



The New Old Way Conference in Africa with Dr. Christopher Perrin

Break Out Session with
Dr. Christopher Perrin

Outline:

The Seven Liberal Arts

- These were considered to be the arts that make us liberated (to enhance capacities of a human being).
- They are called arts because an art enables us to make something.
 - With the art of painting we paint.
 - With the art of logic, you make arguments.
 - With rhetoric, you make persuasive, moving speeches.
 - With grammar, you make anything written (poems, novels, stories).
 - These arts make you a maker. They make us into liberal artists.
 - It will cultivate remarkable mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers.

Questions

- The word liberal in modern politics is considered to be anti-Christian, moving away from the Christian tradition.
 - Often this involves big government (in America).
 - Liberal at its root means freedom.
 - Because of our modern context, classical education is a new old thing.
 - Liber meant the bark of a tree, because the bark was written on.
Through the books we acquire our freedom.
- If you want to be a classical teacher, how can you acquire the techniques to be a good classical teacher?
 - Think of a five year plan.
 - We teach the way we were taught.
 - What are the classical teaching methods:
 - Children should sing it to learn and memorize something.
 - Teach to mastery. Until you have mastered something, you should not go forward. Master addition and subtraction before you do long division.
 - Multum non multa, much not many
 - Better to go deep with a few things than to teach a lot of thing superficially.
 - Students don't just want you to lecture, they want to discover with their own eyes. Do that with Socratic conversation.
- Teachers should be observing one another and modelling for one another.



- The same teaching methods will apply to general teaching and Christian teaching.
 - These pedagogies are things you already know. Good teachers do these things any way.
 - Festina lente, make haste slowly. This means it is better to teach to mastery than to speed ahead and cover the curriculum. Covering material is not education if it doesn't involve learning.
 - Teach to mastery.
- How do we get to Dante?
 - There is a number of reading lists that have been produced.
 - Classicalreader.com, which has a sortable (by grade and topic) list
 - Honey for a Child's Heart by Gladys Hunt
 - The Ambrose Curriculum Guide
- In Africa, what would your book list look like?
 - The great works belong to all of humanity, but what other books would you choose?
 - Whatever books are true, good, and beautiful.
- When a teacher does not know why he or she teaches, they are no longer free teachers.
 - The free man and the free woman can decide what to do and when.
 - A doctor is free because he knows the art of health and medicine.
 - Teachers need to know the principles of pedagogy to know when to sing, when to have the conversation, when to have the lecture, when to read poetry, when to read the fiction, and what to pull out of the literature.
 - Model joy. Children need to see you joyfully interacting with the book.
- As a parent, I would like to be able to help my children.
 - Read the books that your children read, discuss the books.
 - Find other parents in your community and start a reading group together. Read a good book slowly. Find someone to help you read it.
 - If you read only one great book slightly, that is better than reading a slight book greatly.
- How does she adjust her attitude to embrace this model for herself?
 - This is repentance, or turning back away from a mindset to one that is true, good, and beautiful.
 - This requires humility (to be a child in some way).
 - This is a task that is beyond us.
 - Don't go alone, find a group to do this with.
- Why are we going backwards?
 - We are going back to making a correction.
 - These ideas are perennially true.
 - These arts will bless you whether you are a farmer or a philosopher.
 - Classical education is always going to be a benefit to any human.



- Love the children that come to you, and they will receive an excellent education.
 - Seek to compliment the system.
 - Bless children with a good education.
 - People will start hearing about you and coming by word of mouth.
 - Regarding mastery, it is still better to master, go more slowly and we end up going faster in the end.
 - Be wise as a serpent and innocent as a dove in regard to the state system.
- Great teachers do use analogies and relate to the context where we find ourselves.
 - Augustine says you have to know history and geology to understand scripture well. This is the art of rhetoric.
 - There is a spiritual gifting to be a teacher. Some people have natural gifts. The talent needs to be developed.
- Luke 6, When a student is fully trained he will be like his teacher, but if a blind man leads a blind man they will both fall into a pit.
 - A teacher is the opposite of a blind man.
 - A teacher leads as someone with very good eyes, who has seen the beauty and the goodness and wants his students to come and see with their own eyes what he has seen.
 - A good teacher has a clean eye to see, repenting daily so he can see clearly by pulling the specks out of his students' eyes.
 - The teacher is a mature student, and a student is an immature teacher.