"SINE DOCTRINA VITA EST QUASI MORTIS IMAGO"

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NEW SERIES: ESSENTIAL WORKS IN MEDIEVAL HISTORY & LITERATURE

This issue of *Classis* includes the fourth article (Calvin at School) in a series that introduces essential works for teaching medieval history and literature to teachers. The articles also briefly describe how to use these works in the classroom.

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LECTIO DIVINA: MEDIEVAL READING FOR THE MODERN CLASSROOM

by Sam Koenen, Petra Academy

Classical, Christian schools pride themselves on the quality and density of their book lists for literature and humanities classes—and rightly so. In order to shape our students into godly human beings, we have them read the greatest books of the western tradition. We want them steeped in the best that has been thought, said, and done, so that they grow into fully-formed human beings.

But the classical, Christian vision of education must extend beyond book lists. A classical curriculum will either shape our students' characters through the grace of the Spirit, or turn them into insufferable, well-educated narcissists. To avoid the latter, our approach to the books we teach must train students in habits of humility, charity, and repentance. For most of us, this means abandoning our usual methods and attitudes of reading and learning to approach our books in a more Christian way. And the most Christian, most human method of reading that I have found is the medieval method of *lectio divina.*

THE PROBLEM WITH MODERN READING

Before considering *lectio divina*, we must first understand the problems with how most of us read. Everyone reading this article is a modern reader, to some degree. Our reading habits betray modernist assumptions about reality and reveal why modern reading is not consonant with the goals of classical, Christian education. There are three key problems with modern reading:

1. Reading as data accumulation. In modern reading, the reader sees a book as a repository of information that the reader needs to put in his brain. The reader must transfer the data from the pages of the book to the hard-drive of his mind. His eyes scan the pages, his brain processes the words, and then stores them in his memory. The modern reader uses computer metaphors to describe his reading because reading is fundamentally a process of data transfer, not an activity to shape his soul.

2. The arrogant reader. Modern readers judge a book within the first few paragraphs. More charitable readers might make it through a few chapters, but ultimately, if the book doesn't justify itself to the reader, he condemns it as useless. The modern reader assumes that he stands as judge over the book. The book has to satisfy him, because it exists solely to benefit *him*. And for most modern readers, if the book isn't immediately accessible and appealing, it's trash.

3. The uncharitable reader. Modern reading also

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shows a great lack of love for one's neighbor. Instead of reading for moral self-improvement so we can better serve our neighbors, we read to acquire skills that make us more marketable. We read to give ourselves an edge over our neighbor. Modern reading also fails to love the author as a neighbor. Writing is really hard work; writing a great book that will be passed on for generations is even harder work. When generations of humans have protected such books—sometimes dying to preserve them—and we dismiss them as useless, what are we saying about the author and his effort and his work? What are we saying about all the people who came before us? Do we really think our ten minutes of superficial reading can trump the collected wisdom of generations of our ancestors?

If we teach students to read books with this approach, we teach them habits that encourage narcissism, uncritical judgment, and unloving hearts. Thankfully, the past that modernism so quickly rejects offers a wiser, more human way to read, a way of reading that cultivates humility and charity in the pursuit of wisdom and virtue.

In the early twelfth century, an Augustinian monk named Hugh of St. Victor penned a short book defining all the areas of knowledge important to mankind and laying out rules for ordered progress in these areas of knowledge. Hugh's *Didascalicon*[1] contains much wisdom for classical teachers, but (for the purposes of this article) the most significant part is Hugh's discussion of the proper way to read.

Hugh summarizes the medieval method of *lectio divina*, an ancient monastic method of reading Scripture, and then applies this method to the reading of any kind of book. Hugh's discussion of the purpose and methods of medieval reading provide a way of reading that is truly Christian.

THE PURPOSE OF MEDIEVAL READING

In medieval paintings of the twelfth century, objects aren't illuminated by external sources of light. Instead, they seem to emanate their own inner light. Medieval writers apply this same concept to books, and their metaphors for reading reveal the ultimate purpose for reading. When a reader reads, the pages emanate the inner light of the book's wisdom. The act of reading causes the book to "glow" in the reader's mind. As he continues to read, this light of wisdom illuminates the darkness of the reader's sinful soul and reveals his need for God's grace[2].

The medieval reader doesn't judge the book, because he knows he can't. He has a darkened soul and can't pass judgment. His heart contains greater flaws than any that exist in the book. So, the reader needs the book, needs its light to reveal his weaknesses and flaws and his need for grace. In the medieval mind, reading was one of the ways that God made his grace known. Reading brings light back into the world from which sin banned it. The act of reading burns away the sinful mist from the reader's perception, and hopefully ignites the soul of the reader as the book's wisdom enters his eye—like one candle igniting another candle's wick.

So, the purpose of medieval reading was twofold: 1) to give knowledge of the reader's true, wretched self; and 2) to ignite the reader's dark soul with hope and the light of wisdom[3]. This is difficult, demanding work, as other medieval metaphors imply: reading was a "stationary pilgrimage" (*peregrinatio in stabilitate*) that stirred up zeal for Christ through physical discipline[4]; the reader was a "holy mumbler" who would mutter repeatedly the brightest parts of the book, tasting their sounds and rhythms until he had gotten them by heart[5].

The purpose of medieval reading—to illumine a darkened soul by the light of wisdom—makes reading a much more human, much more Christian activity than the data accumulation of modern reading. A brief

exploration of the methods involved in medieval reading will help us find ways to implement it in our classrooms.

THE METHODS OF MEDIEVAL READING

There are three important aspects to medieval reading: 1) memory, 2) *lectio*, and 3) *meditatio*. Of these three, only *lectio* and *meditatio* are methods: memory training is a prerequisite to reading.

Memory

Before any student was set free in the library to read on his own, he first had to memorize the entire story of Scripture. He had to be thoroughly familiar with all the significant themes, characters, events, symbols, actions, and truths about how God saves his people—the whole story of salvation. He learned this from reading Scripture with a teacher to guide him and to help him memorize what he learned.

The student not only memorized all of these details, but also organized them systematically into some kind of "memory house" or "memory ark", as Hugh describes it[6]. This systematic organization provided the reader immediate access to all his Scriptural knowledge. The memory house was a prerequisite for the medieval reader, because he wanted to be transformed by Scripture and his reading. He didn't want to manipulate Scripture, but to be *manipulated* by Scripture, to be pressed and pulled into the right shape.

