"SINE DOCTRINA VITA EST QUASI MORTIS IMAGO"

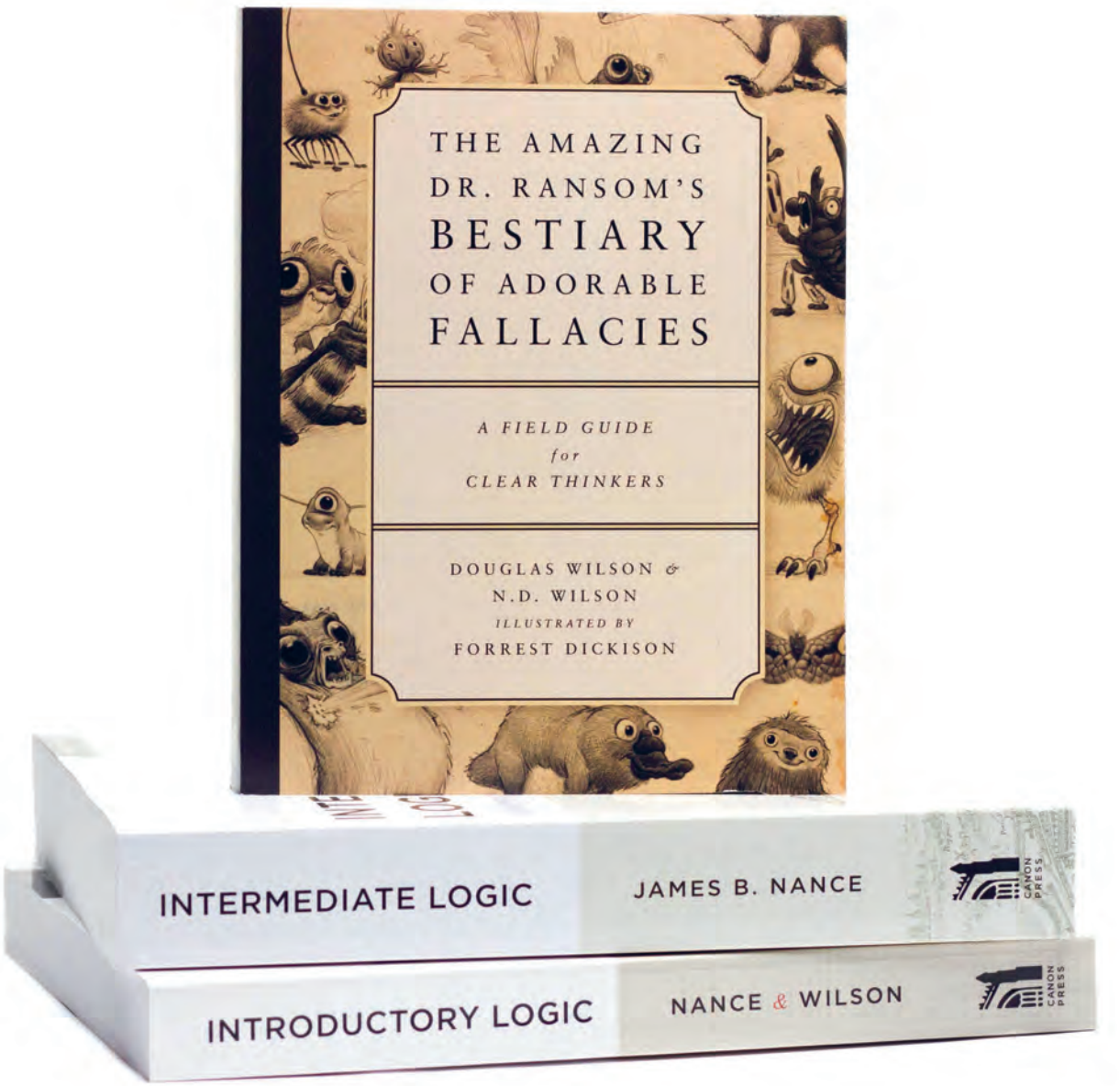
VOLUME XXII NUMBER III

CLASSIS

THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF CLASSICAL & CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

OCTOBER, 2015

HOT OFF THE PRESS



canonpress
moscow, idaho | www.canonpress.com

LEADERS IN CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Request a FREE Chapter Sampler today! orders@canonpress.com

Classical Academic Press

Classical Subjects Creatively Taught

Grades 1-3

"Classical Academic Press seems to have a knack for producing materials that are academically sound and very user-friendly for both teachers and students. Song School Latin does not disappoint. One of the appealing aspects of the program is the common, practical applications of Latin to children's everyday life." — Nancy Casari Dayton, TOS

Grades 4-7

"I love *Latin for Children* & *Latin Alive!* I teach Latin in our Middle and High School, and this is honestly the first curriculum I haven't had to rewrite (or at least seriously tweak) in order to teach it. It's all there, well written and fun to use. The kids love it, I love it, and I've seen the kids grow in understanding and application of the language." Thanks CAP!" —Jennifer Duncan, Latin Teacher

Grades 7-12

"Karen Moore and Gaylan DuBose have succeeded in the lofty goal of producing a truly outstanding textbooks to meet the needs of this new generation of Latin teachers and students. The text is engaging...The explanation of grammar is strait-forward and easily understandable. The illustrations enhance the text...Roman culture is presented in context and reinforced in the stories."
— Erin Davis-Valdez, M.A., Upper School Latin and Greek and Classics Department Chair

866-730-0711 • ***ACCS Schools 20% Off and Free Shipping***

THINK DIFFERENTLY.
RAISE THE STANDARD.
CHANGE THE WORLD.

veritas PRESS

SINGLE SOURCE—ONLY FOR ACCS SCHOOLS

The Single-Source program enables administrators to order virtually their entire curriculum and materials through Veritas Press—even items we don't typically carry. Benefits include:

EFFICIENT
—input your data and we manage your inventory

COST SAVINGS
—25% off of regular retail prices

EASY TO USE
—Purchase orders prepared by us for your approval

FLAT SHIPPING
—3% or 4% depending on your location

"I had many questions about purchasing curriculum, and Cassandra at Veritas Press got back to me very quickly and answered every question that I had. I couldn't be more pleased with choosing Single Source for all of our curriculum needs with Veritas Press!"—Elizabeth at Trivium Academy

800-922-5082 **VERITASPRESS.COM**

"SINE DOCTRINA VITA EST QUASI MORTIS IMAGO"

CLASSIS

THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF CLASSICAL & CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

VOLUME XXII NUMBER III | OCTOBER, 2015

CONTENTS

ACCS

Classical Christian education:
A New "Old-Way"

MISSION STATEMENT

The primary mission of this association is to promote, establish, and equip schools committed to a classical approach to education in light of a Christian worldview grounded in the Old and New Testament Scriptures.

CONTACT
Association of Classical & Christian Schools
PO Box 9741
Moscow, ID 83843

Phone: (208) 882-6101
Fax: (208) 882-8097
Email: DGOODWIN@ACCSEDU.ORG
Web: WWW.ACCSEDU.ORG

CLASSIS is a quarterly journal of articles and book reviews designed to support and encourage schools around the world which are recovering classical Christian education. Hard copies are available to ACCS members and by subscription.

Publisher: *David Goodwin* | **Senior Editor:** *Tom Spencer* | **Technical Editor:** *Deb Blakey*

TEACHING IN THE RUINS

by Dr. R. Albert Mohler Jr., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

A transcription from Dr. Mohler's plenary address at the 2015 Repairing the Ruins conference in Dallas, Texas.

I want you to know how impressed I've been by being here with you. It's been sheer delight to be here, to share experiences like that dinner last night, and the conversations that are taking place after the session and elsewhere. I am with you in common cause, I greatly respect what you are doing. I come to encourage you and to do everything I can to encourage the extension of this movement and the planting and flourishing of schools committed to classical and Christian learning.

It was very impressive this morning to hear Colby. [Colby was the 2015 ACCS Chrysostom Oratory second prize winner.] It's a remarkable achievement to speak at 8:00 in the morning on contemplation, to an audience rapt in attention. It's an indication, along with the artwork that accompanies me on this platform today, of the fact that your concerns are not in the abstract. They are in the concrete of students who are in your care and for whom you care a great deal. The pride you feel in a morning like this is an indication of what you should feel every morning in your schoolroom, every morning in the work that you do. It's just impossible, given the fluctuations in the human spirit, to be equally encouraged all the time. So, be encouraged.

Yesterday, I spoke of Augustine and the two cities as a framework for understanding the task of being a faithful Christian in a fallen world until Jesus comes. Each of these two cities is driven by its own love: the city of God driven by the love of God, the city of man driven merely by love of man. Once we come to understand the atonement accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ and His purpose in establishing a church—or as the apostle Paul says, "citizens of a heavenly kingdom"—the question for Christians is NOT, why are we now in that heavenly city? The question that comes to us is, why then are we still in this world? What is God's purpose in the city of man?

