School of Athens

This is a painting that will be created in the Renaissance Period by Raphael. However, two of our Greek philosophers are in the painting.

The School of Athens represents all the greatest mathematicians, philosophers and scientists from classical antiquity gathered together sharing their ideas and learning from each other. These figures all lived at different times, but here they are gathered together under one roof.

The two thinkers in the very center, Aristotle (on the right) and Plato (on the left, pointing up) have been enormously important to Western thinking generally, and in different ways, their different philosophies were incorporated into Christianity. Plato holds his book called *The Timaeus*.

Plato points up because in his philosophy the changing world that we see around us is just a shadow of a higher, truer reality that is eternal and unchanging (and include things like goodness and beauty). For Plato, this otherworldly reality is the ultimate reality, and the seat of all truth, beauty, justice, and wisdom.

Aristotle holds his hand down, because in his philosophy, the only reality is the reality that we can see and experience by sight and touch (exactly the reality dismissed by Plato). Aristotle's *Ethics* (the book that he holds) "emphasized the relationships, justice, friendship, and government of the human world and the need to study it."

SOCRATES

"Do not do to others what angers you if done to you by others."

"Envy is the ulcer of the soul."

"Remember that there is nothing stable in human affairs; therefore avoid undue elation in prosperity, or undue depression in adversity."

"The only good is knowledge and the only evil is ignorance."

"I am not an Athenian or a Greek, but a citizen of the world."

"Wars and revolutions and battles are due simply and solely to the body and its desires. All wars are undertaken for the acquisition of wealth; and the reason why we have to acquire wealth is the body, because we are slaves in its service."

"Nothing is to be preferred before justice."

"True wisdom comes to each of us when we realize how little we understand about life, ourselves, and the world around us."

"Employ your time in improving yourself by other men's writings so that you shall come easily by what others have labored hard for."

ARISTOTLE

"It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it."

"Man perfected by society is the best of all animals; he is the most terrible of all when he lives without law, and without justice."

"The only stable state is the one in which all men are equal before the law."

"It is not always the same thing to be a good man and a good citizen."

"Liars when they speak the truth are not believed."

"I count him braver who overcomes his desires than him who overcomes his enemies."

"Even when laws have been written down, they ought not always to remain unaltered."

"If liberty and equality, as is thought by some are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be best attained when all persons alike share in the government to the utmost."

"Man is by nature a political animal."

PLATO

"All the gold which is under or upon the earth is not enough to give in exchange for virtue."

"Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle."

"Courage is knowing what not to fear."

"Democracy passes into despotism."

"Excess generally causes reaction, and produces a change in the opposite direction, whether it be in the seasons, or in individuals, or in governments."

"Excess of liberty, whether it lies in state or individuals, seems only to pass into excess of slavery."

"Ignorance, the root and stem of all evil."

"No law or ordinance is mightier than understanding"

"No man should bring children into the world who is unwilling to persevere to the end in their nature and education."

"One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferior."

"The measure of a man is what he does with power."

"When the tyrant has disposed of foreign enemies by conquest or treaty, and there is nothing more to fear from them, then he is always stirring up some war or other, in order that the people may require a leader."

"Your silence gives consent."