The medieval reader understood the power of books, and wanted to ensure that his reading moved him in a Godward direction. The two gravest dangers for a young reader were pride and error. Reading Plato could give him a wrong, even heretical, idea. Then pride would encourage him to hold fast to his wrong idea, to love his interpretation more than the truth[7]. The memory house protected the student by providing a point of reference by which the student could evaluate everything else he read. It checked and corrected both his reading and his heart.[8]

Lectio

Once memory training was over, the student started reading in a systematic way, usually following a book list assigned by a superior. Then reading proper began with *lectio*, a studied effort to understand the primary meaning of the text itself. The reader sought to grasp the immediate, literal, historical, primary, contextual meaning of the text. He postponed analysis and criticism until he understood what the text was really saying[9]. He loved the author as his neighbor, letting him speak his piece without interruption.

When he understood the primary meaning of the text, the reader then sought to relate everything on the page to what was in his memory house. The act of *lectio* wasn't complete until he found some way to relate what he had just read to what he already knew. He would evaluate the truth and goodness of what he had read and would look for echoes of Scriptural themes and images. Lastly, the reader sought to place *himself* in proper relationship to his new reading. He would ask, "What does this mean for me? What darkness of my soul had this brought to light? What is this book requiring that I change in myself?"[10] Answers to these questions would lead to confession and repentance.

Meditatio

Having understood the primary meaning of the text, relating it to his memory house, and relating himself to his reading, the medieval reader then began *meditatio*, the arduous work of meditating on the text until it ignited his soul and enflamed his love.

The reader began *meditatio* by rereading important passages aloud to contemplate their truth further. He would mumble them, tasting them in his mouth. He would "eat" these passages, in order to make them part of himself. He would continue to think through their implications, combining his thinking with prayer. He

would pray and think about what Scripture said about these passages, what they meant for his darkened soul, and what it meant for all the other knowledge he had.

And as he thought and prayed, his mind would be illuminated. He would see new truth, which would lead to a further truth, and to a further truth. Suddenly, all of his knowledge would shift. Truth would lead to more truth in a crescendo of revelations that would leave the reader beside himself with delight. Reading would become worship, as the reader's darkened soul was ignited by the text, his soul set on fire with the beauty of Christ's goodness and truth[11].

HOW TO TEACH OUR STUDENTS TO READ (AGAIN)

It is clear that medieval reading is far more conducive to the goals of classical, Christian education than the data accumulation model of modern reading. So how do we bring medieval methods of reading into a modern classroom?

First of all, we must begin where the medievals began: by building a memory house of Scriptural knowledge. Grammar-level students must be taught the entire *story* of Scripture as a comprehensive whole, not as individual, disconnected stories. They should learn the main story-arch of God's redemptive history, memorizing the main characters, themes, periods, movements, and doctrines essential to that story. Teachers should train students to access any of this knowledge at any time. Lastly, they must be taught how to find their place in this story. They must be taught how to apply the story of Scripture to their everyday experience, seeing how *all* of Scripture is useful for teaching them how to live obedient lives.

Teaching students to memorize all of Scripture may seem like a daunting task given all the other curricular requirements of a grammar school. But grammar students have prodigious, eager memories and they love stories—they are perfectly suited for this task. Books like Vaughan Roberts' *God's Big Picture* or Graeme Goldworthy's *According to Plan*[12] are great resources to help teachers organize these "memory houses" of Scripture.

Lectio requires us to read the entire text humbly, charitably, and in the light of Scripture. First, students should be reading the best possible books they are capable of. Their reading lists should consist of the best that has been written, which means they should systematically read through the classic books that have shaped the western tradition. Their teachers should instruct them how to read these books with humility and charity. They should be taught to postpone their criticism until they clearly understand the author's message. Then they should evaluate the book not in terms of their personal biases and preferences, but in the light of Scriptural standards of truth, beauty, and goodness. Remembering his darkened soul and need for grace, the student should learn to let his books *read him*, critique him, and call him to repentance.

The *meditatio* aspect of reading encourages us to revisit important passages of books *after we've finished teaching them*. After helping our students understand the book in the light of Scripture through *lectio*, we then need to revisit key passages and meditate on them. Writing, memorization, debate, and Socratic dialogue are all useful tools for *meditatio*. Most importantly, teachers and students together should pray for God to illumine the passage and help them understand it in a way that increases their love for Christ, their neighbor, and their world. The goal of *meditatio* is to enflame students with a desire to image Christ in the world.

CONCLUSION

Stratford Caldecott once asked, "What kind of education would enable a child to progress in the rational understanding of the world without losing his poetic and artistic appreciation of it?" The same question could be asked about how we teach our students to read: What kind of reading enables children to grow in their

knowledge of the truth without sacrificing their love for goodness and beauty?

The medieval method of reading provides the best answer. Students trained in *lectio divina* will be trained in habits of humility, charity, and diligence, and will have ordered loves for God, their neighbor, and their world. They will be obedient worshipers of God who faithfully image their Savior to a fallen world—exactly the type of student we want to graduate from our schools.

NOTES

1. Hugh of St. Victor, *The Didascalicon of Hugh of St. Victor: A Medieval Guide to the Arts*, trans. Jerome Taylor (New York: Columbia UP, 1968). Hugh's discussion of reading is mostly in Books 3 and 6, but any classical educator would benefit from a careful study of this entire work.

2. Ivan Illich, *In the Vineyard of the Text: A Commentary to Hugh's Didascalicon* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 19-21.

3. "The wisdom Hugh seeks is Christ himself. Learning and, specifically, reading, are both simply forms of a search for Christ the Remedy, Christ the Example and Form which fallen humanity, which has lost it, hopes to recover." Illich, 10.

4. Illich, 23-24.

5. Illich, 54-57.

6. Illich, 35-50.

7. "Truly, the judicious student ought to be sure that, before he makes his way through extensive volumes, he is so instructed in the particulars that bear upon his task and upon his profession of the true faith, that he may safely be able to build onto his structure whatever he afterwards finds." Hugh, 142.

8. Augustine also warns about this dangerous type of misreading (*De Doctrina Christiana*, Bk 1), and Alan Jacobs offers a theological analysis of it in *A Theology of Reading: The Hermeneutics of Love* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2001), 14-25.

9. "The wise student, therefore, gladly hears all, reads all, and looks down upon no writing, no person, no teaching. From all indifferently he seeks what he sees he lacks, and he considers not how much he knows, but of how much he is ignorant." Hugh, 95.

10. Illich, 42-50.

11. Illich, 51-63.

12. Vaughan Roberts, *God's Big Picture: Tracing the Storyline of the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2002); Graeme Goldsworthy, *According to Plan: The Unfolding Revelation of God in the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1991).

13. Stratford Caldecott, *Beauty in the Word: Rethinking the Foundations of Education* (Tacoma, WA: Angelico Press, 2012), 11.

