



## Charlotte Mason: A Liberal Education for All with Jason Barney

### Lecture 4: Children as Persons

#### Outline:

Charlotte Mason's first principle: Children are born persons.

- “I believe that the first article of a valid educational creed – ‘Children are born persons’ – is of a revolutionary character; for what is a revolution but a complete reversal of attitude?” Charlotte Mason
- There is something of a mystery to the nature of a person.
- Some think of children as an oyster, slowly developing, and not yet a full person.
- “The other view is that the beautiful infant frame is but the setting of a jewel...how valuable is the soul is the soul of a single human person, made in the image of God.” Charlotte Mason
  - This is the bedrock for Charlotte Mason.
- Charlotte Mason says the most valuable thing is this; stop using children as counters in your educational game. Respect the personhood of the child created in the image of an eternal God.
- Jesus valued children. He said, “Let the little children come to me.”

Home Education, by Charlotte Mason

- When we think of our authority as parents as arbitrary, thinking it is ok to let the child off, but Charlotte Mason says that there is a structure of order in the universe and we should never give children the impression that we can choose whether or not to do our duty. This would offend the children in their health, intellect, and moral life.
- We could look down upon children by not holding them up to a high enough standard. Will children really grow out of the moral failings that we see on display? Should we not rather see all the great potential in them?
- In our teaching are we so focused on our classroom and curriculum that we don't have the time to shepherd the heart of the child. Don't despise the little children.
- Don't hinder the little children.
- The third educational law of the gospels is to overlook and make light of his relationship with almighty God.
  - Are we making light of divine things?
  - Are we open to the Spirit's work or the eternal nature of the children in front of us?



- Do you really see the children in front of you every day? Charlotte Mason calls us to study children.

Charlotte Mason warns against the manipulation of children.

- When you see Charlotte Mason use the term personality, you should think “personhood”.
- There are dangers of using both fear and love as a manipulation of children.
  - There are dangers of a winning personality. Perhaps we overlook the danger that children are actually meant to grow up on their own in self order. This sort of magnetic teacher may actually be submerging their personalities into their own.
  - Beware the magnetism of a teacher’s personality.
- Beware of developing a system of prods that get the children to do what we want them to do.
  - We don’t want to raise kids who cannot stand on their own.
  - We want to respect children as persons, and not have them fall under the sway of their teachers.
- Charlotte Mason talks about emulation and avarice, grades and scholarship.
  - Emulation or the desire of excelling is an amazing spur to effort. In the intellectual field, there is danger.
  - Nothing worse could have happened to our schools than the system of marks, prizes, places, and awards by which many are practically governed.
  - Are we making students avaricious, greedy for gain? Might we be training children to do what it takes even if it costs moral compromise?
  - “The boy did not learn to delight in knowledge in his school days, and the man is shallow in mind and whimsical in judgement.”
  - Charlotte Mason felt that curiosity should be put in place as the natural motivator of learning. The desire for excelling has its place in the heart of a child.
  - The desire to know is what is natural to us as human beings.