Dr. Al Mohler is the president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Dr. Mohler hosts two programs: "The Briefing," a daily analysis of news and events from a Christian worldview; and "Thinking in Public," a series of conversations with the day's leading thinkers. He also writes a popular blog and a regular commentary on moral, cultural, and theological issues at www.AlbertMohler.com.

When Jesus was asked, "What is the greatest commandment?" He responded by saying to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, and soul, and *mind*." But then he continued and said the second is like unto it, "you shall love your neighbor as yourself." Putting that into context, the answer Jesus gave concerning the first commandment would not at all have been a surprise. The *shema* found in Deuteronomy, the first verse—that a child in Israel would have memorized—that central verse is, "Hear O Israel the Lord thy God, the Lord is one and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and strength." But that second one—and you'll notice that Jesus said it so quickly, as if you can't have the one without the other, not in this life, not as a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ—"The second is like unto it, you shall love your neighbor as yourself." This is rather an obscure verse in Leviticus, raised by Jesus up into the level of being the **second greatest commandment**. "On these two hang all the law and the prophets."

That first commandment is the driving energy, the life of that first city, the city of God. But love of neighbor explains to a great degree why we are still in this world. It is for the task of missions and evangelism; Paul makes that very clear in a text like Romans 10. But it is also for the vale of soul-making. It is also so that the church of the Lord Jesus Christ will be the salt and light in a world that is desperately in need of an authentic Christian witness and testimony to Christian truth. Thus we have an important task to do, but we understand what the stakes are. The headlines announce them even if we try to hide ourselves. The stakes are incredibly high because the culture is turning in open antipathy to the very essential truths that made that civilization possible. We are finding ourselves facing a society that repudiates it own patrimony, is undercutting and subverting its ability to sustain itself. We see the evidence of this new Dark Age living before us. It is no exaggeration to say that there are barbarians who are now largely in control of much of this civilization.

But here I want to cite a more recent source, the late novelist Flannery O'Connor, who said that "we must push back against the age as hard as the age is pushing against us." It's a good thing to remember. We feel the age pushing against us, but Flannery O'Connor was certainly right when she said we had to "push back against the age as hard as it is pressing against us."

This morning I hope to press against the age just a bit by recapturing sixteen words that I hope will be helpful to us as we consider what it means to learn and to teach, to consider what it means to teach in the ruins, to rebuild education, and to serve a kingdom. Sixteen words.

Repairing the Ruins, by the way, is a theme in which I just find delight. I mentioned the fascination with ruins before. I learned a great deal several years ago when I was in Ephesus, ancient Ephesus. If you have been to Ephesus, you've seen an ancient city from centuries before the time of the apostle Paul—very important to us in biblical understanding because of the apostle Paul. The library that is there is an amazing thing to see. Here's the deal. You want the Germans to get there before the British, because the British carted everything off back to London. You also want the Germans to get there ahead of the Americans, because the Americans, following the current canons of archeology, believe that you should leave everything where it's found and just label and document it. The Germans love LEGO®. When they see ruins, they put them back together

again. It was a German archeologist who was put in charge of Ephesus and he basically glued the ruins back together. That has the marvelous advantage of being able to see something that you can say "that's a library." You look at this and imagine what it was like to walk along the pathways where the apostle Paul walked—to see from the Colosseum to the other ruins there in Ephesus, remnants of a culture that is long gone and was already waning in so many ways when the apostle Paul was there. Teaching amidst the ruins is not new for Christians. In its own way it's glorious.

Sixteen words. The first word is **love**. It need not be emphasized that the word love has been horribly corrupted in terms of our cultural conversation. But I intend to explain love not only in its complex biblical frame, but specifically as it applies to teaching. My witness in this is none other than Augustine. In order to have a full understanding of Augustine's understanding of the role of love in teaching, you have to put two of his works together: *De Doctrina Christiana* [*On Christian Doctrine*] and his book on the instruction of new believers [Editor's note: *De Catechizandis Rudibus*, or *For Instructing the Unlearned*], which is one of the most marvelous Augustinian works. It was written at the request of a deacon in another church, who wrote and asked Augustine to explain how the faith should be taught to new believers. It brings out the pastor in Augustine.

But love—in terms of teaching from a Christian worldview perspective, a biblical perspective—Augustine encapsulates it better than anyone, I believe, before or since in terms of the Christian tradition. He reminds us that teaching is an act of love. Teaching actually demonstrates and requires three different loves. The first of these is love of God. The Christian teacher teaches because the teacher loves God and it is God who has given teaching to His church. It's by teaching that God creates Christians and disciples, by the means of grace, by the preaching of the Word. But it is in the role of teaching, and as Augustine was specifically speaking of the teaching of new believers, it was the biblical instruction whereby new believers, the catechumen, would be developed in faith. He did so first of all because of God. He loves Christ. He loves Christ's church. He is animated by the love of God. Before there is a student in the room, before there is a *catechumen* in the room, Augustine loves being a teacher because he gets to teach that which glorifies God.

But the second love that Augustine indicated is love of the student. Actually, when we reflect upon it, it is virtually impossible to successfully and faithfully teach someone you do not love. You really can't hurl instruction at someone. Even though you may have wondered about this at times, you can't inflict instruction on someone. The only way to actually have a successful transfer take place in teaching and learning is for love to be a bond that draws teacher and student together. Love becomes an animating purpose of the teacher because the teacher loves those whom he/she teaches.

Now as a teacher in the classroom, I will tell you that this is one of the greatest surprises. It was a surprise to me. It was a surprise to me in a way different than the more familiar context, to me, of pastoral ministry. There is something about the sustained classroom experience that builds a relationship and makes possible a relationship that just isn't going to take place anywhere else. Think about the importance of what you do; just think back to your own days as a student and recognize just what kind of a bond there was—maybe not apparent or palpable every day, or every moment, or every class, or every lecture. But a bond, nonetheless, that was there in which you wanted to know more about this—at least in part—because this one who loved you wanted you to have this.

There's a third love. And that is the love of that which is taught. I think even the secular world understands that it is very difficult to successfully teach that which does not excite you. But the love of the subject matter

is something that we shouldn't be at any way reluctant to embrace and to articulate. We should expect that those who teach will be excited about that which they teach and will love it. They will find great pleasure in it. They will find themselves loving it in the sense as Augustine says they are drawn to it, they are drawn into it. You know that's so when you imagine it when you are not reading it, or teaching it, or preparing to teach it. That's what makes real education, and—in particular as Augustine understood it—general Christian education so powerful.

We have to rescue love from mere sentimentality and mere emotionalism. It has those dimensions. But as the New Testament reminds us, it is love that endures all things and bears all things. That's not something reducible to an emotive state.

The second word is **truth**. This is one of the most endangered words in our contemporary cultural moment and it's been endangered for some time. Stephen Colbert coined a word not too many years ago, "truthiness," as being what our society seems capable of either expecting or upholding as a standard. It doesn't actually have to be true in terms of corresponding to any objective reality; it doesn't have to have any ontological basis whatsoever, its just truthiness. Some years ago, Edmund Morris wrote a biography, or what was presented as a biography, of Ronald Reagan entitled *Dutch*. You may recall that he combined fictive and traditionally truthful, biographical techniques in this book. The publisher actually said that it was an improvement upon the traditional category of biography—truthful by being "*truthy*," a word that didn't yet exist. But nonetheless, that is where we are. When I became president of Southern Seminary one of the first works that I did was on postmodernism; that was what everybody was talking about, and necessarily so. Postmodernism is what the prophets of the mid-twentieth century saw coming in the collapse of modernity's audacity and its false claims. Eventually, the secularity of modernity and its totalitarian claims collapses into the idea that there can be no truth, there is no meta-narrative, there is no objective truth whatsoever. The problem is that just doesn't work. It's not a problem for us. The problem with postmodernists is that you can't be consistent postmodernist.

Richard Dawkins, one of the four horsemen of the new atheism, pointed out that there are no postmodernists at 33,000 feet. You are pretty much a modernist at 33,000 feet. I pointed out many times that you might want a postmodern historian, but you don't want a postmodern cardiologist. The folks who were insisting that the author is dead, and the text is indeterminate, and that reading is sheer subjectivity, and that it's a totalitarian imposition of a patriarchal authoritarianism to insist that the text has some stable meaning, they meant that about *Beowulf*. They didn't mean that about their tenure contract.

Postmodernism is now *passe* in the academy. But be not encouraged. It hasn't been replaced by something better. The barbarism on the American college and university campus is now being replaced by an open hostility to any enduring truth claims.