CALVIN AT SCHOOL

by Douglas Wilson, New Saint Andrews College • Medieval History and Literature Series

OUTLINE OF HIS LIFE

John Calvin was born in France in 1509. He was brought up in a devout Catholic family, and was probably well-educated as a boy. He left home to study for the priesthood in Paris at the tender age of 14, but a few years later his father changed his mind about John's future, and so he transferred to Orleans in order to study law. While still a Catholic, he did come under the influence of some reform-minded individuals.

Calvin was probably converted in 1533, and published his famous *Institutes of the Christian Religion* just three years later, in 1536. He was a young man, and a very young Christian when the Institutes were first published. But Calvin was brilliant, and his writing was lucid, and that, then as now, was a rare combination. His book became an instant bestseller. The original form of it was much smaller than the two volumes one might purchase today, and this was because he continually revised and expanded it throughout his life.

Because of his commitment to the new Reformed approach to the Christian faith, Calvin was on the run. Francis I of France and the emperor Charles V were at war, and this resulted in Calvin taking a different route than what he had originally planned. He stopped in Geneva, Switzerland to spend the night, and a local minister of a Protestant persuasion—William Farel—heard that the celebrity theologian was spending the night there. He came by and threatened Calvin with God's judgment if he didn't remain in Geneva in order to help with the ministry. We don't know precisely what Farel said, but it was apparently enough to curl Calvin's hair.

Calvin labored there for a few years, and was then exiled as the result of a showdown with the city fathers. He spent his exile in Strasbourg, where he came under the influence of another Reformer named Martin Bucer. It was also in Strasbourg that he met and married his wife Idelette. In 1541, he was called back to Geneva—and resumed preaching from the verse where he had left off—and he worked faithfully there until his death in 1564. He arranged to be buried in an unmarked tomb so that there would be no venerating foolishness.

SIGNIFICANCE

We know that Calvin had a great deal of influence because there are many thousands of people today who

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identify themselves as "Calvinists." But what does that even mean? In the 16th century, the label would *not* have tagged someone as being a predestinarian—virtually all the Protestants, including Luther, were that. In the first century after the Reformation, the name would likely have referred to Calvin's view of the sacraments. But today most Protestants are not predestinarians, and it has come about that those who are in that position carry the name of Calvinist. But whatever the case, it should be easy to see that someone who has his name used as shorthand so much is a force to be reckoned with.

Whatever we think of the theology of Karl Barth (which in my case is not much), I think we can agree that he was in a position to recognize theological genius when he ran into it. And he had this to say about Calvin: "Calvin is a cataract, a primeval forest, a demonic power, something directly down from Himalaya, absolutely Chinese, strange, mythological." It might be hard to tell on the first reading, but these are words of high praise.

Calvin was French, and discharged most of his ministry in Switzerland. But it has to be said that his most profound influence has been in the English-speaking world. This happened through the agency of a man named John Knox. When Bloody Mary came to the throne in England, a number of theological refugees came to Geneva, and came under Calvin's spell there. John Knox was the pastor of the English-speaking congregation in Geneva. When the thankfully brief reign of Mary ended with her death, she was succeeded by Elizabeth I and the refugees returned, with Knox going to Scotland. The ideas of Calvin took deep root there, in both theology and polity, and from Scotland those ideas spread around the world, most notably to the American colonies.

Calvin made great theological contributions in different areas. For example, we should take note of his view of the sacraments, his view of God's sovereignty, and his views on the intersection of biblical truth and civil society. In the last two areas particularly, American history is incomprehensible without tracing things back to Calvin. In a very real sense, Calvin should be considered the father of the American republic.

APPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS

One of the points that C.S. Lewis once made in his great essay on the reading of old books was that great books are often surprisingly *accessible*. They got to be great for a reason—people could understand them. While Mark Twain defined a classic as a book that no one wants to read, and everyone wants to have read, this joke works largely because of the way that commentators have tended to wrap great works up in learned obscurities. As a result, people are afraid of the work itself. If the commentary is so complicated, what must the original be like? Actually, the original is often a breath of fresh air.

So if a teacher feels up to it, and if the structure of the curriculum permits, I would encourage reading this primary source—either read the *Institutes*, or read key selections from the *Institutes*. Calvin wrote many other things that are worthwhile—principally his commentaries—but it seems that in a classroom setting, the focus should be on that which Calvin himself believed to be foundational to Christian living.

The *Institutes* is divided into four books. The first book concerns our relationship to God as our Creator. The second book focuses on God as our Redeemer. The third book addresses how we are supposed to receive the grace of God offered in Christ. The fourth book concerns issues of external government, both in the church and civil society.

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THE STUDY OF LITERARY ANALYSIS VIA LATIN LITERATURE

Karen Moore, Grace Academy of Georgetown

That classical language should be a component to classical education is not in dispute. Most schools which brandish the title classical will include at least a few years of a classical language, usually Latin. What is debated is just how many years and to what extent students should study classical languages. The answer to that question lies within the end goal or the *telos* of such study. Is the purpose to improve vocabulary or better understand the rudiments of grammar? If so, then two or three years are indeed sufficient. I would argue, however, that there is a great treasury to be gained in studying a classical language long enough and thoroughly enough to study the riches contained within the original words and composition of Latin literature.

The study of Latin continued long past the fall of Rome, through the Middle Ages, beyond the Renaissance, and into the modern era not for the sake of morphology and derivatives, but so that educated men and women could study the writings of Rome's orators and poets as they crafted their various *magna opera*. These works were not merely words on a page, but works of art thoughtfully constructed from carefully chosen words, arranged with skill to wield power and stir the heart. To read a translator's modern interpretation is to see through a glass dimly. To read the work as originally penned is to meet with the author himself. Students of such literature read not only for pleasure's sake, but also for the purpose of learning how to craft such work themselves. By reading these original pieces, students are permitted to sit at the feet of these skilled craftsmen and learn more diligently their skill and technique so their own writing may benefit. Students do not learn such lessons simply by reading a work. They learn through the careful study and literary analysis of these masterpieces.

What is literary analysis? Literary analysis is not the summary of a work. All too often students, and sometimes teachers, misunderstand this crucial point. A mere synopsis only retells the basic plot or main message of a composition. Such summaries overlook the subtleties of craftsmanship. How is the message conveyed? What makes it effective? Where is its power, its sharp bite? These are the types of questions an analysis of literature seeks to answer. Literary analysis is an exploration of a writer's interpretation or presentation of an event or idea.

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Such analysis requires the study of literary devices, word choices, and syntactical structures the author uses to create an image in the reader's mind or solicit an emotion from within the reader's soul. The analysis seeks to answer the question why and for what purpose the author used such words and devices to create these images.

