



The New Old Way Conference in Africa with Dr. Brian Williams

Plenary Presentation
by Dr. Brian Williams

Outline:

Why is the church involved in this work?

- The church has always been involved in education, in most cases for Christian classical education.
- Many of these Christian educators taught both Christianity and the classics, piety and philosophy.
- St. Paul encourages us to think about whatever is true, noble, right, pure, admirable, and praiseworthy regardless of which of God's human creatures first discovered and articulated them.
- St. Augustine says that Christians are plundering the Egyptians when they read non-Christian writers. Did the truths belong to the Romans and Greeks to begin with?
- In gathering what is useful from these writings, let us guard against what is harmful.
- There are many things not revealed in scripture like how to cultivate virtue and how to run a government.
- We are the beneficiaries of those who came before us.
- It was a debate on African soil about whether and how to relate to the arts and literature developed outside of the Christian Church.
- Christian truth allows us to discern and cherish Truth, Goodness, and Beauty wherever we find them in whatever cultures, or artists, or authors.

The Church has always done classical Christian education because it aligns so closely with the Church's mission.

- The Church's mission is to preserve, promote, and protect holistic human flourishing of individuals and their cultures.
- The love we are called to demonstrate to our neighbors is not limited to one dimension of our neighbors. They have bodies, they are moral agents, intellectual creatures, artistic creatures, affective creatures, and spiritual creatures.
 - Classical Christian education takes seriously all these dimensions of our neighbors.

Children will be shaped by the schools in which they are embedded.

- Teachers need to be the kind of people we want our students to become.



- We need to be faculties of friends.
- To narrow the scope of education is to narrow the scope of human being.
- The telos of educations should be coordinated with the telos of human being.
- Students will be formed by our schools, the Church cares deeply how they will be formed.

Four Melodies that are played throughout this long tradition that give shape to classical education in the context of the Christian Church.

- Wonder
 - Looking at the sky and beholding the night stars.
 - Twinkle, twinkle little star. How I wonder what you are?
 - We wonder at the Divine and human creations and recognize that they are good.
- Learning
 - We want to understand through learning that is integrated.
 - Learning is a basic human good. Learning makes the world a less strange place. In knowing the world we are delighted by it.
 - The intellectual appetite needs to be morally normed.
- Love
 - This is rooted in the belief that God loves and desires the good of people in societies.
 - God rarely chooses to be God in isolation of us.
 - Liberal learning is to liberate other people.
- Worship
 - We need our poets to help us articulate.

Christian education teaches us what it will be to wonder, learn, love, and worship in the new Heavens and the new Earth.