The third word that we have to recover is **beauty**. I have to make very clear that when we are talking about truth—and I thought this was the tautology at the time when Francis Schaffer used to say we have to talk about "true truth"—once we have made very clear we are talking about true truth, we have to talk about "true beauty" as well. This is one of the most injurious elements of marketplace evangelicalism. It is one of the most injurious dimensions of cultural Christianity. It is the deadly confusion of the pretty for the beautiful. They are not the same thing. In our fallenness, we are far too easily bought off by pretty and we lose beauty. The difference for the Christian should be abundantly clear when you consider the gospel of Jesus Christ. The cross of Jesus Christ is not pretty, but it is infinitely beautiful.

The Christian worldview explains why the face of a child with Down syndrome is infinitely and eternally

more beautiful than the fashion model on the front of the fashion magazine. It is because the Christian worldview is based upon an understanding of the unity of the transcendentals, one of the most important issues intellectually that we can keep in mind. This is a theological principle that reminds us that according to the biblical worldview, it is not because of the unity of the transcendentals in themselves, as the ancient Greeks might have thought, but rather the unity of the transcendentals **in God**—who alone is true, who alone is beautiful, who alone is good. The good, the beautiful, and the true are the same thing. We are living in a time of brokenness as C. S. Lewis and so many others saw, and those who came before him even saw in the late eighteenth century. It is the intentional effort in the Western world to separate the good, the beautiful, and the true that leads to the moral horrors of the most unimaginable twentieth century.

We have to recover the fact that the transcendentals—the good, the beautiful, and the true—are at core the same. But in our fractured fallenness, we require different categories to describe different dimensions of what is one reality. The good, the beautiful, and the true, find their only source, and their only ultimate fulfillment in the triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. We have to reclaim beauty.

We have to show the beauty of truth and the splendor of beauty. We have to show it in literature, we have to show it in art, in human expressions, and in culture. We have to show it in relationships. We have to show it also just in terms of everyday life where we show the beauty of a mathematical equation. It is, when it is *true*, beautiful. We have to show the beauty of human endeavor when a human being, made in the image of God—whether he or she knows it or not— demonstrates that glory in devising a vaccine, or building a bridge, or for that matter, holding the hand of a child. We must teach in order that the beauty that God has embedded in His creation—that is sometimes hidden from view in terms of a sinful world—is made evident by our teaching, so that we make very clear that not only is what we are teaching true, what we are teaching—because its *true*—is beautiful. And it's not only a matter of aesthetic consideration; it is that. It is more.

And then there is **goodness**, the other of the transcendentals here that we have to teach in such a way that we rescue goodness. And in this sense, it is inherently, irreducibly, inescapably moral. This society has lost any conception of the good life. It has lost any agreement or consensus on moral goods. It is losing its sanity as to whether or not it even believes that there is a goodness that might exist or be defined, even as aspirational. One of the main tasks of Christian education in our times is to rescue goodness and to make very clear there is an objective moral frame of reference that is revealed in Scripture. And that not only is it revealed in Scripture, which is our ultimate authority, it is even embedded in all of creation, as Paul makes clear in Romans 1.

To be made in the image of God is to have—as a part of what it means to be human in the *Imago Dei*—an instinct, not only for the reality of the true and the beautiful, but also of the good. That is to say that all instruction is moral instruction. There is no teaching that is not laden with moral importance. There is no effect of any teaching that is not eventually—and that usually means very soon—moral in its reality and in its expression. 2 + 2 equals 4 may not appear to be a moral statement, but it is. Thus it is not only wrong, it is immoral to suggest that 2 + 2 might equal something other than 4, rooted either in confusion or an attempt to deceive. The more complex the equation, the more complex the text, the more complex the curriculum, the more enters in a danger to lose the true, the beautiful, the good.

Fifth, we have to rescue **knowledge**. It is an amazement to me but I was recently talking to a secular educator about controversies over—you aren't going to

be surprised at this—Common Core. As an educational authority I said, "I'm just trying to get into the inner logic of this." I said, "I did you the disfavor of reading your text. Because now I have to ask you, over here in these teacher aims, you say that the effort of the teacher should be to inculcate a certain kind of knowledge that students should be able to repeat on a test, etc. But over here you just list subjects and knowledge disappears. You clearly don't think knowledge here is possible." That's the kind of world we are living in, a world split apart. Our task as Christian educators is to redignify knowledge. That is an amazing thing. I can't imagine going to my primary school teachers and saying, "One of the purposes of my adult life is going to be to recover the dignity of knowledge." "What do you think we are doing here?" "Well. What she was doing there is not what is being done now, I can tell you that."

At the highest levels of the academic establishment, knowledge itself is increasingly subverted. Everything is being exchanged from knowledge for theory. And this is now taking place, most frighteningly, even in many of the disciplines and arenas of higher education that were thought to be largely immune from this: mathematics, the hard sciences, the applied sciences. It was considered for many years that it's one thing for the English department to go nuts; it's another thing for the engineers to lose their minds. It goes back to the problem of postmodernism. No one wants a postmodern engineer. You just want a postmodern architect, you want it to look like its defying truth, but the superstructure is going to have to be true. But discipline by discipline, this corruption of knowledge has filtered down.

When I was in middle school myself, I can remember a teacher saying, "I don't really believe that anything meaningful is learned by memorization." It's like we were supposed to have an emotional experience with the subject matter. The only way I got through it was by memorizing it. One of the glories of the Christian worldview revealed in Scripture is that *knowledge is bankable*: "Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee." You know it's bankable. Every mom, every parent, knows that knowledge is bankable. You are actually investing in a knowledge account in a child's mind, in a child's soul, in a child's heart. That child might not even know he knows—and most certainly might not even know why he knows it.

But you are recovering and rebuilding education understanding that knowledge itself is dignified by the Christian worldview. There is no apology for inculcating knowledge by the old means of memory, and recitation, and repetition, and honoring knowledge.

The sixth word is **wisdom**. Here again Scripture is so clear. Knowledge and wisdom are not the same thing. They are inseparable, but they are distinguishable. When you are looking at knowledge you are looking at that which we know. But wisdom is that ability to see through that which we know, to see what lies behind it and before it, its ultimate source in God, and its ultimate application in this life, its truthfulness and endurance in the life to come. Scripture tells us to prize wisdom. The Scripture also makes very clear that wisdom is that which we should seek; but ultimately, it is an act of God's grace—wisdom is a gift of God. It's that gift that you get to see. But one of the most frustrating aspects of education at any level, whether its kindergarten or all the way up to the Ph.D. seminar, is you really don't get to see. You can test knowledge. You really don't have the opportunity, in the crucible of that classroom, or seminar room, or educational experience, to test wisdom. That will come later as it's tested by experience and tried by fire. The reality is we are desirous that our students would learn to lean into wisdom and to seek it, and to pray that to their knowledge God would add wisdom, that they could apply truth to every dimension of their lives for as long as they will live.

The Christian teacher understands that wisdom isn't just a matter of intellectual activity. Again Scripture

helps us to understand this. The Scripture reveals to us that wisdom is something that eventually changes how we feel, our affective dimension, our intuitions. In my middle-aged years, this is one of the things I pray most for myself. I pray that my intuitions are ordered according to truth and wisdom. The longer I live the more I feel the urgency to pray that my initial response, my emotional responses—before any extended cogitation—would be ordered by wisdom.

The seventh word is **tradition**. It's just an undeniable fact that the name of your organization includes some fighting words: *classical* and *Christian*. Classical. You guys are reprinting really old stuff that you had to go find somewhere. And you are doing so without apology. You are saying that dead people have a voice in the most important education that you can offer today. Chesterton, you'll recall, referred to tradition as the democracy of the dead. It's where the dead get to show up and speak and in a certain way to vote.

I was greatly informed in my doctoral work by the Yale historian Jaroslav Pelikan, who reminds us that "tradition is the living faith of the dead. Traditionalism is the dead faith of the living." That's the distinction. We are not worshipping tradition, we are not seeking tradition as a dead thing to which we are nonetheless obligated and committed. *We are seeking to be a part of a tradition*. We are seeking to reclaim it without apology. We want the dead to speak. We want to go back to the patriarchs and the prophets. We want to go back to Christ and the apostles. We want to go back to the fathers, and we want to go back to the reformers, and we want to go back to any number of people in between and beyond, in order to be a part of a conversation of which we are not capable. It is simply a matter of humility that we acknowledge that if we do not reclaim that great tradition of learning, if we do not reclaim that great Christian tradition of thought, if we do not reclaim classical knowledge and wisdom that had been lost, if we do not recover these things, then we will never be able to escape the intellectual, cultural, moral, unimaginative limitations of our own time—and they are massive.