These are the very questions we must teach students to ask as they read any work—classical or otherwise. We need to train these young minds to discern the design and intent of any author, and the literature of classical Latin is an excellent training ground. For the Romans knew the pen was at least as mighty as the sword, and the man who knew how to wield its power could command legions. Why, therefore, does a master orator choose the words he uses? Why does he choose to arrange them in a certain manner of phrasing? Who better to study for such purposes than masters of oratory and prose such as Cicero or Augustine? Furthermore, students ought to learn how words can take shape on a page in order to create images and convey emotion, and in so doing turn hearts. What teacher for such lessons could be found who compares to the poetics of Vergil or Horace? These masters were the teachers of orators and poets for centuries. These are the same teachers our classrooms should invite to share the lessons of literary composition.

Certainly teachers of the modern era may choose English prose and poetry as their subject, or they may choose English translations of classical works. We must, however, take to heart the warning that there truly is something lost in translation. Flavors of words and shades of meaning are lost when a translator attempts to reinterpret someone else's thoughts into his own language. Latin's loose word order allows for a juxtaposition of words that is often difficult to accomplish in English. Certain literary devices appear more commonly in classical Latin than in more modern renditions of English. In short, there are some valuable aspects of Latin literature that are difficult and even impossible to convey in English.

Moreover, there is great value to be found in asking students to closely study the literature in a language with which they are not overly familiar. A teacher may assign the reading of an oration by Churchill or a poem by Milton for the purpose of analysis and discussion. At times, however, students may find it tempting to slip into the passive reading of such a passage. Students might gloss over words and phrases and still come away with an overarching sense of the passage simply because they are so comfortable with their native language. Even if they find the passage difficult, because of their familiarity with the language, they might be able to get by with a skimmed reading. Such is not often the case with an ancient language. The analysis of literature in a foreign tongue may be likened to resistance training. The exercises that might come easily in the open air are made harder by repeating those same exercises – even simple tasks—in water. The unfamiliar surrounding slows down the exercise, causing the muscles to work harder and in a more focused manner. So also reading is often slowed, and careful study becomes more focused when analyzing the literature of a classical language.

Great opportunity for this training in literature is afforded through the Advanced Placement courses in Latin as created by the College Board[1]. Indeed, this course requires essays of literary analysis. It would be a terrible shame, however, to wait until this advanced level in which fewer than all students would take part. It is far better to begin integrating discussions and compositions in literary analysis at the earliest possible opportunity when all can benefit. Many curricula are available which offer students the opportunity to read authentic Latin literature while still in grammatical studies[2]. Lessons in analysis can begin using the passages found in such texts with discussions on the simple topic of vocabulary. Select a few words for exploration and discuss the variety of meanings a dictionary assigns the word. Discuss with the class the best possible meaning for the context. Consider together Latin synonyms (or even English synonyms in translation). Ask students why they think the author chose a particular word. There is not always one correct answer (though sometimes

there is only one correct answer). More important than the answer, is that students begin learning to ask this question.

As the class reads passages aloud, consider together the arrangement of the words. Word order for Latin is fluid and the author has the luxury of placing words first or last for emphasis. Students can readily discern literary devices such as anaphora, asyndeton and polysyndeton, and discuss their impact on the passage. Note how Tertullian uses asyndeton in the following excerpt from his Apologetic to illustrate how the Christians, though a recently formed group, are everywhere.[3]

> *Hesterni sumus, et vestra omnia implevimus: urbes, insulas, castella, oppida, conciliabula, castra ipsa, tribus, decurias, palatium, senatum, forum; sola vobis reliquimus templa. (Liber Apologeticus, XXXVII)*

As students advance, they will begin to see how authors employ more complex devices such as hyperbaton, chiasmus, and synchisis to create emphasis or paint images. The placement of *sola . . . templa* in the above quote from Tertullian is an intriguing example of hyperbaton. Take for another example of syntax the following verse from Ovid's Metamorphoses.[4]

> *solis ab occasu solis quaerebat ad ortus (Metamorphoses, V.445)*

Note the syntactical pattern used to portray the setting of the sun and its rising. Even more, note how the seeker interrupts that pattern. The words appear to mimic the orb of the sun around a confused mother seeking her daughter to the ends of the earth. Such word imagery beautifully constructed here is difficult to imitate in English. And yet, such discussions should cause students to begin to consider word arrangement more carefully, both as a reader and as a writer.

As students' grammatical knowledge and reading ability increase, so also should the opportunities for literary discussion and deeper analysis. Move students from the discussion of words and phrases to whole passages. Begin to discuss and then compose essays on the development of characters and themes within a larger work. Train the students to cite passages in a manner that will empower their own analysis of the literature they are reading. Again, the AP Latin course will naturally lend itself to such study, but again classical schools would do well to incorporate this valuable study into their own Latin literature classes. Creating such lessons, and even whole classes within the curriculum, will allow teachers the opportunity to select works important to the *cursus vitae* of the school. The oratory styles of Cicero may be studied alongside St. Augustine or even Queen Elizabeth. St. Augustine's confession may be read and compared to that of St. Patrick, written less than a century later. The poetry of Catullus and Vergil can be compared with the poetry they inspired in Tennyson and Milton. In allowing students the opportunity to learn the art of literary analysis through Latin literature, we equip them with the knowledge and skill to engage in an exploration of texts, both secular and sacred, beyond any limitations of age or genre.

Note: Karen Moore will offer a presentation on Literary Analysis via Latin Literature at the 2014 ACCS Conference in Orlando, Florida. This presentation will expound upon the ideas set forth in this article as well as offer sample lessons for such study.

NOTES:

1. AP Latin College Board https://apstudent.collegeboard.org/apcourse/ap-latin.

2. Some recommended grammar texts containing selections of *Latin literature: Latin Alive Series* by Moore & DuBose, *Introduction to Latin* by Shelmerdine, *Wheelock's Latin* by Wheelock and LeFleur.

3. *Hesterni sumus, et vestra omnia implevimus: urbes, insulas, castella, oppida, conciliabula, castra ipsa, tribus,*

decurias, palatium, senatum, forum; sola vobis reliquimus templa.—We are of yesterday, and we filled all that is yours: cities, islands, fortresses, towns, marketplaces, the very army camp, tribes, companies, the palace, the Senate, the Forum, for you we left the temples alone (Tertullian's *Liber Apologeticus*, Chapter 37). This quotation is taken from a reading selection in *Latin Alive, Book 2*.

4. *solis ab occasu solis quaerebat ad ortus*—from the setting of the sun to the rising of the sun she was seeking (Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Book V, line 445). This line is taken from a reading selection in *Latin Alive, Book 3*.

