



## The Scholé Way with Christopher Perrin

### Lecture 3: Scholé and the Harmony of Action and Contemplation

#### Outline:

In this lesson, Dr. Christopher Perrin explores the concept of *scholé* as undistracted, contemplative learning, tracing its roots from classical thought in Homer, Plato, and Aristotle through the Christian tradition, monastic education, and modern recoveries of restful learning, ultimately emphasizing its role in forming wisdom, virtue, and communion with God.

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#### The Meaning and Origins of Scholé

- Definition of Scholé: undistracted time to study what is most worthwhile in a beautiful place, often with friends and good food.
- Aristotle: "We work in order to have leisure." Scholé is an end in itself.
- Josef Pieper: Leisure affirms both the cosmos and its Creator.

#### Scholé in Classical Thought

- Homer: Scholé cultivates excellence through storytelling, contemplation, and communal meals.
- Plato: Early education as *moske*—inspired by the muses, encompassing poetry, literature, plays, music, and dance.
- Aristotle: Scholé and contemplation as divine activities, enabling human flourishing (*eudaimonia*).

#### Scholé in Christian Tradition

- Early Christians saw harmony between classical and biblical traditions of contemplation.
  - Psalm 46: "Be still and know that I am God."
  - Psalm 27: Desire to dwell in the temple and gaze upon God's beauty.
  - Psalm 1: Meditation on God's law.



- Basil of Caesarea: For Christians, Scholé is prayer.

## Medieval Expressions of Scholé

- Monastic education blended contemplation with study.
- Benedictine monasteries promoted "Ora et Labora" (Pray and Work).
- CS Lewis's reflections on classical education: gratitude for the tradition but critique of harsh teaching methods.

## Scholé in Modern Education and Its Recovery

- Josef Pieper's *Leisure, The Basis of Culture* as a pivotal work in reclaiming contemplative education.
- Aristotle and Aquinas: The distinction between *intellectus* (effortless contemplation) and *ratio* (discursive reasoning).
- The beauty and order of the cosmos invite contemplation and celebration.

## Biblical Example: Martha and Mary (Luke 10)

- Martha is "busy and anxious" with work, while Mary sits in conversation with Christ.
- Christ praises Mary's contemplative disposition as the "one thing necessary."
- Education must balance action (*ratio*) with contemplation (*intellectus*).

## Scholé as Prayer

- True learning is a sacred activity that attends to God's presence in reality.
- Scholé transforms schools into spaces of divine communion, where Christ is the ultimate teacher.