



The Scholé Way with Christopher Perrin

Lecture 14: Contemplating the Core in the Practice of Scholé

Outline:

In this lesson, Dr. Christopher Perrin explores the importance of identifying and focusing on the *core* of education—key skills, ideas, virtues, and knowledge that should be taught to mastery. Drawing from *The Scholé Way* and classical wisdom, he emphasizes deep learning, contemplation, and the balance between restful and active learning.

"Whenever in reflective and receptive contemplation, we touch even remotely the core of all things, the hidden ultimate reason of the living universe, the divine foundation of all that is, the purest forms of all archetypes, whenever and wherever we thus behold the very essence of reality, there is an activity that is meaningful in itself, taking place." — Josef Pieper, Only the Lover Sings"

The Meaning of Core in Education

- The Latin root of "core" (cor, *cordis*) meaning heart
- Selecting the heart of what students should know "by heart"
- The pedagogical principle of *multum non multa* (much, not many)

Identifying the Core in Teaching

- Core skills: Essential competencies students should master
- Core ideas and questions: The fundamental inquiries of a subject
- Core facts: The key knowledge that forms the foundation of a discipline
- Core virtues: The moral and intellectual habits cultivated through study
- The importance of discerning and prioritizing content from textbooks



Teaching the Core to Mastery

- The 80/20 principle: 80% focus on core content, 20% on broader connections
- The need for teachers to know, love, and prepare the core well
- The role of repetition, review, and student teaching (re-teaching) in mastery
- Assessing whether students are truly learning and adjusting accordingly

Balancing *Scholé* with Active Learning

- Restful learning does not exclude rigorous intellectual activity
- The interplay between contemplative (Mary) and active (Martha) learning
- Avoiding both superficiality and overburdening students
- The importance of setting aside time for contemplation (e.g., a sabbatical rhythm)

Methods for Contemplating the Core

- Using reflective questions to deepen student engagement
- Encouraging discussion and student-led teaching
- Incorporating artistic, musical, and mathematical contemplation
- Viewing the classroom as a sacred space for meaningful engagement