KNOW WHAT YOU WANT STUDENTS TO LEARN AND ENSURE THEY LEARN IT

by Tom Spencer, ACCS

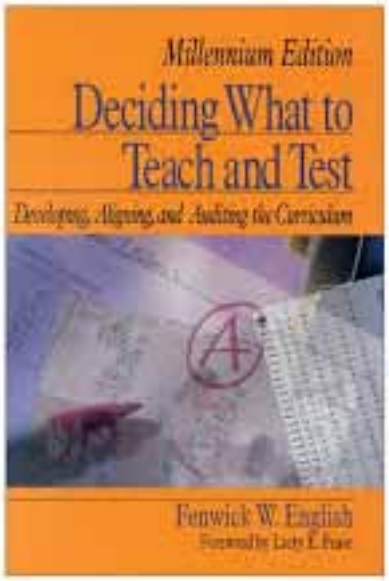
Let's say that you wanted to control what is taught in classrooms across the nation. How would you go about it? Given the tradition of local control of schools in the United States, at first glance this would seem difficult, if not impossible. If you candidly stated your desire to do so, you would likely face loud opposition from school administrators, teachers' unions, and parents.

But while a frontal assault to mandate curriculum[1] might not be successful, there are things related to schools that you might be able to control, that would eventually have an impact on what is taught in classrooms.

If you had a standardized test that most people were familiar with, say one where the results were tied to significant outcomes for students, perhaps college admissions and potential scholarship money, you would have a powerful tool. Now, let's say that you were able to change the content areas covered by the test, knowing that people will continue to pay attention to the test scores. You would then have a better chance of influencing the content taught in classrooms across the country. This would be especially true if educators, without question, presumed that they needed to continue to have their students use this same test.

But would anyone really change a test in an effort to influence what students are taught?

The ideas in this article are based on the work of Fenwick English, particularly those found in his book "*Deciding What to Teach and Test: Developing, Aligning, and Auditing the Curriculum.*" This book



is a short, helpful, and inexpensive work.

Classical Christian educators frequently challenge assumptions about traditional education. This is a trait common to those who have decided to start their own schools. These innovators question prevailing wisdom about many topics, including subjects commonly taught in colleges of education, like the importance of curriculum development and the necessity of standardized testing. *Deciding What to Teach and Test* would be beneficial

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reading for anyone responsible for curriculum development and standardized testing.

Fenwick English writes from a perspective not just as an educator, but also as one with a business background, having worked for a time as a partner in a Big Eight accounting and consulting firm. He transfers principles of business plans and financial audits to education. Consequently his recommendations are practical and realistic.

WHAT DO YOU WANT STUDENTS TO LEARN?

Does your school have a document that specifies the things that you want students to learn while they attend your school? The best way to address curriculum development,[2] standardized testing, and even hiring teachers begins by identifying what you want students to learn. In a K-12 school, this description should identify the "processes, skills, knowledge, and attitudes" that your graduates will possess when they receive their diploma.

When schools identify the things that they want students to learn, it improves the chances that students will actually learn those things and it provides an opportunity to share these goals with parents, teachers, and students. It also helps educators focus their time and effort teaching the things that are most important.

Such a list would include more than course objectives from specific courses. Students learn both inside and outside the classroom, formally and informally. Students imitate their teachers. Schools have standards for student behavior and discipline. Schools will choose to participate in some activities but will decide not to participate in others. Some topics will be judged appropriate for assemblies, others won't. Students are taught by each of these things.

The list should include more than knowledge; it might also include attitudes or beliefs. For example, beliefs in a pro-life position or a biblical definition of marriage might be included. Schools might purpose to graduate students who "love learning." The point is to think through what you want graduates to attain while they spend time at your school.

If schools take the time and do the work to define what students should learn, they can take back the role that has frequently been ceded to textbook publishers and test makers.

HOW WILL LEARNING BE ASSESSED?

Once the list is developed, schools must plan how to assess how well students are learning.

Have you ever read this qualifier when schools release standardized test scores to parents, "these scores are only one measurement of student learning?" Schools want to remind parents not to put too much emphasis on standardized test scores. But this statement suggests that there are other measures of student learning. What are those other measures? Report cards? Anything else? What other means is the school using to figure out what students are learning?

Schools might conduct exit interviews with graduating seniors. Parents could be surveyed to gain their perspective on what students have learned. Schools might survey recent graduates. The evaluation doesn't have to be limited to written tests. Written tests, both teacher-made tests and standardized, are a common way, but only one way, to assess what students have learned. As English points out, it is a mistake to limit our expectations for student learning to that which can be assessed on a written, multiple-choice test.

STANDARDIZED TESTS

Many items on your list of expected student learning will best be evaluated by a written test. Teacher-made tests have some use, provided that they reliably measure student learning. But

teacher-made classroom tests don't tell you anything about how well the students in your school are learning compared to their peers studying in other schools. Test reliability for standardized tests is known and these tests, used properly, can help schools understand what subjects students are learning well (or what subjects teachers are teaching well) and identify what subjects need more development.

There is an ideal, a better, and a poor way to the order of developing curriculum (including identifying textbooks, if any) and selecting particular standardized tests. The ideal way is first to develop goals for student learning and then find a test that actually measures those goals. The better way is to develop the objectives for student learning, the curriculum, and select a test simultaneously. Once you find a test that measures those same items, your teachers will "teach to the test" by following the curriculum during the year.

Some are uncomfortable with the notion of "teaching to the test." But if you think that teaching to the test is wrong, don't allow your football and basketball coaches to scout their opponents next season. (Fenwick English uses a number of football analogies in his book.)

Companies that publish standardized tests want to keep the test questions a secret. (They presume "randomness" in order to achieve results that fall upon a "normal curve.") This makes it a challenge to complete the necessary step of determining how well the school's written plan (or curriculum) matches up with the items measured by the standardized test. However, if you don't have a match between the curriculum and the test, the results won't tell you anything about the effectiveness of classroom instruction. This makes it impossible to use test results to determine where to focus efforts to improve instruction.[3]

If you are familiar with AP courses, you are already familiar with the idea of a match between the written curriculum and the test. Those planning to have students take AP exams are able to order materials from the College Board that define and explain the content that should be taught in the course. These materials include textbook recommendations. This represents "tight" curriculum alignment where the written curriculum, the tested curriculum, and the taught curriculum focus on the same content.

CART BEFORE HORSE

It is a mistake is to adopt a standardized test before developing a written curriculum. Doing so may lead to student learning being restricted to those things that may be evaluated on a multiple-choice test. Schools may focus on these things to the exclusion of everything else, especially in situations of "high-stakes" testing.

When schools receive and release test scores, poor results will soon drive curriculum changes. (The revised SAT exam may have this effect on schools that don't think this through clearly.) Schools with low scores will revise the curriculum to match the test—in this way, testing drives curriculum and instruction. This is clearly seen in many public schools, especially in today's climate where test scores are everything.

