



Growing Classroom Culture through Parent Partnerships with Robyn Burlew

Lecture 1: Establishing Your Classroom Culture as a Virtuous and Wise Leader

Outline:

Our imaginations have the power to shape our actions, as we live into the visions that we have in our minds.

- Are we imitating what we experienced as students?
- Without a vision for a flourishing classroom we will often gauge our success in management terms:
 - Efficiency, orderliness, output
- We are going to shape the culture of the classroom ourselves.

Virtuous Teacher

- What virtues will surround this teacher?
- The wise ruler will be depicted as a shepherd.
 - The shepherd will guard the sheep.
 - The shepherd puts the sheep in the right places (pastures).
 - The shepherd will seek after the lost sheep.
 - The injured sheep will be helped to heal.
- The virtues that surround this wise shepherd are **sacrifice** or **generosity** (magnanimity).
 - They will be generous with time, attention, and praise.
 - The wise shepherd is **not on the center or the stage** in the classroom. The shepherd is providing the conditions for the students to learn.
- The wise teacher will be **prudent** about who the students are in the class.
 - The wise teacher plans today with both the past and the future in mind.
- The wise teacher is **temperate** (selfless self-control), patient.
 - Temperance helps them to be fully engaged in the classroom.
- We shepherd with an expanded interest into who they are, versus the idea that we would be disinterested and detached.
 - What are the fruitful and wholesome activities that you students should be participating in?
 - What occupations should they engage in for a thriving classroom?
 - Your job is to build and guard the environment.
- What are the tasks of the shepherd?



- We need to define the boundaries of our classroom.
- We need to decide who and what comes into our classrooms.
 - Authors, curriculum, other voices come in based on what our students listen to and bring into the classroom
 - It takes discernment and wisdom to know how to guard this boundary (especially in times of political tension).
 - You may have a boundary of phones and smart watches (internet, notifications).
- A ruler has to build infrastructure.
 - The physical space is not just about efficiency.
 - Is this a space where conversation is easy to have?
 - We need to think about the infrastructure needed for times of work and rest.
 - What are the right rhythms for work and leisure (rest and recreation)?
 - There are fruitful activities that can be done during restful time.
- Master/Apprentice
 - The shepherd is out walking around with the sheep.
 - The shepherd is mastering before the apprentices these tasks that are going to be done.
- We need to give our students a vision for the good life.
 - We want the student's imagined fresco to be flowing out of them.
 - We help to form their imagination about the good life in the classroom.
- We need to give to the needy under our care, to give them encouragement and assistance.
- We also need to respond with retributive justice to disturbances among our sheep.
 - Is this a sheep causing this disturbance or is this a wolf?
 - A sheep is one who is usually coming along with the flock.
 - A wolf is one who is working against you all the time.
 - We need to respond virtuously to both a wayward sheep and a wolf.
 - Wayward sheep need to be pursued and invited to join the flock.
 - A wolf needs to be warned and separated from the sheep.
 - Two responsibilities:
 - We have responsibilities to the whole flock to guard them well.
 - We also have a responsibility to the disturber.

Vicious Teacher

- They will see themselves as king or queen.
- They will do things for their own convenience.
- They can be a hard driving person with demands that may be beyond the ability of the student.
- The unwise teacher is lenient:



- This stems from laziness and not caring enough to address things in our classroom.