Endorsements

for

The Liberal Arts Tradition: A Philosophy of Christian Classical Education

"*The Liberal Arts Tradition* selects luminous threads from ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary philosophers, theologians, and practitioners and weaves them into a rich tapestry. The book offers a coherent picture of how the longer tradition of classical liberal arts education attends to the integrated intellectual, moral, aesthetic, spiritual, and physical formation of students. Its goal is people and cultures that know the true, do the good, make the beautiful, and love the holy.

Even more important, however, *The Liberal Arts Tradition* demonstrates how this tradition is being recovered, adapted, and practiced in schools today. For, like any tradition, this one is not static. Clark and Jain are not antiquarian archaeologists, nor are they peddlers of archaic novelties. Instead, they are astute educators who have received a humane tradition, practiced it, sifted it, and are now sharing it with others. We are all beneficiaries of their work. I am especially delighted with the rare attention they give to the poetic mode, the formation of virtue in community, the fine and common arts, the importance of festive leisure, and the necessary connection between a school's calling, culture, and curriculum. Anyone interested or involved in classical liberal arts education—school boards, administrators, educators, faculty, parents, or students—should be grateful for this very fine work from Kevin Clark and Ravi Scott Jain."

—Brian Williams

Dean, Templeton Honors College and College of the Arts & Humanities;
Assistant Professor of Ethics & Liberal Studies
Eastern University

"This book is an indispensable guide to Christian liberal arts education. It is thoroughly researched and presented as a cogent model for contemporary schools. I love the emphasis on teaching that is rooted in piety and directed by theology, with places for all the liberal arts in this context. Unlike some advocates of classical schools, Clark and Jain do not neglect the training of the body, the role of music, and the place of the natural sciences. I pray this

book will gain a broad readership, and I expect it to prove fruitful in the preparation of young people for the challenges of life."

—Dr. John Frame
Professor of Systematic Theology & Philosophy
Reformed Theological Seminary

"The progress of a society can be no faster than the progress of providing a good education for the people who make up that society. To put education first is to put society first. So what is a good education? In *The Liberal Arts Tradition*, Kevin Clark and Ravi Scott Jain answer this question by setting before us a compelling Christian vision for the rediscovery and reformation of classical education for today.

Not since Dorothy Sayers's essay 'The Lost Tools of Learning' and Mortimer Adler's *Paideia Proposal* have we had such a substantive contribution to the Christian classical school movement. Especially noteworthy is the holistic nature of this philosophy and methodology of Christian education that focuses on the development of both the student's soul (piety and music) and body (gymnastic). In *The Liberal Arts Tradition*, Clark and Jain present the cultivation of a student's godly character as the primary goal toward which all the curriculum points, not merely filling their minds with information, but enlarging their heart affections toward God and others. And central to this model is the development of all these competencies in the context of the family and Church as the students' primary learning communities.

Clark and Jain have masterfully designed this educational model to help guide students on the learning pathways the ancients intended: integrating the Trivium arts (grammar, logic, and rhetoric) and the Quadrivium arts (arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy) as the foundational paths to prepare students for the study and application of philosophy and theology in all spheres of life.

The nations of the world need nothing less than an educational revolution, a global movement deeply committed to providing the world with access to the kind of quality education outlined in this book. I highly recommend it."

—Dr. Steve Childers
President & CEO Pathway Learning
Former professor, Reformed Theological Seminary

"I have learned a great deal from *The Liberal Arts Tradition* and find myself frequently going back to it as a reminder, in the same way that a person trying to navigate regularly checks a map to see where he is and remember where he is going. In particular, Clark and Jain have done a great service to the classical education community by expressing the methods and reasoning behind the classical teaching of math and science."

—Michael Robinson, PhD

"We needed this book and now it's here. Clark and Jain explain the inner logic of classical education in a manner fully consistent with the heritage of classical education with no ideological twists and turns and a level of scholarly inquiry that will enrich the classical renewal for a long time. Once you've read a book or two to introduce you to classical education and have started to ask the deeper questions about its history and nature, get this book and use it as a permanent reference."

—Andrew Kern
President
Circe Institute

"Clark and Jain have produced a wonderful book that lays out clearly where classical Christian education needs to go from here. This volume marks the successful passing of the torch lit by Sayers and Wilson to a new generation. All involved in classical Christian education would benefit highly from heeding these new voices.

I teach a course on classical Christian education [in which] students read many of the pillars of the movement such as Sayers, Wilson, Littlejohn, and Evans, but the book that resonated with them the most was Clark and Jain's. This volume should prove going forward to be essential reading for anyone connected with the classical Christian school movement.

Clark and Jain, while appreciative of the good work done by the pioneers of contemporary classical Christian schools, have nevertheless produced a revolutionary book for the movement. By digging deeply into the history and theology of the Trivium and the Quadrivium, Clark and Jain demonstrate how classical Christian schools today can and should be

so much more than a simple three-part formula for learning. I sincerely hope their words will be heard and heeded."