Another mistake is to adopt a test that doesn't match the written curriculum. In this case, schools that use standardized tests aren't measuring student learning as much as they are measuring the socio-economic status of their families.[4]

When schools use tests that are aligned with their curriculum, test results can help improve student learning. Schools may analyze results to find those areas where performance doesn't match expectations for student learning. Once these areas are identified, curriculum may be revised and more time may be given to particular areas needing improvement. Staff training or staff development in these areas may be required. This process is similar to what the

football coach does in planning practice after watching the game film with his players. Practice plans for the following week are adjusted.

IN DEBT TO FENWICK ENGLISH

I've read, re-read, and referred to several books by Fenwick English on curriculum development. Deciding What to Teach and Test includes many more ideas than presented in this short article. For example, he describes how to develop curriculum guides that are useful to teachers and how such guides meet the needs of "loose-tight" organizations, i.e., "organizations that are tight on vision and mission and loose on methods and how-to's." Thoughtful classical, Christian schools should be such organizations.

By starting with a coherent philosophy of education, classical Christian schools have a great advantage. Following effective practices in writing, testing, and testing curriculum can help schools deliver a great education to their students.

NOTES:

1. Fenwick English, *Deciding What to Teach and Test: Developing, Aligning, and Auditing the Curriculum* (Corwin Press, 1992), 2. "The word curriculum didn't come into widespread use in education until textbooks were used in preparing teachers in normal schools. That didn't occur until 1900."

2. English, x. ". . . the function of curriculum is to shape the work of classroom teachers."

3. English, 75. "If a test does not match a school's curriculum, how can test scores be used as a measure of the quality of the curriculum?"

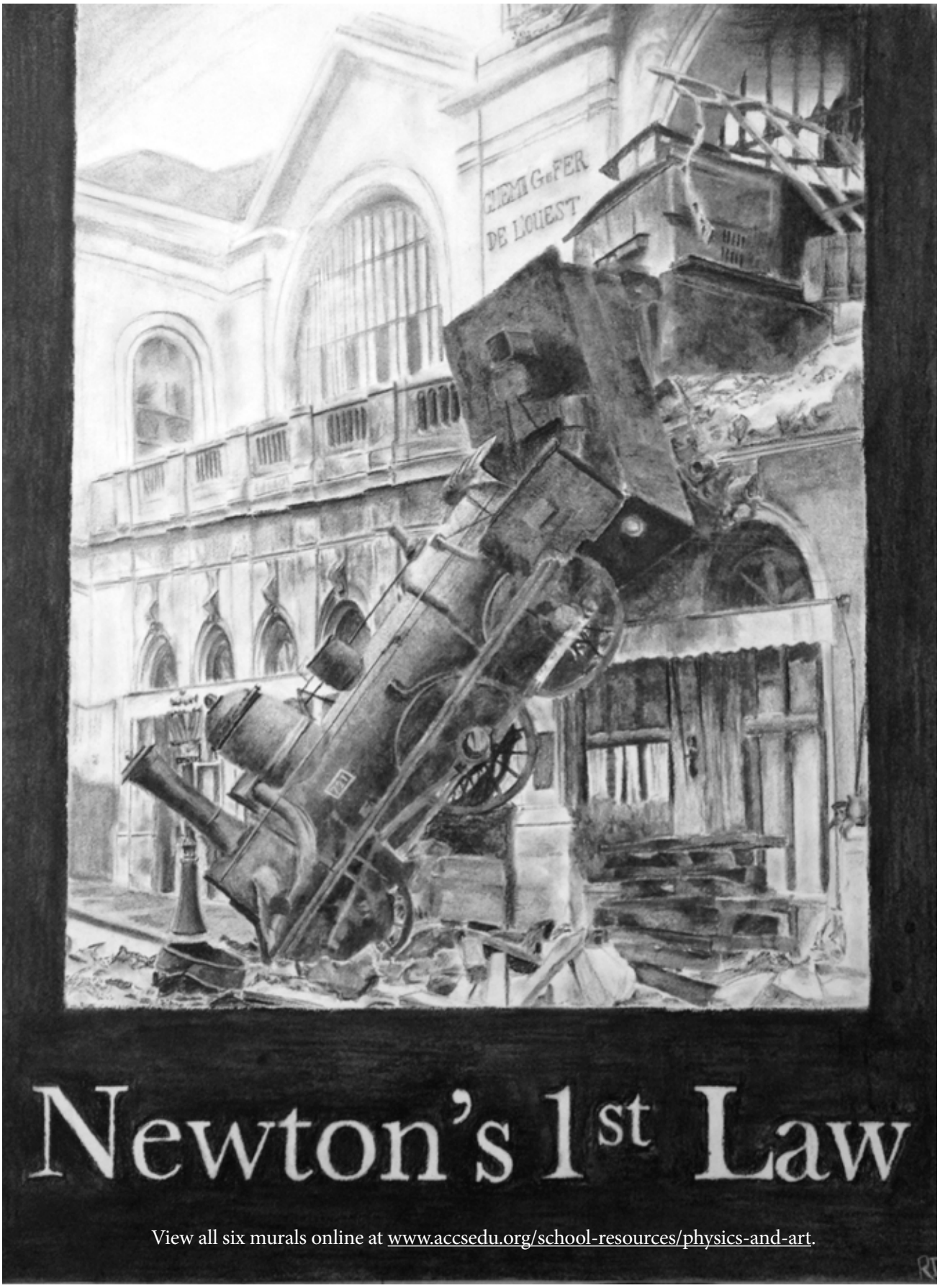
4. English, 6. "The minute that curriculum becomes focused on and connected to, as well as aligned with tests, the influence of socioeconomic level on test performance declines."

BRINGING THE BEAUTY OF PHYSICS INTO ART

by Steve Lewis and Heather Schwartz, Schaeffer Academy

At Schaeffer Academy, we seek to surround our students with "Truth, Beauty, and Goodness." The science and art departments have worked together to bring more of these attributes to the walls of the classroom. The junior and senior studio art students were presented with the opportunity to create works of art that would go beyond simple portraits of important physicists. Their task was to represent the physics equations that are taught in the classroom in a way that would catch the interest of other students and stimulate their desire to learn. The artists studied these equations as well as the principles of artistic design in order to create a compelling composition that would successfully draw the viewer in and unfold a story. The science department reviewed the artwork and chose pieces that demonstrated good design and technical skill while successfully portraying the equations of physics. Since the artists are known in the school, excitement has built because the audience has a personal connection to each artist and is often led to ask questions about the science behind the artwork. This is our first attempt to integrate these two subject areas and the reaction to the compositions has been extremely positive. It has also been very interesting to see how each artist interpreted his subject matter (e.g., what does this equation mean to you?) *Could this project be an option for your school?*

Steve Lewis teaches physics and Heather Schwartz teaches studio art at Schaeffer Academy, an ACCS-accredited school in Rochester, Minnesota.



