

# Plato and Socrates on Self Knowledge

## 10 Lectures and Discussions

The words **Know Thyself** were inscribed on the temple of Apollo at Delphi over 2,000 years ago by one of the seven sages of the ancient world and yet the meaning of Self Knowledge remains a puzzle to this day:

- Does it mean knowing what you know and what you do not know?
- Does it mean knowing your strengths and weaknesses?
- What is the object of this Self Knowledge?
- What do Plato and Socrates say about Self Knowledge?
- What direction emerges from Plato and Socrates which is relevant to our lives today?



Charioteer - bronze statue  
Delphi – 5<sup>th</sup> Century B.C.

Plato presents philosophy not in dogmatic treatises but in the form of discussions and conversations in which great philosophic questions are examined in a lively and interactive manner among characters with whom we can readily identify. The phrase Know Thyself was as well known in the ancient world as it is today. Plato records a conversation between Socrates and some young men on the true meaning of Self Knowledge in a dialogue which allows us to re-examine for ourselves the true meaning of this famous injunction. These lectures will consider this Platonic dialogue (called Charmides) and will present its contents in detail allowing the discussion to continue among ourselves also in the spirit of Socratic dialectic. The lectures will also briefly survey other dialogues of Plato in which the topic of Self Knowledge is mentioned or discussed.

For the great philosophers of antiquity the divisions and separations which we make, between philosophy and psychology or religion and science, had little meaning. For Plato all things were related one to another and all had a direct and immediate relevance to our human lives.

**Saturday mornings, from 10.00 to 12.00.**

**Repeated on Wednesdays from 7.30 to 9.30 p.m.**

**Commencement dates:**

**Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> and  
Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2009.**

10 Lecture course €100 (or €80 for those already enrolled for Philosophy). Concessions €80.

**Enrolment on first attendance.**

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