—Jason R. Edwards, PhD
Associate Professor of History and Humanities
Grove City College

"This book is an important contribution to the classical education movement in three major ways. At one level, it presents a complete liberal arts curriculum in the context of a holistic vision of Christian formation. At the same time, it offers an account of the liberal arts that extends beyond the customary emphasis on the verbal arts (Trivium) by including the mathematical arts (Quadrivium). As a result, it also notably locates a subtle and practical training in the modern sciences within classical education. The authors speak to these issues based on their unique combination of training in math, science, philosophy, and literature, as well as their crucial experience as classroom teachers. The book suggests what may yet be possible for those answering the call of the scholar-teacher."

—Phillip J. Donnelly, PhD
Director of the Great Texts Program, Honors College
Baylor University

"In an age in which education is generally assumed to be a crassly utilitarian enterprise, Clark and Jain provide a refreshing reminder of what education for centuries has been understood to be. Through astute historical and philosophical analysis, they offer an introduction to the liberal arts tradition that is both accessible and thorough, both theoretical and practical."

—David Diener, PhD
Headmaster of Hillsdale Academy and
Lecturing Professor of Education, Hillsdale College

"Ravi Scott Jain and Kevin Clark have given us a book we have needed for a long time. Scrupulously researched, thoroughly documented, tightly argued—and best of all, readably concise. This is henceforth the "go-to" book for anyone serious about developing an historically accurate and theologically compelling classical Christian education. Our longstanding imbalance has been a classical humanities emphasis accompanied by the limping stepchild of mathematics. We have loved rhetoric and despised geometry. The first half

of our curriculum has thus been genuinely ancient; but the latter, modernist. We recovered and elevated the language-based Trivium, so long lost in the ashes of history. For this we must thank Sayers and Wilson, among others. But along the way we failed to recover the mathematics-based Quadrivium, and thus essentially gutted fully half the classical curriculum of the seven liberal arts that we say we value so much—and I say this as a humanities scholar-teacher. The brilliant classical move of this book is to show us how to complete that second recovery, and why we simply must implement it, including the musico-gymnastic element. But more importantly, the equally brilliant Christian move of the book is to reframe the entire curriculum and its pedagogy with the bookends of piety at the origins and philosophical theology as the goal. We have the blueprint now—let's get to work!"

—Grant Horner
Associate Professor of Renaissance and
Reformation Studies, The Master's College
Teacher-Mentor, Trinity Classical Academy
Santa Clarita, CA

"Some of us, after having immersed ourselves in the Trivium, thanks to Dorothy Sayers's essay and many other wonderful resources, have found ourselves wondering, What else? We know there are seven liberal arts, including the Quadrivium, and we don't know exactly what to do with these other four, where to go next. Clark and Jain's *The Liberal Arts Tradition* has the answers, and provides them in a clear, concise, nonpartisan way. If you are wondering, What else? then this is one resource you need to have on your bookshelf."

—Matt Bianco
Director of *The Lost Tools of Writing*,
Curriculum Development, and Training
CiRCE Institute

"Kevin and Ravi joined the Great Conversation many years ago. They know its rhythms, complexities, elegance, and narrative. In meditative fashion they learn by listening; in teaching they gain clarity; in life these embodied practices flourish in themselves and unto others. In short, these men have made me a better man."

—Robert F. Ingram
Headmaster, The Geneva School

"Jain and Clark bring to the still-young conversation around the recovery of classical schooling for Christian purposes a combination that has been rare thus far. First, they adhere to a scholarly motif, painstakingly referencing and noting a wide range of literature, from ancient theorists to modern experimentalists. Second, they are bona fide schoolmen; teachers who have worked in the same school for a decade, and who, together, have honed their craft—you can hear the symbiosis in their prose. Third, they have filed and planed and shaved an immense topic into an accessible work. Some books illustrate, others examine familiar topics from different perspectives. Jain and Clark's work moves the conversation about the liberal arts in the modern school to a new level of sophistication and practicality."

—Charles T. Evans
BetterSchools, LLC
Coauthor with Robert Littlejohn of
Wisdom and Eloquence: A Christian Paradigm for Classical Learning

"*The Liberal Arts Tradition* is a great gift to classical homeschooling mothers. Beautifully written, heart-stopping truth graces each page. An antidote to my own progressive education, this book has reordered my thoughts and priorities. It is an irresistible call back to humanity, wholeness, and wonder."

—Lesli Richards
Coauthor of *The Homegrown Preschooler*

"I can think of no book that sums up the essence of classical Christian education better. Clark and Jain masterfully weave together the liberal arts tradition as it forms culture in our children. Never before has this *paideia* activity been more important for Christians to understand."

—David Goodwin
President, Association of Classical Christian Schools

The Liberal Arts Tradition was awarded the *Afterthoughts* Book of the Year award in 2016 by Brandy Vencel, author of *Afterthoughts* blog.

