and deed—that is, whatever you say and do and omit in word and
deed must be in emulation of the law-giver.

XVI. . . . And know that certain of your questions which you asked me cannot be
answered in writing and in speech; if you attain that state you will know what they are;
and if not, knowing them is impossible; for they are known by experience, and whatever
is known by experience cannot he described in words, as the sweetness of the sweet or
the bitterness of the bitter cannot be known except by experience. As it is said that an
impotent man wrote to a friend. "Tell me about the delight of sexual intercourse, how it
is." And he wrote in answer, "Oh N. N., I have accounted you only impotent, but now I
know that you are both impotent and foolish; assuredly this delight is known by
experience; if you attain it you will know it, and if not, it cannot be described in writing
or speech."

XVII. . . . It is told that Shibli, the mercy of Allah, upon him, said: "I served four
hundred professors and read four thousand traditions; then I selected from them a single
tradition by which I worked, and left off the others; for I meditated and found my
salvation and safety in it, and all the knowledge of the ancients and the moderns was
included in it, and I was content with it. . . .

XIX. . . . Know that it is indispensable for the traveler to have a shaykh as guide and
tutor, to expel from him the evil qualities by his training and to replace them with an
excellent character; and the meaning of training resembles \{[the act of]\} the plowman
who digs out the thorns and removes the wild plants [from among the sown] to stimulate
its growth and make it thrive perfectly . . . And the sign of the shaykh who is fitted to be
the substitute for the Prophet, upon him be blessing and peace, is that he be learned—not
that every learned one is fitted for it; and I will show you certain indications in a general
way so that not every one shall pretend he is a learned guide. And we say, one who
removes himself far from love of the world and love of rank, and has succeeded a
discerning person who traces his successorship to the Lord of the apostles, and has
exelled in disciplining himself in scarcity of food and sleep and speech and in
abundance of prayer and alms and fasting, and who, in following the discerning shaykh,
is making the good qualities of character his way of life, such as endurance and
thanksgiving and trustfulness and conviction and generosity and contentment and
tranquility of soul and moderation and humility and knowledge and veracity and modesty
and trustworthiness and gravity and quietness and staidness and similar traits; and then he
is light from the lights of the Prophet, upon him be blessing and peace, and he is worthy
to be imitated; but the presence of such as he is rare, more precious than red sulphur. .
And whomever fortune aids to find a shaykh such as we have mentioned, and the shaykh
accepts him, he must honor him outwardly and inwardly.

Now outward honor is that he should not dispute with him and not labor in argumentation
with him [in every question even if he knows his (the shaykh's) mistake, . . .

But inner honor is that all he hears and accepts from him outwardly he should not deny
inwardly, neither in deed nor in word, lest he be branded with hypocrisy; and if this be
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not possible, that he should desert his companionship until his inner life agrees with his
outer; . . .

XX. O youth, the remainder of your questions—a portion are covered in my writings, so
seek them there; and setting down others in writing is forbidden: work by what you
know, there will be revealed to you what you do not know.  

XXIII. . . . . These you are to avoid are, first, do not argue with any one in any matter, as
far as you are able, for in this is great mischief, and its evil is greater than its benefit,
since it is the source of every blameworthy quality: such as hypocrisy and envy and pride
and malice and enmity and boasting and other such. Of course, if there arises a question
between you and an individual or group and it is your purpose in it that the truth should
appear and not be lost, discussion is permissible. But there are two signs of such a desire,
first that it makes no difference whether the truth is revealed by your tongue or the tongue
of another; and second, that discussion in private is preferred by you rather than in public.

And listen, for here I call your attention to a helpful point: know that the question about
obscure points is the presenting of the disease of the heart to a physician, and its answer
is the attempt to cure his disease. And know that the ignorant are diseased in their hearts
and the learned are the doctors, and the partially learned cannot perfect the treatment; and
the perfectly learned does not treat every sick person, but every one who will, he hopes,
accept the treatment and the cure. And if the weakness is chronic or fatal, (and) incurable,
then he will not labor to give medicine, for this is a waste of time.

Then know that the sickness of ignorance is of four sorts, one curable and the others
incurable. Of these which cannot be cured, [the first] is one whose question or objection
arises from envy and hate, [and envy cannot be cured for it is a chronic weakness] and
every time you answer him with the best or clearest or plainest answer, that only
increases his rage and envy. And the way is not to attempt an answer.

One hopes for the removal of every enmity
   Except enmity arising from envy.

So you must depart from him and leave him with his disease. Allah the Exalted said,
"Withdraw from whoever turns away from our warning and desires nothing except the
present life." And the envious, both in all he says and in all he does, kindles [a fire] in the
sowing of his deed: as the Prophet said, Allah bless him and grant him peace, "Envy eats
up excellences as fire eats up wood."

