

The Noema Lectures:

The Modern Age Series

“Every thought captive to Christ” 2 Cor. 10:5

Noema: From the Greek νόημα meaning “mind, thought, understanding”

(Pronounced: No -A -mah)

Noema (from **noéo** = perceive in turn, from **noús** = mind) is literally the result of the activity of the “**nous**” or mind, that part of man which thinks. **Noema** means that which is thought (a thought), perceived with the mind (a mental perception), understood, pondered, or considered.

The basic meaning is what results from directing one’s mind (**nous**) to a subject, in the present context case in directing our mind to prayer with thanksgiving. The focus of our mind changes from the problem to the “Problem” solver, from a self centered focus to a “Godward”, Christ centered focus and the result is a “guarded, garrisoned” mind.

(https://www.preceptaustin.org/philippians_47#minds%20noema)

Philippians 4:7:

“And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

In a discussion on the phrase “Peace with God” multiple commentators focus on Paul’s phrase, “hearts and minds” (*kardia kai noema*) to convey a peace that is more than either your heart (*kardia*) can feel or your mind (*noema*) can understand individually. True Peace with God comes when both your heart and mind are in unison, both “settled” in the person of Christ. Theologian William MacDonald writes, “People of the world cannot understand it at all, and even Christians possessing it find a wonderful element of mystery about it. They are surprised at their own lack of anxiety in the face of tragedy or adverse circumstances.”

The link between our hearts and minds is deeply important for a Christian. Without the two working in tandem, there is no true Peace with God. Our hearts and minds cannot and should not be disconnected. One of the goals of WCA is to orient a student's affections (hearts) to the Good, True, and Beautiful. It is our hope that the Noema Lectures Series would be part of shaping their minds toward the same end - to see, recognize, and understand the True, Good, and Beautiful that is evident throughout God’s created world.

2 Corinthians 10:1-5

“By the humility and gentleness of Christ, I appeal to you—I, Paul, who am “timid” when face to face with you, but “bold” toward you when away! I beg you that when I come I may not have to be as bold as I expect to be toward some people who think that we live by the standards of this world. For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul uses the same word, *noema*, for our thoughts. In order to discuss how a Christian engages with the arguments of the world. The passage connotes a mental battle. The weapons of the world are not literal weapons, or evil things that a person may find attractive. The true danger is the way the world thinks about themselves and their place in history. While the world attempts to replace God with mankind, Christians must “battle” to understand our world the way God created it. And we know that we can have peace with God throughout this battle with both our hearts and minds obedient to Christ.