



Charlotte Mason: A Liberal Education for All with Jason Barney

Lecture 6: Education is an Atmosphere

Outline:

Education as an Atmosphere

- The value of an atmosphere for inspiring the education of a child:
 - The value of a natural home atmosphere
 - A child should live freely among his proper conditions.
 - Children often want more in an atmosphere than just a child environment.
 - Our culture is filled with ways that we talk down to children. We train children to think of themselves as less than.
 - As parents and as educators, we might be unthinkingly putting children in a box.
 - Parental anxiety can be a huge problem in the life of a child. Anxiety is catching.
 - Children want an open, free environment of love.
 - Charlotte Mason is concerned that we do not shelter children.
 - Our goal is not to shelter children, but to train and prepare them for the world, but not be overly influenced and affected by the negative things in it.
 - Children must face life as it is. We may not keep them in glass cases.
 - By the troubles of life, children live.
 - We want backbone in our children as they grow up.
 - Children come into the world ignorant. We have to be their guides.
 - We should not give children's a lot of decisions. We must make many decisions for them, which is relieving to the will of the child.
 - We, as adults, are also under authority.
 - The importance of nurture and challenge for children
 - Children need nurture and challenge.
 - "A plant carefully protected under glass from outside shocks looks sleek and flourishing but its higher nervous function is then found to be atrophied. But when a succession of "blows" (electric shocks) "is rained on the effete and bloated specimen, the shocks themselves create nervous channels and arouse anew



- the deteriorated nature. Is it not the shocks of adversity and not cotton wool protection that evolve true manhood?" (CM Vol 6 Ch. 6 Section 1 Education is an Atmosphere)
- Adversity is part of the Christian life. Adversity builds character. The testing of your faith develops steadfastness (James).
 - Those parents and teachers who have both high expectations as well as high relational support (high law and high relationship/grace) combined makes strong children.
 - The school atmosphere
 - How can we use the atmosphere of the school to educate a student?
 - Teachers may be so suave and condescending as to bring about a condition of intellectual feebleness and moral softness, which it is not easy for a child to overcome.
 - School is not about jumping through the hoops of education, but there is a spirit of inquiry in the air. Teacher and student alike must pursue knowledge.
 - The culture of your faculty is going to impact the culture of your students.
 - What are you doing to support this kind of atmosphere amongst your colleagues?
 - We have an anxiety inducing grade focused modern school culture.
 - We need students who are in an environment that values learning and knowledge for their own sake.
 - Shouldn't you try to encourage a child to do their best work, rather than try to manipulate them with a bad grade?