THIRD EDITION

The Liberal Arts Tradition

A Philosophy of Christian Classical Education

Kevin Clark, DLS, and Ravi Scott Jain

Foreword by Peter Kreeft

The Liberal Arts Tradition:
A Philosophy of Christian Classical Education
Third Edition

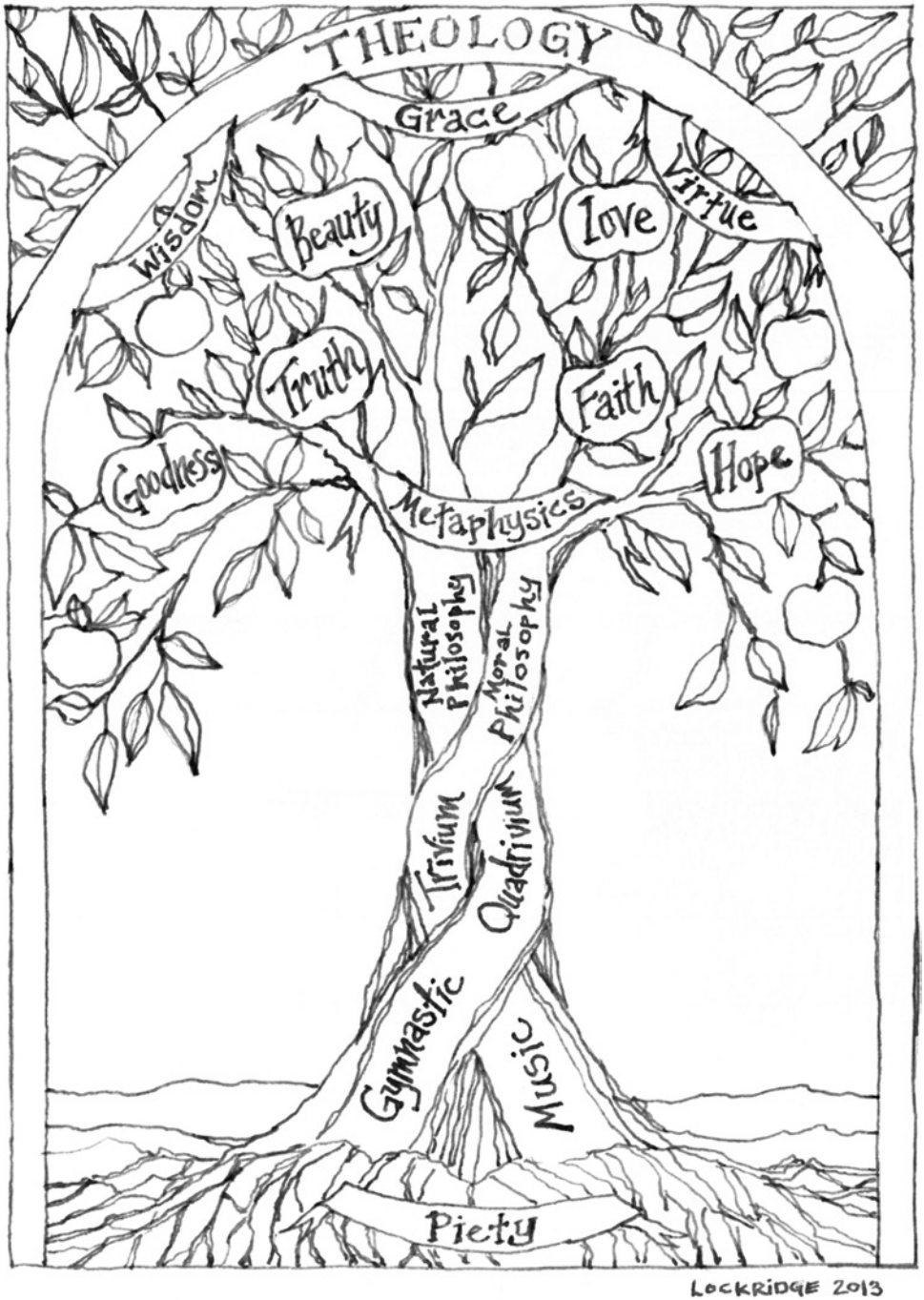
Version 3.0, Third Edition

ISBN: 978-1-60051-225-4

Illustrations by Matthew Clark & Rachel Lockridge
Cover & design by David Gustafson

Classical Academic Press
515 S. 32nd Street
Camp Hill, PA 17011
www.ClassicalAcademicPress.com

KP.04.21



LOCKRIDGE 2013

Table of Contents

PART V: Notes toward Pedagogy and Practice

Appendices

List of figures

A Short History of Classical Christian Education's Recovery

by David Goodwin, President,
Association of Classical Christian Schools

In 1991, the book *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning* by Douglas Wilson was published. Its thesis was simple: Something important was missing from school. Public schools were godless, and Christian schools were shelters. Neither seemed to teach students to think well or see the world from a Christian viewpoint.

Wilson, a pastor and father, based his book on "The Lost Tools of Learning," an essay presented in 1947 and published in 1948 by Dorothy Sayers, an Oxford graduate, mystery author, and friend of C. S. Lewis. The thinking behind Wilson's book and Sayers's essay launched the classical Christian education (CCE) movement.