We will cut ourselves off from that which even tells us who we are. So, don't apologize for requiring old books. Don't apologize for requiring old writings. Don't apologize for inviting people dead for centuries into your classroom. Don't apologize for introducing them and making clear that they matter. And in some sense, because of what they wrote and what they said and what they did, they are still here, as Chesterton would have us to understand.

Language is the eighth word. Not too long ago, I was in a debate having to do with what makes human beings distinctive. When are you debating someone who operates from a consistently secular worldview on what makes human beings distinctive, they come up with some amazing things. They do believe that human beings are distinct in some way, because after all we get driver's licenses and bears don't. (And even though a New York judge recently gave two chimps their day in court, the chimps didn't show up in court, and their attorney was not a chimp.) In this debate, a social scientist said, quite seriously, what differentiates homo sapiens from other advanced primates is our ability to cook! I just want to tell you I'm not going to hang human dignity on that because I've eaten some food that calls that into question! But there is something to that, there really is. I hadn't really thought of that before; that is a distinction. After all, it's the bears that come across our campfires, we don't come across theirs. But if human dignity is going to be reducible to the ability to cook, most millenials are sub-human. That's not going to work. Now again, if you are going to reject the Imago Dei, if you are going to reject the biblical anthropology, then you are going to have to come up with something crazy! At least throughout most of more recent centuries, and even going further back to the ancient Greeks, there's been the understanding that what distinguishes human beings from other creatures is language.

Language is one of God's gifts. And Scripture has an entire meta-narrative just on language. Just think of the Tower of Babel. Thank of the table of the nations. Think of Peter at the day of Pentecost and Paul at Mar's Hill. Think about the marriage supper of the Lamb and you realize language is playing some very, very, important roles here—what it means to be made in God's image. We are the creatures with the ability to use language to communicate. Of course we understand that with language we can say things that are good and beautiful and true or we can say things that are evil and horrifying and ugly. But we have to recover language as one of God's gifts to us. Linguistic ability is part of the Imago Dei. We have to recover language and we have to help our students to love words, and love language, and learn how to express good, beautiful, and true things in language.

Now it's very easy at a point like this simply to say the world's going to hell in a handbasket called an iPhone. But the world is going to hell in a hand basket called an iPhone in a sense—when you look at this you realize increasingly it is not just young people (I'm not going to just throw young people under the bus here)—it's increasingly an entire civilization that is reducing itself to emoticons and text messages. You have to wonder how many people are actually going to read books or have an extended conversation.

I am writing a book right now entitled *The Art of Christian Conversation*. It's not going to be massive. It's going to be a fairly small book, but it's a book I'm writing out of frustration. It's not just generational, but it's somewhat generational. There are so many people who lack the ability to have a conversation. It just seems that somehow we are going to have to tell people how to have a conversation. By the way, there were conversational guides that were written back in the age of the gentlemen in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, because during that time it was believed that conversation was one of the most essential social responsibilities and a discipline and art that had to be learned. It turns out that is true and when it's not learned around the dinner table, and when it's not learned in the organic context that we would expect, it's going to have to be learned somewhere. Language itself is something that is just disappearing from our culture. The vocabulary of the average eighth grader today is significantly reduced from the vocabulary of the average eighth grader twenty years ago. That's a big problem. You are a big part of the answer to that problem.

We are the ones who understand that by being made in the image of God, we are giving the gift of language such that it can be deployed, it can be received, it can be understood. It reveals every dimension of fallen humanity in terms of the ability to say the good things, the ugly things, the true things, or the false things. We are not human without language.

The ninth word is **reading**. Once again, have no apology for requiring reading. I have parents who come to me all the time because I talk so much about books and reading, and they say, "How can I get my child to read; I can't get them to read." And I say, "Yes, you can; yes, you can." Now I will say there is a problem here already. Most children are naturally drawn into reading by having books read to them, such that at some point, having been exhilarated and enriched and their hearts shaped and warmed by the relationship that comes from a parent or a grandparent reading a book to them, or an older sibling reading a book to them, they want to be able to do this for themselves and find themselves in the glory of reading. Increasingly, it is something that we are having to teach people to do, in the hopes that doing it they will learn to love it, even if at far later ages than outside that organic context. But give no apology for an education that is classical, an education that is Christian, in reading.

I've come to the conclusion that what is read gets to the heart faster than almost any other means of transmission—and more lastingly. There's an interesting study—there is a difference between young girls and

young boys in this, even more so for boys. Some of you have no doubt seen this research, that reading a text is now measurably different on a printed page than on a screen. It's because, for one thing, there is a tactile experience to holding a book. There's also a visual experience that is tied to the sensory capabilities in which turning a page and holding a book creates a wholly different experience than holding a flat screen and simply moving a finger. There's more to it than that, but not less than that. It simply reminds us that we have to recover reading without any apology.

Augustine heard those words "*tolle lege*," take and read. The apostle Paul, at the very end of his life, writing to Timothy said to "bring the books and parchments. Come if you can before winter." It's a reminder to us of the importance of reading, the dignity of reading, the glory of reading. We've got to recover this. It's not just reading strategies. That's what's being taught increasingly in higher academia—that's ideology again, that's theory. We are talking about reading.

Moms usually ask me this, dads too sometimes: "How can I get my 10-year-old son to read?" It's as if they have to get the kid's permission before they can read. You are the parent—make him read. Test him on it. Have you ever thought about this? Test him on it at the breakfast table! "You aren't going to eat." The other thing I said is, "Look, you are not the most reliable guide to what is going to be interesting to a 10-year-old boy." My parents just let me read. I don't mean indiscriminately. When I was interested in sharks and rattlesnakes or whatever, I had to do all the stuff I had to do, but then I could read anything I wanted to read on sharks and rattlesnakes—which was just about everything that was ever printed on sharks and rattlesnakes. My capacity and love for reading were such that I just wanted to get to the next one, get to the next one, get to the next one.

The **teacher** is the tenth word. In the eighth grade my family moved from a small southern town to the megalopolis of south Florida. But I moved in more ways than one; I moved from a junior high school to a middle school when I shifted one grade. I moved from a classroom where there was a teacher in the front, and desks, and we all sat up straight. We stood up when the teacher entered the room. We did the pledge of allegiance in the morning. Then, I walked right into Greenwich Village for the eighth grade. It was one of those experimental schools; my parents had no clue what I was getting into. There were no classrooms. It was one giant room with 880 middle schoolers in one room because "walls are divisive; we don't want to divide." It was the school without walls—don't you love that? And we didn't have teachers. I had a teacher in the seventh grade; I didn't have a teacher in the eighth grade—we had a facilitator. Now, I had no idea what was going on at Berkeley in the 60s when I was in the eighth grade—well, I kind of did, because I was staring at it. But I had no idea what this was looking like and where it had come from. Back in the 60s and 70s they were saying, "We don't need any sage on the stage, we just need a guide on the side, man." You had the subversion of the teacher as authority in the classroom. The teacher is now just a facilitator, because otherwise it's going to be a totalitarian imposition of curriculum and didactic authority in the lives of these otherwise genius children. I can still remember thinking, "No one is in charge here; we're not learning anything." I went home. "What are you learning?" "Nothing. I'm not learning anything." I just went into refuge in my own world during all of this. I just watched this chaos. It was a year lost to me in terms of the classroom experience. I can't remember learning *anything* other than survival in that setting. But I very clearly understood these people did not want to teach me anything.

We need teachers to teach. Here again the biblical worldview helps us a great deal. There is authority in teaching. There's supposed to be authority in teaching. The teacher is there for a reason. The teacher is there not only to impart knowledge but also to guide this process

and to make certain that the classroom is an experience in which learning can take place. It is a verb "to teach." The teacher is the one who does that. It's not fair to make the contrast "the sage on the stage versus the guide on the side." Let me be very, very blunt: we need someone on the stage. And we need someone doing more than guiding from the side.

The eleventh word is **school**. We have to redignify the idea of the school even as the early church came to understand the school of Christ and as the early church appropriated classical models of schooling. We do understand that there is something powerful, important—there's a stewardship that is palpable. There is an opportunity that is precious. In putting together a school in which you have an organized context for learning, something happens because students and teachers are together in the context of disciplined and intentional learning that isn't going to take place anywhere else.

So without apology, when you have as the name of your organization the Association of Classical and Christian Schools, be schools. Don't just be places where people show up to do the same sort of stuff. Make certain there is a unity of vision, a unity of mission, a unity of conviction, a unity of worldview, a unity of purpose. Make certain that it's something other than being in the same rough geographic proximity, or moving from one classroom to another, from one grade to another. Let there be a unified school that is represented by what you do to recover that.

Child is the twelfth word. Here again, going back to Rousseau and any number of developments—especially in the Enlightenment—is the confusion about what the child is. The 1970s, the 1960s, were filled with all kinds of arguments, basically coming from the most humanistic directions imaginable, like the Summerhill experiment and all the rest. You had a revival of Rousseau, in which the child is just basically good, and what you have to do is avoid doing anything to harm the child's natural development along the path of enlightenment.

