



## Introduction to Classical Education

with Dr. Christopher Perrin

### Lesson 9: Implementing Classical Education

#### Outline:

##### A Long Journey, Three Stages of the Classical Christian Education Renewal

- We are trying to rebuild the ship and get the vessel seaworthy again, but we have never seen the ship all assembled before. This is a long journey.
- Truth: Recovery of the curriculum and the truth of the arts of grammar, logic, and rhetoric.
- Goodness: The idea that our schools need to be good, and our students need to be cultivated to be good people. Education is the cultivation of a virtuous soul.
- Beauty: The idea that our schools have to be embodied such that beauty is present in traditions, routines, exercises, sensory input.

##### Understand, Learn by Doing, Ten Years to Mastery

- It takes ten years to master something.
- 10,000 hours of study, 3 hours a day for 10 years.

##### Classical Scope and Sequence

- How does wonder lead to worship and worship lead to wisdom in our schools?
- How do we deploy and define PGMAPT?

##### Deploy Classical Education

- Deploy: Unfold
- Apply
- Implement: We need to bring to fulfillment this philosophy of education.

##### Acquiring Depth

- Classical education is a culture.
- To understand the culture is going to take time.
- What is it that you know? Can you grant that there is a lot beneath the surface that you do not yet know?

##### Why Education is an Art?

- Education involves the making of something: We are seeking to craft and cultivate the humanity of our students. We go nowhere alone (C.S. Lewis)



- Requires artistry (ars, artis: skill, craft): It involves moving principles and ideas moved to practice, sustained thinking.
- Principles to practice
- Involves contemplation

## Why Education is an Art

- Not just techniques, not a science though informed by it. Human beings have wills, they are not always completely predictable.
- Not “curricula”
- Not management
- Not micro-assessments
- Human
- Adaptable
- Imitation/Relationship/Apprenticeship
- Cultivation/Formation/Transfiguration

## Why Education is an Art: Scripture

- Luke 6: We reproduce ourselves in our students.
- Proverbs 2: Cry out for wisdom as treasure. Seek it with an ardent desire. Write these things on the tablet of your heart.
- Deuteronomy 6: Old Testament Paideia, fully embodied educational approach that cultivates souls.
- Ephesians 6: New Testament Paideia, fathers don’t exasperate your children, but raise them up in the training (discipline, education) of the Lord.
- 2 Timothy 2: Educational discipleship, teach others who then can teach.

## Main forms of teaching (Mortimer Adler, *Reforming Education*)

- Lecture: To read at a lecturn
- Seminar: Discussion around a table. The teacher is sitting at the table with the students.
- Tutorial (coaching, apprenticeship): This is one of most effective ways of teaching, homeschoolers get to tutor children.

## *Seven Laws of Teaching* by John Milton Gregory

- Teacher’s knowledge
- Student Interest: The teacher understands well the interest of the student.
- Clear Language
- Associative Knowledge
- Mental Initiative and Discovery: The good teacher requires the student to do their own thinking, not just spoon feeding, allow them to see things on their own.
- Mental Reproduction and Integration: The teacher wants the student to think and reproduce thoughts of text, lecture, and principle.



- Review: The teacher knows that we need to revisit learning over and over again.

## Principles and Practices

- Principles and practices are embedded with one another, in an ongoing dance.
- These principles are all connected, they are not discrete from one another.

## Festina Lente

- Make haste slowly
- Master each step
- Carpenter's dictum: Measure twice, cut once
- 10,000 hours to master a skill – 3 hours a day for 10 years
- Resource: *Adagia* (Erasmus) He says this should be carved on every column in Europe. This maxim has been emblemized on coins of emperors and used by publishers.

## Multum Non Multa

- Much not many
- Less can be more
- Deep diving or jet skiing?
- Better to master a few things than “cover content”
- Lewis and the Great Knock
  - The study of Latin and Greek led to the study of the literature as well as dialectic, rhetoric, and writing.
  - Lewis says that we should study far fewer subjects and study them better.
  - If you can master one thing, you know what it feels like to get to the end of something.
- Contra: Cram-Pass-Forget approach
- Resource: *Global Achievement Gap* (Wagner)
  - Liberal arts are important for acquiring the survival skills needed today.
- Luke 10: Mary and Martha
  - Martha is busy.
  - Mary is enjoying conversation at Jesus' feet.
  - Jesus says that Martha is busy about many things, but Mary has chosen what is best and it will not be taken from her.
  - This reminds us that there is a time when we should value the best thing and go deep with what is best.

## Repetitio Mater Memoriae

- Repetition is the mother of memory
- Lively, meaningful review that makes learning permanent
- Assumes *multum non multa*



- Reading is re-reading
- We come back to the things that we love because we want to engage it again. When we come back to them, we do not have to come back to them in the exact same way.

## Songs, Chants, Jingles

- Important content linked to a song
- Lower school mainly, but upper school too
- Students can help create songs
- Frequent “seasoning” of the school day
- Resources: Various curricula with songs built-in (e.g. Song School Latin, Greek, Spanish)

## Wonder and Curiosity

- Imparting a love for truth, goodness, and beauty
- Modeling our own love and wonder before our students is a crucial way to do this.
- Loving that which is lovely.
- Wonder, Admiration, Wisdom
- Resources: *The Abolition of Man* (Lewis); *Leisure the Basis of Culture* (Pieper)

## Educational Virtues

- Also student or intellectual virtues
- Modeling and cultivation
  - We are never done with our own virtue formation.
- Resource: *The Intellectual Life* (Sertillanges)
- Educational Virtues and Vices
  - Love: Pride
  - Humility: Pride
  - Diligence: Sloth, Capriciousness
  - Constancy: Inconstancy, Irregularity
  - Courage: Fear
  - Temperance: Sloth; Excessive Ambition
- Why aren't these virtues making it onto our lesson plans as part of our objectives?

## Embodied Learning

- Our minds work in concert with our bodies.
- Rhythms, practices, traditions, routines
- More important than didactic presentations
- Shape student's soul and ideal of human flourishing
- The five senses; beauty
  - What would you ideally like to sense?
- Schools should be more like home.



- Liturgy
  - There are secular liturgies, and we need liturgies to counter these.
  - Praise, confession, homily

## Scholé, Contemplation

- Contemplative learning
- Right use of leisure
- Adequate time for reflection, contemplation, discussion of important ideas
- Inside and outside the class
- With and without students
- Resource: *Leisure the Basis of Culture* (Pieper)

## Docendo Discimus

- By teaching we learn, this is true of teachers.
- Students teach back what they learn.
- One room schoolhouse
  - The teacher would have to employ the older students to teach the younger students.
  - Students should have opportunity to be teaching back to you, teaching the class, teaching groups.
- Andrew Elizalde's math classroom
  - He had white boards on three of four walls to have all of the students at the whiteboard at once working on the same problem or a similar problem. Students would have opportunity to teach and be called to work together.