Newton's 1st Law

View all six murals online at www.accsedu.org/school-resources/physics-and-art.

TRINITARIAN EDUCATION: MORE INSIGHTS FROM DOROTHY SAYERS

by Brad Almond, Providence Preparatory School

Note: An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Academic Roundtable of the C.S. Lewis Foundation's Fall Conference in Houston, TX in November 2013.

If someone unfamiliar with Christian classical education asked you to identify a single source that concisely and clearly summarizes its constitutive elements, it is likely that Dorothy Sayers' essay "The Lost Tools of Learning" would be near the top of your list. It might even be the only item on your list. While some among you might be tempted to gainsay or amend portions of this essay, or to simply spell out its limitations, I suspect none of you would deny its widespread influence, to which can be attributed the writing of many books and the founding of many schools.

But my own initial reading of this essay, while helping me greatly to understand and embrace the tenets of classical education, left me with a nagging question that I was not sure how to answer: is classical education substantively and essentially Christian? And if so, how? Aside from noting the long-standing historical usage of the trivium by the Church, Sayers has little to say about this question in her essay. And not being as familiar with the writings of the Patristics and the Schoolmen as I perhaps ought to be (and as undoubtedly some of you are), I could offer no satisfactory answer to this question. But I recently came across another work by Sayers, which—although ostensibly about a completely different topic—can be interpreted in such a way so as to shed some light on this question. The work I am referring to is the book *The Mind of the Maker*. But before I discuss this interpretation, and because I ultimately want the two works to be considered alongside each other, I ought first to briefly summarize them. Let me begin with the "Lost Tools."

THE LOST TOOLS OF LEARNING

In this essay, Sayers, after lamenting a litany of various deformities and dangers into which our fallen Western education system has led us, goes on to describe the essence of classical education as a proposed remedy. Central to her prescription is the core of the classical syllabus known as the *trivium* (meaning the "three ways"): the tripartite progression of grammar, logic, and rhetoric that leads students to a mastery of language, that teaches students how to learn (and thus prepares them for life), that integrates all subjects (as we Moderns understand them), and—as Sayers goes

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to some length to illustrate—that corresponds to the natural developmental stages in children.

These developmental stages and the respective implications they hold for education may be briefly summarized as follows. The youngest of school children are endowed with a great capacity for memorization, and are fascinated and astonished with the newness and strangeness of the world, and should thus be introduced to our culture's vast storehouses of stories, facts, and personalities (from whatever subject) to both whet and satiate this appetite. As children approach middle-school age, however, they change, and are more likely to engage the world in a less passively receptive, more contrarian or combative fashion—to challenge and question and spar with ideas, with their teachers, their parents, and with each other. As Sayers argues, children at this stage should be taught formal logic to both shape and play to this natural tendency. The materials accumulated during the grammar stage can now serve as "grist for the mill" to exercise and further develop the newly acquired logic skills. At the onset of adolescence, students change once again, and begin to seek a unique voice and mode of expression to enable them to engage with and leave their mark on the world. Students at this age should be taught rhetoric, which can integrate facts and formal logic into a form of expression that should be wise, persuasive, and articulate. These are the "lost tools" in a nutshell.

THE MIND OF THE MAKER

On the other hand, *The Mind of the Maker* is a reflexive, exploratory study in Trinitarian theology in which Sayers describes how the creation and reception of a work of fiction dimly but truly images our Three-Personed God. To show this correspondence, Sayers depicts the genesis and life of a novel (the form of fiction writing with which she was most familiar) as having a Trinitarian structure consisting of three clauses: *Idea, Activity,* and *Power*. First, the novel begins with the receipt of the *Idea* for the story—complete in itself and received, as it were, *ex nihilo*, without conscious effort or preparation on the part of the author. Second, the Activity of the work involves bringing the *Idea* of the story into space and time by embodying and clothing it in words via the writing process: imagining, drafting, revising, editing. Sayers argues that the *Activity* always and necessarily proceeds with reference to the *Idea*—otherwise the writer's intuition regarding the rightness or wrongness of a particular word, phrase, sentence, character, and so on, would be illusory. Third, the *Power* of the written story transmits the *Idea* through the *Activity* to impart the significance, meaning, and beauty of the story to the reader. Without the Power, the Idea remains sterile and opaque to the reader, even though he understands all the words on the page.

After defining her terms, Sayers shows the correspondence between the *Idea*, *Activity*, and *Power* of a novel and the Persons of the Trinity. Not surprisingly, Sayers likens the *Idea* of the story to the Father—Unbegotten Creator, Timeless, beholding the end and the beginning of the creation at once; the *Activity* of writing to the Son—the Word and Image of God, Incarnate in space and time, by Whom all things were created and in Whom all things cohere; and the *Power* of the story to the Holy Spirit—the Meaning and Radiance of the love and reciprocal glorification that is continually exchanged between the Father and the Son. But beyond this simple one-for-one correspondence between Persons and clauses, Sayers also notes the indivisibility and the unity of *Idea*, *Activity*, and *Power*: "And these three are one, each equally in itself the whole work, whereof none can exist without [the] other: and

this is the image of the Trinity."[1]

Furthermore, Sayers refines and extends her framework by claiming that a work of fiction either succeeds or fails to the degree that it images a true trinitarian structure, which it would do by rendering proportional and ordinate glory to each of the three clauses/Persons. If the work is not a true image, she argues, it must deviate from it by one or more conscious or unconscious errors—errors that are analogous to various historical Christian heresies—by either over-emphasizing or denying the glory that is due to one or more of the three clauses/Persons. For example, Sayers, with her characteristic incision and wit, criticizes "son-ridden" writers who give too much emphasis to the *Activity* of writing: they are the writers "in whom the immense ingenuity and sensuous loveliness of manner is developed out of all proportion to the tenuity of the ruling idea; their ghosts enjoy a kind of false Pentecost, thrilling and moving the senses but producing no genuine rebirth of the spirit . . . [in their poetry, especially, the] power of unconscious persuasion is lost and the reader's response is diverted by a conscious ecstasy of enigma-hunting, like a pig rooting for truffles."[2] While the scope of Sayers' book is broader than what I have briefly outlined here, this will suffice for our present purposes.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Having now briefly outlined these two works by Dorothy Sayers, I propose that by generalizing from the trinitarian framework described above, the "Lost Tools" and *Mind of the Maker* can be read in complementary conjunction as a more complete exposition of Christian classical education, the latter clarifying and lending additional power and significance to the former. How is this so? In short, classical education is more than just a *trivium*: it is also an image of the Trinity. Samuel Taylor Coleridge wrote that an image must always derive from something greater than itself, and must represent in some way the greatness from which it derives.[3] By this measure, Dorothy Sayers demonstrated in *Mind of the Maker* how a work of fiction is an image of the Trinity. I want to follow her lead and consider how the *trivium*, like a work of fiction, is also an image of the Trinity. How might this work? Let's consider the three clauses, ways, and Persons together.