We have to recover the biblical understanding of the child. It is a far more accurate picture to say the very least; it's also a far more endearing picture. We understand what it means to embrace the biblical understanding of the child, we come to understand that we are *not* looking at *tabula rossa*, we aren't looking at blank slates, we are looking at little sinners—glorious, little wiggling sinners. And we come to understand that God has created us such that by His glory and intentionality, we are not born as adults but rather we are to develop along a timeline in which childhood is so very, very important. What you do in influencing children, as children, is priceless and infinite. Enjoy it. Enjoy it! Enjoy working with children, as I know you do. What an incredible opportunity for parents to entrust to you their children in order that their children might be not only more educated but more godly, more moral, more attracted to the good, the beautiful, and the true, more grounded not only for this life, but also for the life to come.

We also have to recover the idea of the **adolescent**. A recent headline in the *New York Times*, just this week, writes of how young must you be to demand transgender surgery—it's a horrifying article at every conceivable level. One of the things it's talking about is that children as young as X or Y, should now be able to demand and receive this kind of surgery. Talk about a rebellion against a created order. Talk about a horrifying embrace of irrationality. It's just horrifying! Look at what it also says about the disappearance of adolescence. One thing we have is the extension of adolescence, in which adolescence is now being redefined into the late twenties and thirties, sociologically speaking. I'm talking about that period educationally defined in which the transition is being made from the child to the adult. There is an intellectual component that is traceable to the development of two things in particular, and that is abstract thinking and a moral crisis.

This is what I try to help Christian parents understand. You want that moral crisis to happen, because without it they will never grow to become mature believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. The difference between the eight-year-old and the thirteen-year-old is that the thirteen-year-old is asking questions knowing that it might have been otherwise. She could have been born to Hindu parents in India. This might have turned out differently had this happened. The moral crisis that comes with adolescence is something that virtually every wise civilization has understood in order to surround adolescents at that stage with moral maturity and moral truth and with loving moral guides to help them through the moral crisis. Today, this society is trying to seduce adolescents into an enduring moral crisis.

Christian education is committed to seeing them through to the other side of it. This is where I often cite an unlikely source and that is Oliver Wendell Holmes who said that there are two forms of simplicity. There's the simplicity on the near side of complexity, and there's simplicity on the far side of complexity—and the latter is far to be preferred over the former. With a child you have simplicity on the near side of complexity. They don't understand moral complexity. They can't think as other minds would think. They can't abstract themselves. They are not capable of that type of abstract thinking. There's simplicity there and it's sweet, but it's not going to be sweet in a forty-year-old. In this world, in this age, it's growing far more rare to find someone who achieves what we biblically would define as a simplicity of truth, a simplicity of affirmation, a simplicity of conviction, on the far side of complexity—having worked through the issues, having been guided through a process of careful thought and responsible conversation. Our goal is to help students, especially in the high school and the college experience, attain a simplicity on the other side of complexity.

Let's recover **time**. As you know, education isn't instant. There are instances of recognition, instances of understanding. There are flashes that just happen, and when they happen they are glorious. You can sometimes see a student's face come alive when, all of the sudden, at one moment in time they get it and they love it and they are excited by it—there's that "aha" moment. But those aren't all that often if we are honest. We are sowing seeds for a very, very long cultivation, for a harvest that we may never actually get to see ourselves. But that should not dissuade us in any way for understanding that time is also a gift; we can't download an authentic education. It has to be received over time, seasoned over time, contemplated over time, tested over time, and demonstrated over time.

We need to remember that education is **basic**. By this I mean what the Catholics refer to as subsidiarity. It's the principle that that which is most basic is most powerful—which is to say, if the family breaks down you can't have a welfare system to replace the absence of parents. That which is more basic, the family, has to be strong if civilization is going to be strong. You can't have a strong society if the bases of society are destroyed.

So in terms of this particular conversation, I want to remind us that what we are really trying to do is to encourage parents to be the teachers of their children and to hopefully work in concert with or under the direct supervision of churches that are assuming their responsibility, which is prior to the responsibility of the school. We understand that the school cannot replace—must not dare idolatrously replace, arrogantly or overreachingly replace—the family or the church. Rather, do everything to serve the church and families in such a way that that which is more basic than what we schools do may be encouraged and not subverted by our task.

The last word, as we think about all of this, is **kingdom**. We are not seeking merely to build a civilization. That's one of the nice by-products. We are not primarily concerned about the culture and the society—that's the responsibility, that's part of what it

means to be the city of man, that's part of what it means to bear this responsibility as image bearers and as a redeemed people. We are ultimately serving a kingdom. It's that city of God that is ultimately the source of all of our confidence. If our hopes are for this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. Every one of those students you teach is going to die. Everything you have done will eventually die with you in the city of man. Nothing is actually lasting in the city of man. Nothing.

But in contrast, nothing in the city of Christ, in the city of God, is ever lost. Nothing in Christ's kingdom is ever lost. Given the stresses and strains in education, given the pressures and the continual political battles, given the economic issues, given the structural problems, given the students and parents and donors, just given the weight of all of this and the increasing complexity of all of this, if I thought I was doing this merely for the city of man I would quit. And if you do it long enough, merely for the city of man, then you are going to be even more disappointed because you are going to find out that a lot of your students don't turn out like you intended. At least, it doesn't look that way.

On the other hand with a kingdom perspective, we are eschatological in our educational mission. We are driven by the gospel and by the love of God to do what we do knowing that nothing that is done in the kingdom, for the kingdom, will ever be lost. You are not merely teaching students. You are shaping citizens of a heavenly kingdom. And in that sense, nothing will ever be lost.

So while we seek to recover and rebuild in the ruins, people are scratching their heads all around us trying to figure out, why are these people doing these things? "Why are all these books by dead people showing up? Why are these thirteen-year-olds memorizing stuff that other thirteen-year-olds don't even care about or know about? Why? Why? Why?" We can say, "To put the matter bluntly, it's because this is what education actually looks like." And then we can say, "But we aren't doing it merely for this reason. We are citizens of a heavenly kingdom by God's grace seeking to form, to upbuild, to encourage, to educate, to inspire little citizens of a heavenly kingdom to one day take their place in that kingdom and do what we do till Jesus comes." Amen. God bless you all.

THINKING CHRISTIANLY ABOUT THE LIBERAL ARTS

by Robert M. Woods, The Covenant School

The incarnation calls us to the things of this world. So when we consider the following quotes about the liberal arts we must begin and end there:

- "What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?"—Tertullian
- "What has Ingeld to do with Christ"?—Alcuin (when catching some monks reading Beowulf)
- "What has Horace to do with the Psalter? Or Virgil with the Gospel? Or Cicero with the Apostle?"—Jerome

Just as the Logos, God Himself, became flesh, and just as God's words and wisdom were penned by human hands in particular times and places, Christians, as embodied beings, are called to be in the world. We are called to a healthy, robust terrestriality, without compromising our calling. Engagement with the world–in all of its God–imbued glory intertwined with human wretchedness–requires wisdom from God, a wisdom that assists us to be faithful. Just as the incarnation was ultimately about redemption, it is the task of the Christian to redeem all that can be redeemed. Paul tells the very worldly Corinthians to "take captive every thought for Jesus Christ." We can do this by imitating the enfleshed Word of God and by dwelling in God's Words while we live in God's world.

It is grand news indeed that we are not alone. There have been many who have been faithful in this endeavor

Tertullian

for thousands of years. Remember the examples of John of Salisbury and what he did with his *Metalogicon*, or Hugh of Saint Victor's *Didascalicon*, or Dorothy Sayers's "The Lost Tools of Learning." The shape, tone, contours, and content of the liberal arts in the West has been thoroughly developed by the Christian worldview. It is the Bible, more than any other writing, that informs the great intellectual liberal arts tradition to such a degree that ignorance of the Bible makes apprehension of our

Robert M. Woods, PhD, is a senior contributor at The Imaginative Conservative. *He is the head of school at the Covenant School in Dallas, Texas. His work has been published in several journals.* *This article, originally published September 18, 2013, at* The Imaginative Conservative *(http://www.theimaginativeconservative.org), is reprinted by permission.*

humane past nearly impossible. Indeed the Bible was institutionalized in the Western intellectual tradition until the modern world, and the modern world's reaction to the Bible can be seen as persistent mass rebellion against that tradition.

The liberal arts have been in decline for a number of decades and the attacks on this tradition come from various fronts. There are those who have called for all education to be "immediately practical" and "eminently usable," who have called for the end of these "irrelevant studies" that "waste our time on fruitless" intellectual endeavors. These utilitarians are the modern-day equivalent of the ancient slave owners. All considerations about the issue of what it means to be human are framed in terms of "man as worker" who is best educated when pragmatism governs the work week and consumption is the chief end.

