Advanced Certificate in Classical Education for Parents
with Dr. Christopher Perrin

Outline:

The Liberal Arts set us free!

Mark Van Doren (Part 1 at 1:00; Part 2 at 26:22)
- 1894-1972; Professor of English Literature at Columbia University
- Van Doren, along with Gilbert Highet and Jacques Barzun, argued for the Classical Tradition of education rather than the progressive education of the 1950s.
- "The liberal arts are the liberating arts. They involve memory, calculation, manipulation, and measurement, and call for dexterity of both mind and hand. Without these powers no mind is free to be what it desires."
  - The mind and the hand reference contemplation (scholé) and activity!
- The thoughts of great minds and great books free humans from their own limitations, allowing them to grow beyond those limitations.
- The human mind wants to order the world and understand its harmony; the Liberal Arts allows humans to name (Trivium/language) and measure (Quadrivium/numbers).

Van Doren and the Justice of Liberal Arts (29:22)
- ***Democratization of a liberal education:*** A human with a mind is entitled to a liberal education; regardless of aptitude or capacity, every person deserves a liberal education.
- Liberal education is "a surgery of the soul," meaning that it is painful, but the results are strength, capacity, powers, and ultimately liberating.

Aristotle (7:36)
- 384-322 BC; Philosopher
- For the Greek or classical mind, true education was the cultivation of the human soul to be ***wise, eloquent, and virtuous***; this is a far cry from American education today, which aims for utility or practicality.
- Utility is important in education, but humans should really be aligning their souls to the harmony of the cosmos.

- Both utility (practicality) and theory (perceiving, understanding) are important in education.
- Education is delightful, but it is difficult!

St. Augustine (14:32)
- 354-430 AD
- Rhetoric teacher; Bishop of Hippo
- To compliment his ancient, classical education, Augustine said he could "read anything that was written, understand anything he heard said, and say anything he thought."
    - The careful use of grammar was useful for biblical reading & interpretation.
    - Logic was part of a divinely instituted system; to be made in the image of God was to think rational, logical thoughts.
- St. Augustine recommends classical education to instil *virtue and freedom*.

Cardinal John Newman (16:41)
- 1801-1890
- Priest, theologian, cardinal; began a Catholic University in Ireland
- Liberal Arts help humans reach "The Perfection of the Intellect," or the maturation & fullest development of the human intellect that allows humans to perceive truth.
    - Liberal Arts & classical education develop a mind that is clear, calm, and comprehending, or a mind that is free.

Eva Brann & St. John's College (35:14)
- Eva Brann: 1929—; Tutor and Dean at St. John's College in Annapolis, MD; Homeric scholar
    - "Education forges the bonds of freedom."
    - The Liberal Arts set us free from banal pursuits, from earthly bonds, and from inherited prejudice.
    - The liberal arts are the "proper beginnings," which are the basic skills and practices for anything else humans learn.
- **St. John's College Seal**: "*Facio liberos ex liberis Libris libraque*"
    - "I make free people out of children with books and a scale."
    - The 7 seals of St. John's College mirror the 7 Liberal Arts
- Scott Buchanan (founder of St. John's College's Great Books program), writes that the liberal arts are central to a traditional education; they are the building blocks from which all other arts grow.

Final Thoughts (46:30)
- The Liberal Arts allow for Moral Freedom.
- The Liberal Arts make way for Understanding and Service.

- o There are powers within a person that only liberal education can free for use!
- The Liberal Arts are essential for <u>Justice</u>.
  - o Human beings should be free; Liberal Arts, which set humans free, should be available for all who want them.