In her essay, Sayers laid bare the problem: Modern pseudo-educators had distanced "school" from Christ. She stated, "Theology is the Mistress-science, without which the whole educational structure will necessarily lack its final synthesis. Those who disagree about this will remain content to leave their pupils' education still full of loose ends."[1] C. S. Lewis echoed Sayers's point in *The Abolition of Man,* another significant book in the modern renewal of CCE. Wilson believed the distance between school and Christ evident in both secular and Christian schools was caused by progressive influence.

In her essay, Sayers also addressed the danger of education that failed to teach students to think:

> By teaching [children] to read, we have left them at the mercy of the printed word. By the invention of the film and the radio [and now the internet], we have made certain that no aversion to reading shall secure them from the incessant battery of words, words, words. They do not know what the words mean;

1. Dorothy Sayers, "The Lost Tools of Learning," *National Review*, August 1, 1959, 241.

> they do not know how to ward them off or blunt their edge or fling them back; they are a prey to words in their emotions instead of being the masters of them in their intellects. . . . We have lost the tools of learning, and in their absence can only make a botched and piecemeal job of it.[2]

Wilson's interpretation of Sayers's essay not only led to the eventual writing of his book, but also to his participation as one of the founding fathers of Logos School, which opened its doors in Moscow, Idaho, in 1981. But Wilson was not the only classical Christian pioneer. Others came to similar conclusions and took steps to start their own schools and write their own books.

In 1980, just a year before Logos School was started, a small group of Christians in Topeka, Kansas, founded Cair Paravel School. Named after the capital of the kingdom of Narnia in C. S. Lewis's The Chronicles of Narnia, the school was based more on Lewis's writings than on the essay by Sayers. Also in 1980, David Hicks's *Norms and Nobility* was published. It has become an increasingly popular and influential book in the renewal of CCE, contributing to the restoration through its educational prescription based largely on the Greek term *paideia*. In 1981, another group of ecumenical Christians in South Bend, Indiana, started Trinity School at Greenlawn.

Logos School, Cair Paravel School, and Trinity School at Greenlawn all started independently of one another and almost at the same time. Each school provided an early impetus to the renewal of CCE.

The first generation of more than 100 classical Christian schools emerged between 1994 and about 2000, most of them based on the Logos model. The Association of Classical Christian Schools (ACCS) was founded in 1994 to shepherd this burgeoning movement.

First-Generation ACCS Schools: Sayers and the Trivium, c. 1992–2000

This first generation of classical Christian schools was primarily based on Sayers's particular interpretation of the Trivium—grammar, logic, and rhetoric—the first three of the seven medieval liberal arts. Sayers was a master of seeing patterns and finding hidden but profound truth. Her prowess with this skill probably explains why many consider her to be

2. Sayers, "Lost Tools," 238.

the best mystery author of the twentieth century. Sayers used this skill to observe something novel about the Trivium.

The Trivium is ubiquitous in historic Western education. Light still shines today through medieval stained-glass depictions of the Trivium and Quadrivium (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music) across Europe. These seven liberal arts are etched in stone on colleges and cathedrals. But it was Sayers who noticed that the Trivium also aligned with the ages of students. She said the grammar phase for young children was natural—they could memorize and recite facts with ease. Adolescents were prone to argue, so they should be taught logic. And young adults (about high school age) desired to present themselves well, so they should be taught rhetorically. This view of the Trivium was innovative, and it provided to the first generation of classical schools a framework onto which Latin, history, literature, writing, and other subjects could be laid to form an excellent education. This three-part model shaped the classical Christian movement throughout the 1990s.

About 100 schools were founded in this early phase.

Second-Generation ACCS Schools: Integration and the Great Books, c. 2000–2008

The second generation of the classical Christian movement emerged around 2000 and continued until about 2008. The leaders of Trinity at Greenlawn and other thinkers within the movement, including Wes Callahan, Andrew Kern, Ty Fischer, and Veritas Press, popularized the integrated study of history, literature, philosophy, theology, and art based in Western canon. Roundtable discussions of the Great Books of the Western world in classrooms became a more prevalent hallmark of classical education. Philosophy made up a bigger part of this second generation of schools. Art, literature, and theology grew in importance.

In the second generation of the movement, Latin and Greek gained new importance, not as agents of logic or scientific language, but as a path "back to the source," or *ad fontes*. Studying original works in the original language, or as close as possible, provided the purest and most potent form of education. Rather than solely providing practical outcomes, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and French and Anglo-Saxon to a lesser degree became a path to more fully appreciate texts. Many second-generation schools moved to more rigorous attempts at fluency in classical languages, using language programs such as Hans Orberg's *Lingua Latina*.

At the end of this phase, from within the movement a group of scholars, led by Dr. Christopher Perrin of Classical Academic Press, began to deepen the recovery of CCE. This group, called the Alcuin Fellowship, contributed to the formation of the third and fourth generations of the classical Christian renewal. Alcuin emphasized the ongoing study of historic expressions of CCE, noting the importance of embodied practices that cultivate affections, the role of *scholé* (restful learning), and the restoration of beauty and aesthetics throughout school life.