Not all the enemies of liberal learning are managers of middle-class America. There are those in the academy, who have been "educated" in modern day "wisdom" to have a posture of disdain toward the Great Tradition. In fact, much of the attack begins there. We should recognize these enemies of the permanent things as anti-traditionalists. I once had an exchange with an individual who claimed there was no great tradition or Western intellectual heritage. I assured him that the Great Tradition is as real as Narnia and my birth city of Rochester, NY. All real in different ways, but real, nonetheless. These are all places we can inhabit and that, in turn, inhabit us. Unfortunately, there are those who would state that since they have never been to Rochester or Narnia they do not exist. This is modern narcissistic folly.

Much like Christianity in twenty-first century America, liberal learning has fallen to the wayside due more to sheer apathy than overt attacks. The masses care little about anything that happened fifteen minutes ago, let alone fifteen-hundred years ago. This apathetic posture has done tremendous damage. And the people in the academy have come to passionately embrace it. Instead of the good, the true, and the beautiful, one can now major in the relative, the mundane, and the insipid.

Possibly the worst enemy, omnipresent in the academy and pervasive throughout society, is an extraordinary level of ignorance about the liberal arts. Shortly after I received my PhD in humanities, a well-intentioned but astonishingly ignorant fellow asked me in the most sincere tone, "Why would a Christian get a PhD in humanism since humanism is opposed to God?" After several minutes of trying to explain to him that I did not spend years pursuing a degree in humanism, but in the humanities, I yielded to him and said, "I'm not sure." Willful ignorance trumps learning and persuasion almost every time. Within the academy, I gave up years ago trying to explain the value of the study of the humanities to my colleagues in the "hard and social sciences." As they have boldly declared in various ways, "We know how things really work in the world with the aid of our disciplines." I have decided that there are certain treasures that ought not to be placed before certain critters where mud-like ignorance is the grime of their habitation.

There are things many humans desire toward a different end than merely knowing those things. Most college students now attend college, not to learn for the sake of learning, but to acquire the skills necessary for gainful employment. Times have indeed changed. Not many decades ago, the primary motivation for attaining a college education turned toward the immediate end of earning wages. Oddly, we are at a moment when many, if not most, graduate with neither.

To paraphrase Scripture, what does it profit a person to go to college for four years? It seems the answer now is to establish the beginning of twenty-five years of student loans and a certificate of achievement, still called a diploma. The sad fact is that the college diploma has become synonymous with the elementary school award, "Everyone Is a Winner."

In the best and highest sense, a liberal arts education is a liberation from something and for something. It is liberation from the kind of narrow training that restricts one to a single trade, or skill, and a myopic vision of all that is good, true, and beautiful. Humane learning is that which moves us toward a life of happiness beyond labor, feeding, and rest. When a human soul has been expanded and ennobled by liberal learning, he is able to recognize, and desires to embrace, that which makes him distinctly human.

A human who has reaped the full benefits of a liberal arts education knows how to recognize the true even when swimming in a sea of propaganda. He knows the good even in an age that humorously declares there is no good. The privileged human who has received that rarest of education will know and treasure the beautiful in an age of crass consumption.

Ideally, a liberal arts education, fully informed by Christian conviction, will make students unfit for the modern world. Much of our Western world, shaped by the odd marriage of Enlightenment arrogance, Romantic consciousness, and Industrial consumerism is contrary to the virtues of those who inhabit the kingdom. While there are tensions and some inconsistencies intellectually within the Great Tradition—ones that Mortimer Adler argued should be forced to speak with one another so that the truth can be heard—there is much more of compliance, agreement, and derivation to be found here.

Thinking Christianly about the liberal arts means not merely to give attention to the content, but is the very means of thinking about that content. In other words, in addition to what is analyzed, it is the process of analysis that was historically, thoroughly informed by the Christian faith. Within the history of the Christian intellectual tradition, the liberal arts have been appreciated first and foremost as pillars of wisdom and also as intrinsic goods gifted from God, even when discovered in Egypt and Babylon. The consensus among early Christian thinkers was that all truth is God's truth and this remains the consensus to this day among those who have learned from the one greater than Solomon. When faithfully adhered to, this conviction provides freedom.

A major contention of thinking Christianly about the liberal arts, implicit throughout the West until the Enlightenment, is that if the liberal arts are to survive in a meaningful manner or even thrive with new and significant scholarship, it must be among Christians—unique communities, and institutions shaped by Christian conviction. While I know and trust that there are those old school humanists still fighting the good fight, their days are numbered. I desire to be counted among a people who recognize the eternal value of this kind of education rooted in the permanent things. It is to those people I offer encouragement: you are not alone. There is hope and help from the great cloud of witnesses to the Great Tradition. We are strengthened and aided if we have but ears to hear and eyes to see.

Books mentioned in this essay may be found in the *Imaginative Conservative* Bookstore.

NOTES:

1. Licensed under public domain via Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tertullian.jpg#/media/File:Tertullian.jpg

THE IMPORTANCE OF BRANDING IN SCHOOLS:
DEVELOPING A WHOLE SCHOOL CULTURE

by Mark Anderson

Culture is really important. Get it wrong, things fall down around your ears. Get it right and you can be on to a winner!

The term "branding" as you'll most likely know, comes from the age-old practice of charring the skin of your cattle with a mark. Sometimes this is done to mark it as your own cattle and additionally to separate out different animals within your stock. In business, branding follows a similar principle in that you have a mark which represents your product. In business, the branding is tied to the logo and ultimately what it represents. The image should be simple, recognizable, and be found across all of your documentation and products. We see this very clearly on major "brands."

I recognize the fact that schools are not businesses but there are lots of parallels. Schools have employees. These employees are people who need to buy into the culture, vision, and mission of the organization, albeit not as a "business" per se. Additionally, schools have budgets, they manage reasonably large sums of money, and they are definitely expected to get results. You see, businesses and schools are not too far apart, and when it comes to successful businesses, it's important to get your branding right. It reflects your whole company ethos, culture, and overall success. Branding is in essence your school's vision. This post aims to examine how you can go about branding your school and combining that branding to your whole school vision.

A good friend of mine who spoke to me while I was writing this post said, "So what about businesses where it becomes all about the logo? What if the logo and what it represents is empty and reflects rubbish, poor quality, and an empty organization?"

I replied that firstly, she should probably wait until the whole post was written before passing comment. I then moved on to talk about it just being a whole strategic part of reinforcing the vision. When it comes to branding in schools—whilst in business it might be tied to the logo, which is of course important—in schools it is more about what it represents.

Mark Anderson is a former assistant headteacher, an award winning blogger and education technology expert, keynote speaker, best-selling author of Perfect ICT Every Lesson *and independent consultant. This article, published September 14, 2015, at ictevangelist.com, is reprinted by permission. Contact Mark at mark@ictevangelist.com or @ICTEvangelist or learn more at http://educationevangelist.com.*

Take the logo above. The logo above is a coat of arms with a motto of "Garde Ta Foy"—translated from the Latin meaning "keep the faith." You aren't likely to find many logos or emblems of a school in the UK older than that of Sir Thomas Rich's Grammar School for Boys in Gloucester. Founded in 1666, this school (which happens to be the school I attended) still runs today. It regularly features as one of the best schools in the country to attend and the results are stellar. Some might take that to be down to the fact that the school is a select entry school. I would probably agree. One thing that the school cannot be judged poorly on, however, is its lack of culture with regards to learning.

Routine, rules, expectations, and boundaries at this school are absolutely rigid. The result of centuries of deliberate practice and reinforcement of a good learning culture means that student behavior for learning is superb. The house system has a heritage to it that breeds a healthy and positive competitive culture throughout the school. The annual events such as Founder's Day and the Christmas concerts, the assemblies with their rigid routine, and various house events are just as important a part of the culture in the school as the lessons that take place across the curriculum. The walls noted with the accolades of students past and the wall of remembrance serve to remind students of the heritage of the school, what is possible with hard work and the dedication of previous students who gave their lives for the country. Everything within the school points towards the culture and ethos of the school and its logo and motto.

In business, your brand is your promise to your customer. It tells them what to expect from your product or services. The brand is derived from who you are, what you want to be, and who people perceive you to be. In education, this means tying your branding very heavily to your school's vision. What do you want learning to be like? What sort of culture do you want? What do you want the school to look like, feel like, sound like, smell like??? Once you have done this, fill the school with this and make it sing and breathe through your staff. Headteachers should be multipliers in that they give much of themselves to make their teams better than they are.

