



Charlotte Mason: A Liberal Education for All with Jason Barney

Lecture 9: A Method for Habit Training

Outline:

A method for habit training:

- We can think of this along the lines of discipleship and mentorship.
- Habit training is about helping a student form habits.
- Habit is inevitable as a human being. We should approach habit training proactively to help each student find a better way.
- Avoid only habit training the disruptive or disobedient students. Education and teaching is not about you and comfort level, it is about the students and their good.
- Three reasons why a child is acting poorly:
 - Ignorance: A child does not know the better way to respond to the situation. We should inform and instruct or even habit train the student.
 - Weakness of will: This may lead a student in a bad habit.
 - Rebellion: They may be genuinely flouting your authority to your face.
 - In this case giving them a consequence is the right move.
 - Many times the bad habit is a rut in the brain that they fall into without thinking.

Train students toward a better way (habit training).

- Sow an idea first. The mind is a spiritual organism.
 - Sow an act, reap a habit. Sow a habit, reap a character. We must go a further step back and sow the idea which makes the act worthwhile.
 - Habit training is a spiritual practice.
 - Use stories to sow ideas casually and lightly.
 - Habit training is about the child and the grand ideals of life that we would lift them up towards.
 - Be there for the child as a supportive presence.
- Build a relational alliance with the child around some great idea.
- Establish a strategy with the child around what it would be like for me to remind you as you seek to build a habit. I want to help. I know it is hard to get into a habit. How can I support you in that habit?
 - Establish with the child a fitting consequence for failing to perform the right act in a particular scenario.



- The goal of habit training is to get the child on board with their own growth and development.
- We want to catch their minds with a vision of nobility.
- One custom overcomes another.
 - Point out the miseries that must arise from the fault, and the duty of overcoming it.
 - Get the will of the child on the side of right doing.
 - The habit must be required.
- The parent/teacher can help strengthen that will toward the good habit. Our good habits are established with a purposeful cause with a reason behind them, with an idea informing them that makes a strong will.
- **What is needed is tact, watchfulness, and persistence.**
- Habit training is not about punitive measures, but a supportive mentorship and growth into a better habit.
- Lay down the rails toward the good life.
- Take the time to help each student grow in one habit.
- Sometimes you will help the whole group with a habit.
 - There may be times when you need to revamp a whole procedure in your classroom (Lemov).
 - Sow the idea of a better way that our class might run.
 - With the class discuss how you might help remind them, and remind one another.
 - Turn procedures into routines.

Focus Efforts

- Focus on one habit with habit training.
- Be your student's friendly ally and coach.
- You may need to habit train yourself.