



A Brief History of Progressive Education with Dr. Jason Edwards

Lesson 3: Just what is Progressive Education?

Outline:

“It is typical of our time that the more doubtful we are about the value of philosophy, the more certain we are about the value of education. That is to say, the more doubtful we are about whether we have any truth, the more certain we are (apparently) that we can teach it to children. The smaller our faith in doctrine, the larger our faith in doctors ...”

G.K. Chesterton

“Men are cast-iron, but children are wax.”

Horace Mann

“Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself.”

John Dewey

Common Traits of Progressive Education

- An attempt to broaden the function and understanding of the school; (progressive education includes health, vocation, quality of family life, quality of communal life, etc.).
- A push to apply scientific research into the classroom; (ex. psychology and sociology).
- An idea that we should tailor instruction to different types of students.
- A belief that education can reform, democratize, and even perfect society
- A general rejection of classical Christian anthropology; (ex. Man is not understood as a fallen being)
- Defined by what it is “not”; (ex. “not” memorization or mental discipline)
- Knowledge is not understood as static (it does not need to be preserved and passed on from one generation to the next).
- A push for professionalism in education (ex. specialists).