In writing this post I'm reminded of a post by Carl Hendrick of Wellington College titled "The Scourge of Motivational Posters and the Problem with Pop Psychology in the Classroom"[1] which ended up getting picked up by the *Daily Mail*. I agree with Carl to a certain extent, and certainly, this post could be seen in many ways to be a response (albeit a pretty tardy one) to his.

My point, however, is having been to Wellington School on a number of occasions I can clearly see that it is a school which has a similar rich heritage to that of

Sir Thomas Rich's, where similar branding still exists. It might not be in the pop culture style as seen above, but it serves the same purpose. It is a way of branding the school, embedding its culture, celebrating the success of old students, and passing it on to the pupils so that the learning culture and ethos persists.

Branding, therefore, isn't necessarily about the logo of the school although it will represent it. Branding is something which sings to the whole culture of the organization. As a friend of mine recently said, it's about using all of the propaganda tools available to us. Whilst said in jest, he was spot on. The culture, messages, and phrases that link to the vision of the school should be echoed in every location and reinforced at every opportunity—in the presentations delivered in assemblies, in the lessons that happen, on the school website, in the words that are spoken in the corridors and halls around the school.

This isn't about creating a cult, but a culture where all members of the community are driven by this singular vision that comes from the leadership team of the school. Make this over-complex, it won't be understood. Too simplified, its implications and ramifications will not be significant enough. This will be for you to decide but don't underestimate the importance of branding in schools.

Here are some tips from business that will help to share this branding across the school and its wider community:

- Create a great school vision and logo to represent it and place it everywhere.
- Write down your vision messaging and make sure everyone is aware of the intentions.
- Integrate your vision. Branding extends to every aspect of a business so do the same with your school. It goes to how you answer phones, what people wear to work, email signatures, everything. Make it so it reflects your branding and vision.
- Decide upon the "voice" of the school that reflects the brand and vision. Get this reflected in all aspects of the organization—from the tweets that are put out to the glossy brochure you give out at Open Evening. Everywhere.
- Develop a tagline for your school. A meaningful concise statement that captures the essence of your brand/vision can be used over and over again to reinforce your branding.
- Design templates and standards for all marketing materials—this could be for department areas, house colours, PE kits, all of it. Fanciful isn't important but consistency is.
- Stick to your vision and brand. Be consistent.

I hope you found this post interesting and useful. As always, please join in by commenting. Over and out.

NOTES:

1. Carl Hendrick, "The Scourge of Motivational Posters and the Problem with Pop Psychology in the Classroom, http://chronotopeblog.com/2015/02/15/the-scourge-of-motivational-posters-and-the-problem-with-pop-psychology-in-the-classroom/.

BLAKEY PRIZE IN FINE ART

FIRST PRIZE: DRAWING

"AFIELD"

DREW GRIFFITH

ROCKBRIDGE ACADEMY, BEAVERTON, OREGON

FIVE TEMPTATIONS FOR CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

by Brian Douglas, All Saints Presbyterian Church

Having taught at a classical Christian school for five years and followed the classical Christian education movement for some years prior, I have come to believe that it is the best approach to K—12 education available today.

Due to its understanding of education as the reshaping of a child's soul (in contrast to "discovery" models of education, for example), the method tends to develop thinkers defined by who they are instead of workers defined by what they do. Its focus on the Great Conversation gives students respect for history and helps them see themselves as contributors to that conversation. Unlike inward-facing fundamentalist approaches to education, this movement does not shy away from the world, but instead teaches students to interact thoughtfully with contemporary culture.

Classical Christian schools do these and many other things well, and consequently their numbers, acceptance, and influence are on the rise. However, as this form of education comes of age, it needs to be wary of certain temptations. Five specific cautions come to mind.

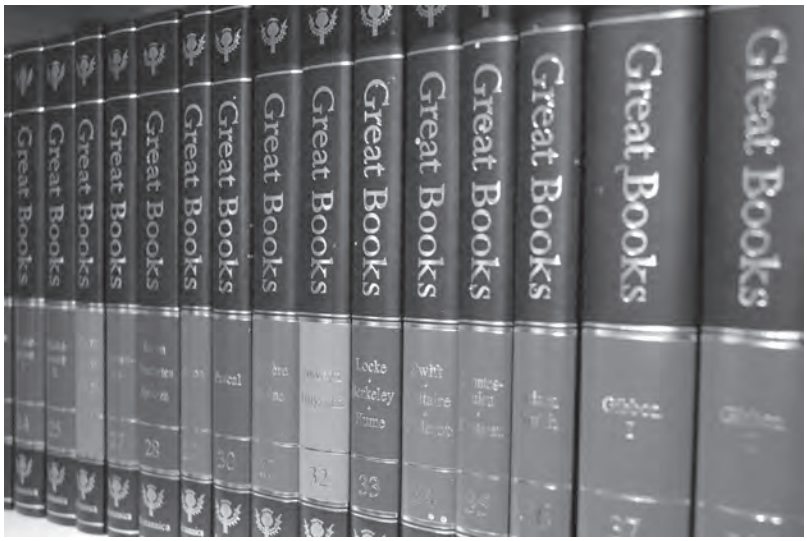
The first temptation is to overemphasize mistaken notions of success. The bigger our schools grow, the more respected a faculty we attract, the better we implement a Trivium-based curriculum, and the more accomplished our graduates become, the more we will be tempted to slip into something of a prep school mentality. Staff members and families begin to think of their school as an elite academic institution, one that produces a better "product" (by whatever measure) than others in the area.

In contrast to a more "successful" classical Christian school, less established schools may feel inferior because they lack the appearance or reputation of other schools. They might yearn for the facilities and programs that they see as their ticket to being an elite school: "If only we had . . . " It is easy for any educator to mistake the trappings of education for education itself.

The history of the movement demonstrates that amazing things can be done despite want, but as our schools grow richer, the temptation grows to consider these things the keys to success. Buildings, labs, athletics, the best materials, and other tangible things are good and helpful (and probably even necessary), but they can become the same kind of covetous idolatry that Israel displayed when it asked God for a king. Our focus must always be on the one thing that actually determines our success—God's power and promises.

Mistaken notions of success are best revealed by our attitude toward our graduates. When they are prominent and successful, we hold them up as evidence that our school is prominent and successful. We must be doing

Brian Douglas lives in Boise, Idaho, with his wife, son, and two daughters. He taught at The Ambrose School and serves as an associate pastor at All Saints Presbyterian Church (PCA). *This article, published November 8, 2012, in* First Things (http://www.firstthings.com), *is reprinted by permission.*



something right, the argument goes. But when graduates fall short of our expectations, we feel the need to explain them away: they failed because of family influences, they had spent years in public schools, they had a weak church background, etc.

The reality is that our students are like our own children. Parents know that even if they do everything in their power to bring their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, whether or not the children ultimately have genuine Christian faith is beyond our control. Likewise, teachers can guide students toward God, but only the work of the Holy Spirit in their souls can make them into the kind of Christ-honoring graduates that we would like to produce.

Instead of lifting up our best students as proof that we are doing things "the right way," our response to their success should be gratitude. God be praised for His work in the lives of these students, in many cases despite our flaws. Rather than feeling ashamed of less successful students, we should pray that the seeds once planted would come to life by God's grace. The idea that they are evidence of our failure reveals an errant and unhealthy understanding of success.

The second temptation is to believe that academic rigor plus disciplined behavior equals a good education. It is easy for a classical Christian school to become known more for its uniforms, homework expectations, strictness, and the like, than for its gracious, loving environment. Yet we ought not treat education like a simple input-output situation, in which the right learning environment can program our students to be Christians. While students do need high expectations for their work and conduct, focusing on order becomes hazardous when it overtakes the joy of experiencing God's grace. When this happens, students may learn to jump through the hoops, obey the rules, do the right things, but they do not learn to love God and others. That is moralism, the worst enemy of true Christianity.

Creating a truly gracious classroom is much harder than creating an orderly classroom. It is a challenge that requires spiritual preparation far beyond classroom management techniques. But the only Christian education is a thoroughly gracious education. It sounds so basic, but it remains true: without God's grace, we can only produce narcissists who are more focused on their own successes and failures than on the eternal reality of God's love for His people.

The third temptation is to rely on ourselves rather than on God's work in the hearts of students. It is easy for classical Christian schools to feel like we have the moral high ground in the midst of a fallen culture. After all, anyone who seeks out such a school believes it to be superior to other systems, especially secular ones. But the people of Israel are warned to not trust in their own

goodness; it is not because of their own virtue that they will conquer the land.

The same is true for our schools. We will not successfully overhaul the education system just because we have the right methodology. Education cannot be reduced to a formula, even if the formula is a good one. Education is ultimately God's work in the soul of a child, and forgetting that fact leads some educators to feel inadequate. We err frequently, do things for the wrong motives, misjudge students academically and spiritually, and fall short of the glory of God.