The second, whose weakness arises from stupidity, and he also is incurable. As 'Isa  


2 When Dawud Ta'I had acquired learning and become a famous authority, he went to Abu Hanîfah and said to
him: "What shall I do now?" Abu Hanîfah replied: "Practice what you have learned, for theory without practice
is like a body without a spirit." Hujwiri's Kashf al-Mahjûb, p. 95.
3 The Moslem world knows Jesus under the name of 'Îsa. In the Qur'an he is called 'Îsa, 'Îsa son of Miriam, and
the Messiah. He is also described as the Word of God (4:169), a Spirit of God (4:170; 19:31), Prophet (19:31),
Illustrious in this World and the Next (3:40), and One of those who have near access to God (3:40).
And the third is one who is seeking guidance and whatever he does not understand of
the speech of the great ones, he lays to the defects of his own understanding and his question
is in order to seek benefit; but he is dull and cannot arrive at the truth of things. You must
not attempt to answer him also, as the Prophet, Allah bless him and give him peace, said,
"We, the company of the prophets have been commanded that we speak to the people
according to their understanding."

But the sickness which is curable is that of the intelligent and understanding seeker of
guidance, who is not overcome with envy and anger and the love of worldly vanities and
wealth and honor, but is seeking the straight road; and his questions and objections do not
arise from envy and a desire to cause trouble and to make trial. And he is curable, and it
is permitted to attempt to answer him—nay, it is necessary.

And the second thing to avoid is to guard against and shun becoming a preacher and
warner, since its mischief is much unless you practice what you preach first and then
preach it to the people; and consider what was said to 'Isa, upon him be peace, "O Son of
Miriam, preach to yourself, and when you have preached to yourself, then preach to
others; and otherwise, be ashamed before your Lord." And if you are impelled to try this
work, then guard against two conditions: the first is affectation in speech in explanations
and allusions and vehement cries and versification and poetry because Allah the Exalted
hates pretention, and the person pretentious beyond bounds gives evidence of inner
confusion and a heedless heart.

. . . if you read or study science, it must be a science which corrects your heart and
purifies your soul; as if you knew that your life would not be prolonged more than a
week, necessarily you would not busy yourself in it in the science of jurisprudence and
argumentation and rudimentary principles and scholastic theology and such like, because
you know these sciences would not enrich you, but you would busy yourself in guarding
your heart and in apprehending the attribute of the soul, and removal from the
entanglements of the world, and the purification of your soul from the blameworthy
moral qualities, and you would busy yourself in the love of Allah the Exalted and his
worship, and in being distinguished with good qualities; and not a single day or night
passes upon the worshipper but that it is possible his death may occur in it.
Ayyuhal Walad atau juga dikenali dengan nama al-Risalah al-Waladiyah asalnya ditulis oleh Imam al-Ghazali r.h. dalam bahasa Parsi, kemudian kitab ini diterjemahkan ke dalam bahasa Arab oleh sebahagian ulama dan dinamakan dengan nama di atas. Kitab Ayyuhal Walad ini ditulis oleh Imam al-Ghazali r.h sebagai jawapan kepada sepucuk surat yang dihantar oleh seorang murid beliau yang sangat mencintainya. Ayyuhal Walad. Author: Al-Imam Hujjah al-Islam Abu Hamid al-Ghazali. About. Letter to a Disciple is a summary of the spiritual teachings of he who was regarded as the Proof of Islam. Four obligations of a seeker of knowledge. Eight beneficial advices of Hatim Al- Aadam. Characteristics of Sheikh Mursid. Ways of veneration upon Sheikh Murshid. Keywords: Character, Ayyuha al-Walad, Morals. Abstract. This research is based on research library, the background of this research concerns with the deterioration of morals or character education in children and adolescents. Foreign cultures that are not properly filtered is the result of deterioration of education and children’s akhlak. Al-Ghanimi, Abu al-Wafa al-taftazani. (1997). Sufi dari Zaman ke Zaman. As Salam Alaikum. Share this MahsAllah a really good collection of Al-Ghazali Books. Reply. Shakila says: September 16, 2012 at 3:38 pm. Can anyone tell me if there is a website where I can read his (Al-Ghazali) books in English pls? Reply. read says Ayyuhal Walad: A free course with Shaykh Abu Aaliyah. This course will be based on the short epistle of Imam Ghazali, Ayyuhal Walad, which contains a series of compounded counsels for his student. A student of Imam Ghazali asks of his teacher a truly powerful question; what will benefit him in the grave? He wrote in his letter that although Imam Ghazali has written numerous books on this issue, he was in need of something that he could always study and always act upon its injunctions.