By the end of this second phase, about 200 schools were members of the ACCS.

Third-Generation ACCS Schools: Virtue and Training the Affections, c. 2008–2018

Rediscovery continued to define classical education, now using more ancient sources. This brought a new phase to the movement from about 2008 to 2018. Schools turned to fourth-century bishop St. Augustine and *De Doctrina,* his work on Christian education. In it, he said of the objective of Christian education: "Now he is a man of just and holy life who forms an unprejudiced estimate of things, and keeps his affections also under strict control, so that he neither loves what he ought not to love, nor fails to love what he ought to love, nor loves that equally which ought to be loved either less or more, nor loves less or more which ought to be loved equally."[3] Augustine's "rightly ordered affections" became for the movement a definition of virtue. David Hick's *Norms and Nobility* from 1980 was promoted by Andrew Kern's CiRCE Institute in the early 2000s, resulting in a stronger focus on *paideia*, the ancient Greek idea of education that cultivated in students *arete,* the education of a man or woman who rightly ordered his or her affections (virtue). Dr. David Naugle articulated this early in the 1990s, but it was reignited in 2009 by James K. A. Smith in *Desiring the Kingdom*.

These influences drove ACCS schools to consider the *pathos* and *ethos* (desires and environment) of classical education. A renewed focus on beautiful school decor and student communities took hold. Traditional music, particularly as worship, also grew in prominence. Both of these had been part of the first generation, but now, with a new emphasis on school culture (*ethos*), they played a more central role. House programs, which had previously been intramural sports programs, were converted to

3. Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, n.d.), 38.

provide student peer leadership toward "loving the good." In other words, obedience not out of duty but out of love for the good. These house programs often enveloped activities such as protocol dinners, dances, travel, assemblies, and service projects into a single mission, drawing students to love what is true, good, and beautiful in community.

This generation of school also had a newfound focus on virtue. Rather than moral behavior, the older understanding of virtue as connected to the desires of the soul, shaped to imitate Christ, was being applied. Dating to the early medievals, the seven historic Christian virtues—Justice, Fortitude, Temperance, Prudence, Faith, Hope, and Love—are frequently at the center of this understanding. Other virtues surround these. "Stories," valued for their influence in shaping virtue, shifted toward the older "fairy tales" in the grammar school. In upper school, narratives from the Great Book canon found new importance. The original focus on Great Books by Mortimer Adler was rooted in the development of philosophical ideas. Later, Adler discovered the value of great stories to shape a culture, regardless of their contribution to the canon of ideas. In all, this third generation of schools was intentionally formative to the souls of students.

By the end of this phase, a total of about 300 classical Christian schools were ACCS members.

Fourth-Generation ACCS Schools: Seven Arts with Three Spheres of Knowledge, c. 2018–present

More than twenty years into the classical restoration, the underlying foundational framework of CCE presents a challenge. CCE is not to be viewed as classical education with a Christian overlay. Rather, CCE is a unified educational project of Christianity through the ages. Between the time of St. Augustine (c. AD 354–430) and the Enlightenment (c. 1750), Christian monks and scholars transformed the seven liberal arts into the foundation of Christian education. These arts were originally inspired in Imperial Rome and Hellenistic Greece. But, like planets with no sun around which to orbit, these arts had previously lacked *telos*, or a central purpose. With the glorification of Christ in the center, the seven arts found unification in the medieval period. So "classical Christian" does not mean "classical *and* Christian." It refers back to this medieval construct so unique in human history: humanity and nature united in and for the glory of Christ.

The Liberal Arts Tradition is leading the way for this fourth generation. In the first part of the book, authors Kevin Clark and Ravi Scott

Jain improve and deepen our understanding of the Trivium arts. Then the authors reveal the depth of the Quadrivium, the remaining four of the seven liberal arts. And they go further in. Heretofore in the movement, classical educators have adopted the general framework of subjects common to progressive schools—science, math, language, history, literature, etc. A few new ones such as rhetoric and logic were added, and many such as social science or political science were removed. Clark and Jain present a new challenge to this fragmented subject orientation to education, showing that the integrated study of the seven liberal arts reflects the intellectual practices that make up an educated person.

Clark and Jain point out how, for centuries, classical education was this integrated study that was holistic, grounded in revealed truth in the Word and the world, beginning in wonder and leading to wisdom—and all governed by the "Mistress-science," theology. They also reveal how we, in our time, can renew this tradition that is our inheritance.

I believe this work of Clark and Jain will be as central to all four cumulative generations of schools as *Recovering the Lost Tools* was originally for the movement. I commend it to those in our movement so that we, following in the footsteps of Christ, might "make all things new" in education.

Foreword

by Peter Kreeft

Plato said a lot of foolish things in his *Republic* about an ideally just society, but one very central thing that he said in that work was not foolish at all but very wise: the single most important thing that makes a society good, and just, and wise, and happy is education.

Do you want *the very best* middle- and high-school education for your children? Then read this book and find a school that believes and practices its principles.

