



The New Old Way Conference in Africa with Dr. David Diener

Presentation from Dr.
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Outline:

Four main kinds of differences that characterize the paradigm of classical Christian education.

- Foundational assumptions
 - The given-ness of the Cosmos and humanities task of conforming to it
 - Physical laws
 - Moral laws – if we break those laws there will be certain kinds of consequences
 - There are objective truths about the world. This calls us to action, “How should I respond to what is true about the world?”
 - What it means to flourish as human beings is to conform to the truths of the universe.
 - Classical education takes the purpose of education to be the holistic cultivation of human beings, not just job preparation.
 - The liberal arts education frees us to live well, and continue learning for the rest of their lives.
 - The goal is to teach people how to be human beings.
 - Education is about formation not just information.
 - We need engineers, doctors, teachers, lawyers, and economists, but we need people in those positions who are living well.
 - The unity of truth
 - We believe that God is the source of all truth.
 - Through special and general revelation, we have access to knowledge of God and His Creation.
 - All of the disciplines are interdependent on one another.
 - Because all truth is God’s truth, we don’t have to choose to rely upon science or the Bible. God revealed truth to us through both. If we interpret them correctly, they will never be in conflict with one another.
- Goals
 - Every model of education has a telos, a goal, or a vision of the good life. Every model of education is based on a set of values (to serve others, to live well, or to get a big car).
 - What ought the goal to be? The goal is not to transfer a body of knowledge, not to teach practical skills, not to prepare students for a



- specialized vocation. Rather the primary purpose of education is to cultivate students into virtuous human beings who are equipped to live well.
- Knowledge is a good thing, but it is not enough. There are a lot of smart evil people, we don't need more of them (clever devils).
 - Knowledge without virtue is pernicious (worse than useless).
 - Cultivating the loves
 - What we value and how we live flows from what we love.
 - Ordo amoris (St. Augustine)
 - What do your students love? Toward what type of ideas are their hearts inclined? Those loves will determine the kind of people they become.
 - Our task is to cultivate student loves so they will live virtuous lives. This is the primary purpose of education.
 - Curriculum
 - As much as possible, we try to use primary texts. We go to the sources.
 - The goal of education is to teach students to learn from what has gone before them.
 - Imitation precedes creation. If you want children to learn to be great poets, give them great poetry.
 - We should study the wisdom of the past in order to learn what it means to be a human being and live well. We should respect the past, learn from it, and continue growing.
 - The study of the liberal arts and ancient languages were the curriculum that was selected for being best at giving us the tradition and helping us to live virtuously.
 - Pedagogy
 - Memorization of information
 - Analysis and evaluation of the ideas of others
 - Eloquent and convincing expression of one's own ideas
 - We can learn from cognitive science and psychology.
 - The teacher is responsible for imparting knowledge and leading them in their own pursuit of knowledge, wisdom, and virtue.
 - The teacher is not just a professional clinician. The teacher and students are engaged in the same process of learning. The teacher is one who has gone down the trail before.
 - You can only teach well if you are a learner. You are the text from which students will learn.