Sayers' first clause in a work of fiction is the *Idea*, which corresponds to the Grammar stage of the trivium, and both of these correspond to and derive from the Father. Like their Divine Referent, these two images of the Father deal with origins and beginnings and the naming of things. To make it clearer: what the *Idea* stage of a novel accomplishes in an author, with regard to a specific story, the Grammar stage accomplishes in a young child, with regard to the whole realm of creation. Both comprise a Father-inspired pedagogy of "let there be light." The *Idea* and the Grammar, as images, both reflect the Father, and partake of his glory in a subordinate and derivative way. And so on with the other stages.

The second clause of Sayers' work of fiction is the *Activity*, which corresponds to the Logic of the *trivium*, and both of these correspond to and derive from the Son. Like their Divine Referent, these two images of the Son deal with incarnation and revelation: of making the unseen seen—both to the eye and to the heart. To make it clearer: what the *Activity* stage of a novel accomplishes through an author by embodying the Idea of a story into an ordered and intelligible parade of characters, events, and revelations, the Logic stage accomplishes in a student by bringing the jumble and mass of accumulated facts and figures into order so that right relations among them may be achieved and error may be avoided. Both comprise a Son-inspired pedagogy of "and He saw that it was good."

Finally, the third clause of Sayers' work of fiction is the *Power*, which corresponds to the Rhetoric of the *trivium*, and both of these correspond to and derive from

the Holy Spirit. These two images deal with amplifying and glorifying the right relation between story and text, remembering and thinking, observation and analysis, even as the Holy Spirit amplifies and glorifies the loving relation between Father and Son. To make it clearer: what the *Power* of a work of fiction accomplishes through the kinship and affinity between a tale and its written embodiment to produce the meaning and impact of the written work in the reader, the Rhetoric stage of the *trivium* accomplishes in a student by integrating and enveloping truth and goodness within beauty, such that the hearer is moved and compelled to participate in or partake of that which is beautified. This comprises a Holy Spirit-inspired pedagogy of "be fruitful and multiply," or even of "go ye therefore into all the earth."

Furthermore, as with their Divine Referents, the three ways of the *trivium* must not be disintegrated. Viewed in this way, education will either succeed or fail to the degree that right and ordinate relations among the three ways are preserved. Failures of integration produce educational heresy, of which history readily provides many examples.

And may also these historical heresies of education be described and accounted for within this trinitarian framework of education? I believe they can. These educational heresies can arguably be reduced to two heads. The first educational heresy in the modern West arises from the objectivist, materialist impulse that comes to us from the likes of Bacon, Laplace, Descartes, Darwin, and Marx, and has produced the scientific and technological revolutions and the educational methods informed by them that effectively deny all knowledge that does not lead to man's mastery over nature. In Aristotelian terms, this education fixates on material and efficient causes but denies formal and teleological ones. It is all matter and no meaning, all technique and no telos, and thus it gives inordinate emphasis to the *Activity* or the Son while simultaneously denying both *Idea* and *Power*, Father and Spirit, origin and meaning. It is a Cat-in-the-Hat pedagogy that favors utility and mastery over both truth and beauty, and while it may at times delight or impress, it cannot nourish or impart wisdom. Within the works of our beloved Inklings, we see this error embodied in the likes of Uncle Andrew in the Magician's Nephew, in the National Institute for Coordinated Experiments in That Hideous Strength, as well as in Sauron and Saruman in The Lord of the Rings.

The second educational heresy arises from the subjectivist, post-modernist impulse that comes to us through the writings of Nietzsche (who wrote of the will to power) and Sigmund Freud (who wrote of primary narcissm), and which has been descried and further elaborated by Alasdair MacIntyre (who wrote of emotivism), and Phillip Rieff (who wrote of therapism). It is the education of John Dewey's constructivism, Gaius and Titius's *Green Book* and of "art for art's sake" that puts the locus of meaning and authority within the individual self, and thus denies both the Father and the Son, the *Idea* and the *Activity*. It is a pedagogy of free self-expression without discipline, tradition, or purpose. It is the wholesale rejection of all authority: of inherited craft, form, practice, and meaning. C. S. Lewis rightly and prophetically warned us of the dangers in this form of education in *The Abolition of Man*.

There are certainly other conceivable heresies within this framework, but enumerating them all is not my purpose in this paper (I'm sure Screwtape could tell you if you asked him). Rather, my purpose has been to attempt to provide a more substantive answer to the question of how classical education is Christian. To me the historical, affiliative argument (i.e., Christians have always used some form of classical education, therefore classical education is Christian) is wholly unsatisfactory. I believe the Trinitarian argument is better in that it provides a more complete basis for classical education: not only does the *trivium* provide a practically beneficial set of tools to both children and teachers alike, it also

points beyond itself to bear witness to its origins in God Himself. Furthermore, classical educators often speak of things in terms of truth, goodness, and beauty. The "Lost Tools" essay advocates for classical education on the basis of only its truth and goodness. Sayers claims that the *trivium* is true (i.e., that it possesses some correspondence with reality) on the grounds that it honors the developmental progression of all children. Sayers claims that the *trivium* is good on the grounds that it makes men free by helping them avoid the errors by which they can become enslaved or subject to deception, tyranny, or propaganda. But we can now say the *trivium* is beautiful, and is Christian, in that it also bears the radiance, integrity, and proportion of the Trinity from which it derives and to which it refers.

In closing, I don't know that Dorothy Sayers would agree with my usage of her ideas, and I don't claim that any of this is new. For all I know, the things I have mentioned above are precisely the sorts of insights the Early Church Fathers saw in the *trivium* that caused them to adopt it in the first place. But for those of us for whom the answer to this historical question is beyond our ken or ambition, I hope this brief essay will suffice for the more modest purpose for which it was intended.

NOTES:

1. Sayers, Dorothy. L. (1994 / 1941). *The Mind of the Maker.* New York: Continuum Books, p. 28.

2. Ibid., p. 122

3. Coleridge, Samuel Taylor (1853). "The Statesman's Manual." *The Complete Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*. New York: Harper & Brothers.