This book is about a *complete* education in the "liberal arts," which are the fundamental subjects that students will need as a foundation to build on for the rest of their educational life, no matter what specialized subjects they take later, in college and graduate school. Most important of all, these are the subjects we need to know for *life*, for a life that is free and not slavish (thus the term "*liberal* education").

Just look at this book's table of contents to see how much is included in it. It's more than the old "seven liberal arts," but it builds on them.

It is an education of *the whole person*, not just the calculating intellect. But it is not less "intellectual" for that, but more so.

It is based on the "tried and true" tradition of liberal education invented by the greatest minds in history. Here you will meet Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Christ, Augustine, Aquinas, Pascal, C. S. Lewis. It is the best of the old *and* the best of the new. It is not the "politically correct" education offered by our ever-declining and continually dumbed-down state schools. In fact it compares to that as a Jane Austen novel compares to a pothead's addled dream.

As our culture becomes more decadent, spiritual survival reactions to it become tougher and tighter, just as the body's white corpuscles organize to combat an infection. As bad gets worse, good gets better. And the contrast gets clearer and stronger.

This is not "mainstream" education. And the educational establishment feels deeply threatened by it, and offers at least eight silly objections to it that are really advertisements *for* it.

1. It's "divisive." It's not what everyone else is doing. It marches to a different drummer. It cultivates excellence rather than conformity. Yes it does. And this is actually sometimes used as an objection rather than as a selling point!
2. It's old, outdated, unfashionable. Yes it is, like honor, courage, integrity, and honesty. It doesn't try to tell the truth with a clock; it doesn't practice chronological snobbery. In an age which has embraced every novelty, the true rebel is the traditionalist.
3. It's not in line with modern philosophies: skepticism, cynicism, subjectivism, relativism, naturalism, materialism, reductionism, positivism, scientism, socialism. That's exactly right. It's not. It's countercultural. It harnesses teenagers' natural proclivity to rebel and turns that force against "the bad guys," who are now the "establishment," instead of against "the good guys."
4. It's "judgmental." It believes there really is good and bad, true and false. The typical modern education is judgmental only against being judgmental, and skeptical of everything except skepticism.
5. It's small. It's private. It's grassroots. It's implemented mainly in small schools, not big ones. This is true, and it's another plus rather than a minus. "Small is beautiful." The bigger the school, the more standardized it has to be and the more the person tends to get lost in the system and get identified with his or her race, economic class, gender, sexual orientation, or political party.
6. It seeks the truth for its own sake, not primarily for pragmatic uses. It aims at wisdom, not wealth. It makes its graduates philosophers instead of millionaires. This is also true. But it's not a fault. As G. K. Chesterton said, "Man's most practical need is to be more than a pragmatist."
7. It's not specialized. It doesn't include courses on underwater basket weaving or pickling and fermentation (which was actually a major at Ohio State). It doesn't teach you clever ways to outguess Microsoft Word, or the government, or lawyers, or your professor, or the standardized tests. It just teaches you how to think and how to live. But businesses, law schools, and government agencies don't want specialist drudges and drones; they want people who can read and write and think logically and creatively.

8. It's religious. It's Christian. It doesn't pretend that the most important man who ever lived never lived, as our public education now does. It assumes that the supernatural is not the enemy to the natural, that "grace perfects nature rather than demeaning it," as light perfects all colors.

This book is a description of that educational program. It's precious—because children are precious.

A Note from the Publisher on the Revised (2019) Edition

Classical Academic Press originally published *The Liberal Arts Tradition* five years ago in 2014. Since that time, the book's success has been notable. It has made the rounds and has become a touchstone for virtually anyone seeking to understand the classical liberal arts tradition of education. The book is assigned in college classes, is read by classical school faculties, and is a common resource for classical homeschooling parents and communities. It has been widely reviewed and recommended by a host of scholars, online bloggers, and other notable reviewers. Sales have been robust in the United States and are growing internationally as well. In fact, most of *The Liberal Arts Tradition* has already been translated into Mandarin in China, where the book has already had a remarkable influence, even in English.

During the past few years I have been pleased to hear people quote from memory various passages and maxims they learned from reading *The Liberal Arts Tradition*. At conferences and faculty training sessions, I frequently meet people who have digested the book and use it as a point of departure in discussion and conversation. In my view, the book has struck a nerve and has extended the conversation around classical education that was begun by other authors such as David Hicks and Douglas Wilson.

If careful research and clear writing is a large part of the original success of *The Liberal Arts Tradition*, we expect it will be the reason for the success of this edition as well. Over the last six years, Clark and Jain have continued to read and research and then apply what they have learned at the Geneva School in Winter Park, Florida. They have also engaged in countless conversations with thoughtful educators and readers both in the United States and abroad. The result is an edition that contains 40 percent additional content that includes both a deepening of the presentation of piety, gymnastic, music, arts, philosophy, and theology (the PGMAPT paradigm) and the addition of a new section on classical education and the formation of virtue. The original edition's extensive footnotes and bibliography have been praised by readers, and the authors have spent significant time further enhancing existing footnotes and adding additional footnotes and bibliography references as well. For

those who want to read the primary and secondary sources that convey the liberal arts tradition, I know of no better bibliography than the one contained at the back of this book.