Focusing too much on our educational methods will lead us to despair. Self-assessment can easily leave us feeling either too strong or too weak. We praise our own accomplishments, and we feel inadequate based on what qualifications we lack. Whether our response is overconfidence or despair, anything but faith in God's power and promises is idolatry. Our strength is from the Lord and not ourselves; He will accomplish His ends despite both our strengths and our weaknesses. We must remind ourselves, if God is not blessing our work as educators, then no measure of training, skill, or finances can overcome that. But if He is blessing our labors by changing our students' lives, then nothing can overcome that either.

The fourth temptation is to neglect the Word of God. Although it may sound counter-intuitive, classical Christian schools need to integrate the Bible into our entire curriculum. Some in these education circles criticize other Christian schools for having what amounts to a secular curriculum with a Bible class on the side. The complaint is that this approach functionally teaches a secular-sacred divide that undermines real Christian faith and practice.

While this complaint has merit in many cases, we need to take care lest our schools fall into the same pit. Unless we carefully integrate biblical education throughout the entire curriculum, across every subject and grade, it would be very easy for our graduates to know more about Achilles and Dante than Abraham and David. The Word of God is our source for God's wisdom; without it we only have the wisdom of man.

The final temptation is to assume that a classical Christian school will automatically influence a student more than the broader culture. We should pay careful attention to our students' long-term goals, for they most clearly reveal the depth of the culture's influence. Students tend toward materialistic goals because that is what they learn from the culture around them. Overcoming the intrusion of materialism into our schools is probably the biggest obstacle a Christian educator faces.

Students are humans, and humans are perpetual factories of idols. Every student brings some variety of idolatry into the classroom. The most common and most subversive idols are divine gifts that become valued above God Himself: intelligence, finances, skills, moral goodness, even a good Christian education.

Although this kind of culture conflict is a problem for Christian education of every variety, it might be a more striking problem in classical schools because of the expectation that our graduates will be uniquely equipped to stand against the world and change the culture. That said, classical Christian education is perhaps also uniquely capable of addressing the conflict because it defines education in terms of the health of a student's soul rather than the strength of a student's skills.

The primary job of every Christian educator, regardless of grade level or subject matter, is to shape the heart. We should begin by warning students about the subtleties of pride in both its forms: arrogance and despair. We must teach them to think less of their own abilities and more of God's. It will be difficult, but it is even more central to the goals of classical Christian teaching than the Trivium or the Great Books. The only way we can accomplish our task as educators is to demonstrate with our own lives that a truly successful life is one in which God is glorified for His faithfulness and love regardless of our personal performance.

THE GREAT VISION OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: TEN FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS

by Justin Taylor, The Gospel Coalition

When we hear about "Christian education," we often think first about schooling that seeks to operate according to biblical principles. Perhaps we think of Christian private schools or homeschooling or Sunday school. We think of desks and homework and assignments and teachers.

These are important forms of Christian education, but these institutional forms are only the tip of the iceberg. Have you ever considered, for example, that Jesus's Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20) is a charter for Christian education?

Precisely because Jesus has been invested with "all authority in heaven and on earth," he can command his followers to "go and make *disciples* of all nations." We do this, Jesus tells us, by doing two things: (1) after they repent of their sins and trust in him, we *baptize* them in the name of the Trinity, and then (2) we teach them to observe all that he commanded us. We can do this with confidence because Christ himself will be with us always, even to the end of the age.

Christian education is as big as God and his revelation. It goes beyond parenting and teachers and classroom instruction to infuse every aspect of the

Christian life. It involves not merely donning gospel-centered glasses when we study "spiritual" subjects, but being filled by the very presence of almighty God as we seek by his Spirit to interpret all of reality in light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

If we are to practice an education that is truly Christian—in both word and deed—there are at least ten foundational presuppositions and principles that should shape our approach.

1. True Christian education involves loving and edifying instruction, grounded in God's gracious revelation, mediated through the work of Christ, and applied through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, that labors to honor and glorify the triune God.

Justin Taylor is senior vice president and publisher for books at Crossway and an elder at New Covenant Bible Church in St. Charles, Illinois. He blogs at "Between Two Worlds" and is co-author of The Final Days of Jesus: The Most Important Week of the Most Important Person Who Ever Lived. *He and his wife have four children. This article, published April 18, 2015, at Desiring God website, is reprinted by permission.*

2. Christian education begins with the reality of God. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit—one God in three persons—create and sustain all things (Genesis 1:1–2; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:3). It is from, through, and to the one true God that all things exist and have their being (Acts 17:28). The glorification of God's name in Christ is the goal of the universe (Colossians 3:17; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Isaiah 43:7; 48:11).

3. Christian education seeks to rightly interpret and correctly convey all aspects of God's revelation, both his self-disclosure through the created world (called "general revelation") and his self-disclosure through the spoken and written word ("special revelation"; Romans 1:20; Hebrews 1:1–2).

4. Christian education, building on the Creator-creature distinction, recognizes the fundamental difference between God's perfect knowledge of himself (called "archetypal theology") and the limited, though sufficient, knowledge we can have of God through his revelation ("ectypal theology"; Romans 11:34; 1 Corinthians 2:16).

5. Christian education recognizes that the recipients of our instruction—whether believers or unbelievers—are created in the image of God, designed to resemble, reflect, and represent their Creator (through ruling over creation and relating to one another; Genesis 1:26–27).

6. Christian education reckons with the sobering reality of the Fall—that because of Adam's rebellion as our covenantal head, all of us have inherited a rebellious sin nature and are legally regarded as guilty (Romans 3:10, 23; Romans 5:12, 15, 17–19), and that the creation itself is fallen and in need of liberation (Romans 8:19–22). Our disordered desires and the broken world around us affect every aspect of our thoughts, feelings, and actions, such that even after regeneration, we must still battle indwelling sin (Galatians 5:17).

7. Christian education is built upon the work of Christ—including, but not limited to, his substitutionary atonement and triumphant resurrection victory over sin and death—as the central hinge of history (Galatians 4:4–5; 1 Corinthians 2:2; 15:1–5). All of our instruction is founded upon this great event that makes it possible for sinners to stand by faith in the presence of a holy and righteous God through union with our prophet, priest, and king.

8. Christian education recognizes that to reflect the mind of Christ and to take every thought captive (2 Corinthians 10:5), we must be born again (John 3:3), putting off our old man (in Adam) and putting on the new man (in Christ), renewed in knowledge after the image of God (Colossians 3:10).

9. Christian education insists on the indispensable work of the Holy Spirit, who himself is a teacher (John 14:26; 1 Corinthians 2:13), who searches everything (including the depths of God) and alone comprehends the thoughts of God (1 Corinthians 2:10–11). He helps us in our weakness, intercedes for us (Romans 8:26–27), and causes us to bear good fruit (Galatians 5:22–23).

10. Finally, Christian education recognizes the insufficiency of merely receiving, retaining, and relaying notional knowledge (1 Corinthians 8:1; Matthew 7:21–23), but insists that our knowledge must be relational and covenantal (1 Corinthians 13:12), such that our study results in delight (Psalm 37:4; 111:2), practice (Ezra 7:10), obedience (Romans 1:5), and the further discipling and teaching of others (Matthew 9:19–20; 2 Timothy 2:2).

Christian education no longer involves physically sitting at the feet of Jesus and walking with him down the dusty roads of Galilee. But Jesus himself tells us that it is to our advantage that he goes away, so that the Helper—the Holy Spirit—can come to be with us (John 16:7).

And now, as lifelong learners in Christ, we can truly say, "Though [we] have not seen him, [we] love him. Though [we] do not now see him, [we] believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory" (1 Peter 1:8). *That* is a truly Christian education.

BLAKEY PRIZE IN FINE ART

FIRST PRIZE: PAINTING

"SWIMMING AT DAWN"

MADISON MIER

ST. STEPHEN'S ACADEMY, BEAVERTON, OREGON

CFS

CONFIDENTIAL FINANCIAL SERVICES

TUITION AID DECISIONS ARE ONE HURDLE YOU CAN EASILY CLEAR WITH CONFIDENTIAL FINANCIAL SERVICES!

Our verification services ensure you are making accurate award decisions while **FWB2.0** increases your parents' financial performance.

Track families' financial wellbeing year over year.

Take the leap today!

Call us @ 1-888-685-5783

ACCS
ASSOCIATION OF CLASSICAL & CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS
P.O. BOX 9741
MOSCOW, ID 83843
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

24TH ANNUAL
REPAIRING THE RUINS
ACCS CONFERENCE

JUNE 23–25, 2016 • ATLANTA, GA

HYATT REGENCY HOTEL

WATCH WWW.ACCSCONFERENCE.ORG

FOR REGISTRATION AND INFORMATION