



The Monastic Tradition of Education

with Dr. Christopher Perrin

Lesson 4: Deep Contemplation of Scripture & Literature

Outline:

Deep Contemplation of Scripture and Literature

- In the offices of prayer, the Psalms would be memorized through chanting and singing.
- There was a great deep engagement with scripture and other literature as these books needed to be copied.
- **Contemplation and Silence**
 - There was time for silence to think about what had been heard.
 - Dining was often silent.
 - There was time for corporate prayer and individual devotion.
- **Memory: Scriptorium**
 - The Scriptorium was a place where copying took place.
- **Lectio Divina**
 - Lectio Divina means a divine reading.
 - This was done to read scripture in a certain way. The focus is to slow down.
 - Then there was a time of meditation.
 - The third phase was to respond in prayer, petition, and gratitude.
 - What might happen in our schools if we found time to pray this way?
- **Florilegium**
 - Florilegium means “book of flowers”.
 - This was the practice of the monks having their own book so that they could write down passages and excerpts from the books they got to read. They could have it in the book so that it could go onto the book of their heart.
 - This could be a gathering place for what is true, good, and beautiful that a student wants to possess and be able to meditate on.
 - What about copying? Maybe students need to be writing things down in their own journal more often.
 - Of course we privilege the memorization of scripture, but why not poetry and literature as well? What if we issued commonplace books to our students?

These formative practices shaped and formed a certain kind of soul. If we would like to see these deep souls, we need to emulate these practices.