Any educator, scholar, or reader interested in the renewal of classical education today cannot afford to ignore this pithy book. *The Liberal Arts Tradition*, perhaps more than any other book in the twenty-first century, tells us what classical education was and can be today in our schools and homeschools.

A Note from the Publisher

Seeking to recover a lost art or craft is a difficult endeavor. There are few, if any, who are masters of the craft or art and who can teach the necessary skills to those coming behind. Those of us who have been trying to recover the art of classical education have been in that awkward position of trying to craft a curriculum and pedagogy without training and only a few tools. We have tried to give what we were not given ourselves. We are trying to reconstruct a bridge without having studied bridge building.

The good news is that the recovery has been underway for about thirty years now, and some good books have been written and many great old books found and read. Beyond that, there have been many who have been building bridges—actually implementing a recovered classical Christian education in our schools and slowly learning the art, often through a good deal of trial and error. We are slowly finding our footing, finding ourselves walking more confidently on the old paths and finding the old way very much suited to our own new times. The bridge may not be beautiful, but it's now functional and people are crossing over. Slowly the bridge is getting wider and stronger and gradually more attractive to the eye.

Kevin Clark and Ravi Scott Jain are two educator-philosophers who have been reading the old and new books and implementing their ideas at the Geneva School in Winter Park, Florida, for some ten years—building the bridge. What's more, they have discussed their ideas with peers and critics over this span, inviting leading educators and professors from around the country to engage and critique their ideas. In this crucible of give and take, their ideas have evolved and clarified and have resulted in this pithy, clear, and profound book, setting the model of Christian classical education before us in bright light. To those who have read Douglas Wilson's *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning* or Evans and

Littlejohn's *Wisdom and Eloquence*, this book will prove to be the illuminating third book that helps complete the bridge linking us back to the classical tradition of education.

I have noted that this book is pithy and clear. It is. Clark and Jain took this manuscript through some eight editions, refining the text more each time, knowing that the discussion of classical education is often confusing on many levels. In at least two ways Clark and Jain bring clarity where it has often been lacking. First, they clarify the confusing taxonomy of the classical curriculum (scope and sequence) and they *define terms*. They accomplish this with a historical survey of the classical curriculum as well as a contemporary survey of its application and terminology. Too often we find an unstable blend of modern terminology and traditional classical categories. Generally there is talk of the Trivium and Quadrivium—blended with many other kinds of terminology and classification. We are not sure what is specified by "art," "science," "humanities," "grammar," or "natural philosophy," because these various words are used in different ways and already have a wide or uncertain semantic range. Clark and Jain bring much-needed clarity to this discussion.

The second way in which Clark and Jain bring clarity is by showing us the entire context of the classical curriculum—a context that is larger than the seven liberal arts of the Trivium and Quadrivium. In fact, for the first time (for many), they show us explicitly how singing, worship, poetry, recess, stories, drama, and field days are in fact an integral part of a classical education. They show us how history, literature, philosophy, and theology (not liberal arts) are critical to the tradition. They summarize that context for the integrated, holistic, and humanizing curriculum as PGMAPT: piety, gymnastic, music, arts (the liberal arts), philosophy, and theology. In my thinking, PGMAPT has already become the mental overlay I use for reflecting on the general endeavor of classical education—it is the best big picture I have seen.

This model proves to be very helpful to elementary school educators (especially in grades K–2) who do not teach Latin, logic, or rhetoric and who often ask, "How do I teach classically?" Well, a kindergarten teacher is indeed a profoundly classical teacher who helps establish young souls in piety, gymnastic, and music—priming and cultivating the affections, loves, wills, and bodies of children at a time when they are docile, receptive, and eager. It is these teachers of the young who make the first deep and lasting impression on the souls of children—tuning their hearts and training their bodies, engaging them in a holistic and essentially "musical"

education, and educating them in wonder that teaches "passions more than skills and content." It turns out that the classical primary teachers are the exalted "wonder-workers" of the school. In this respect, the primary teachers lead the entire endeavor, as "wonder" is a condition for all future study.

This model is also helpful to upper-school educators who teach literature, history, theology, and philosophy. Training in the liberal arts while humanizing "goods" in themselves nonetheless prepares students for the formal study of philosophy and theology. There is a kind of biblical study that is present even in kindergarten, but the formal study of theology requires the training of the liberal arts to be done with mastery. Thus Clark and Jain say that classical education is "grounded in piety and governed by theology," which is to say that biblical truth is both the beginning and the end (the *arche* and the *telos*) of Christian classical education. This recovered full model of classical education (PGMAPT) gives the twelfth-grade theological educator his rightful place. Though the formal study of theology comes last in the sequence, she nonetheless is the governess guiding the entire educational enterprise, giving coherence and unity throughout—the "queen" of the arts.

