

Kant, Immanuel. *Answer to the Question: What Is Enlightenment?* Translated by Carl J. Friedrich. In *Basic Writings of Kant*, Allen W. Wood, ed. New York: The Modern Library, 2001.

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804 A.D.) wrote a pivotal ethics in multiple parts. The first is *Critique of Pure Reason*. *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, *Critique of Practical Reason*, and *Critique of Judgment* followed. Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* erodes exaggerated Enlightenment confidence in human reason, and castigates unbridled metaphysical speculation. Kant was a warm conversationalist and popular lecturer in Königsberg, Germany, and a Pietist by religious sentiment. Some believe Kant's work represents the transition point between Enlightenment and modern philosophy.

1. Enlightenment consists in religious free-thinking, making one's own religious decisions independent of government interference. Sapere Aude! (translates "dare to think").
2. The obstacles to enlightenment are laziness and cowardice. It is easier to surrender control to supposed experts better able to judge your circumstances than are you.
3. Individuals alone can seldom throw off subservience. The public at large, however, is less hindered.
4. Public enlightenment must proceed slowly, or it will replace one despotism with another.
5. The paradigm of enlightenment is the college professor doing his scholarly work and the public reading his work.
6. Some members of government must not indulge independent thinking. Our collective well-being depends upon their unwavering obedience: police and military officers, every citizen as a taxpayer, the clergy instructing their flock.
7. But one age cannot make commitments to remain subservient that bind subsequent ages. This would be a "crime against human nature." Such action might be permitted in the short term, provided scholars are free to criticize. But longer arrangements are "absolutely impermissible."
8. The crown should make a place in society for all religions, and leave the citizen's choice of salvations to the citizens alone.
9. Frederick the Great would be well received and doing his duty if he allowed clergy to speculate and criticize, as well as all persons "not thus restricted by official duty."
10. If the king allows free thought, the people eventually act well in freedom, and the state itself better recognizes human dignity.