If recovering classical education is like recovering a lost art, it might also be like trying to remember a hazy dream. In the reading of dozens of books on classical education, I often experience the exercise in a kind of dream state. I find myself catching glimpses of things that I know are part of a great whole, as if I once knew that whole but can't quite remember it. When another book restores some part of that whole, I put that part into place with a flash of recognition—as it fits into place I recognize that I once knew it. Who will restore to me the whole? How can I remember what I once knew? Well, Clark and Jain have helped stir these collective memories, telling us who we once were, restoring our narrative, restoring our rightful inheritance. How do they do this? Over ten years they have somehow succeeded in remembering who we all once were and they can now tell the story that awakens us. PGMAPT is that story, and I think you will immediately recognize it as your story, as the education for which you have yearned and want to give to your children.

—Christopher A. Perrin, PhD
Publisher, Classical Academic Press

Preface

The authors have worked together as colleagues for nearly fifteen years at the Geneva School in Winter Park, Florida. Kevin has taught primarily philosophy and theology but also logic and rhetoric. Ravi, on the other hand, has taught mathematics and science mainly at the level of Advanced Placement classes. Over time we realized that, though we teach very different subjects, we cherish similar ends. By our third or fourth year in the classroom, it also became clear to us that the categories of Christian classical education were bursting at the seams and were scarcely able to achieve the ends that first attracted us to them. Moreover, while we deeply valued the principle of integration, it was unclear how to accomplish that on a practical level among classes. Various teachers were often stepping on each other's intellectual toes, usually inadvertently. This work represents the culmination of five years of dialogue searching for solutions to these and related problems. While we have certainly not solved all of them, this book offers the sketch of a direction that we have found promising.

This paradigm accomplishes four goals we were eager to advance. First, it *foregrounds the centrality of Christian formation* as integral to the entire endeavor of Christian classical education. In our view, the whole of education ought to proceed from the love of God and neighbor. Education is more than the transference of knowledge; it is the transmission of values, culture, and the proper ordering of loves. Second, this paradigm *celebrates music and art and respects human embodiment*. While most Christian classical schools include music, art, and bodily engagement in the curriculum, these aspects are often listed as grammar. This to us seems awkward, unprofitable, and ahistorical, especially when the tradition has much to say on these topics. Third, this paradigm *offers a robust vision of both the language arts and mathematics*. Christian classical schools have often treated mathematics and natural science as awkward and unwanted appendages. The truth is that mathematics has been a key subject of the Western curriculum since the time of Plato. It was from this fertile ground that modern natural science sprang. Both mathematics and natural science can thus be authentically situated within Christian classical education. In addition, while the language arts have been championed by

our schools, too little progress has been made on the recovery of Latin, perhaps due to a crisis of vision. Lastly, this paradigm *offers a path forward for integration—in both thought and life*. It identifies how faith and science are complementary and not exclusionary. It appreciates the situatedness of embodied life, the centrality of love, and the life of the mind. It establishes the possibility of discourse between the social sciences and natural sciences. It suggests that the language arts are important to the natural sciences and that mathematics is relevant for human formation. This paradigm values the profundity of tradition and yet offers a path to improve upon that tradition through organic change from within. It respects contemporary academic discourse and yet seeks threads within that discourse that cohere with a traditional Western Christian vision of reality. In a word, this paradigm allows for a high degree of *integration*.

We offer this paradigm not, we pray, as innovators, but as those who have discovered a great lost gem. We have met many educators throughout the country who are pursuing similar goals, and we have realized that they also find the current categories important but too limiting. In order to avoid turf wars between classrooms and to cast an authentic and compelling vision to parents and newcomers, we realized that we needed a dogged commitment to work out the implications of a thoroughly Christian classical education in a context that respected academic scholarship. One reason we have provided so many footnotes is to offer readers an introduction to the wealth of academic sources that can assist Christian classical schools in their endeavors. We hope our exploration of the tradition may provide others with resources that will inform and inspire their teaching. We also hope that discussion of these categories will motivate others to search deeper into the tradition themselves in order to find more treasures therein. While we believe our paradigm is faithful to our Western Christian heritage, we are certain there is much more to be said. We look forward to working alongside that next generation of teachers who will both say it and teach it to their students.

Acknowledgments

As teachers we have the opportunity of working alongside a number of engaging and inspiring colleagues as we share with our students our learning, our loves, and in many ways our lives. It is as hopeless a task to thank adequately each of those who have had a role in shaping our understanding of education as it is to identify precisely which parts of that understanding belong more properly to us or have simply arisen in the context of the ever-flowing dialogue that makes the school day. Acknowledging these limitations, we wish simply to offer a heartfelt word of gratitude to our colleagues and students. Without these we could not even begin to account for who we are as men, much less what we have come to understand about the nature and ends of education.

Beyond the borders of the school, Chris Perrin deserves sincere thanks. His tasking us to write a philosophy of Christian classical education for the Alcuin Fellowship's review ultimately became the germ of this present book. We also appreciate the efforts of Nathan Raley, a close friend and helpful editor of this work, and those of Christine Perrin, who reviewed an early manuscript. Others who have read and commented on this work at various stages, including David Diener, Adam Lockridge, and Milton Gaither, are also due thanks. We are indebted to Jason Edwards, Peter Kreeft, and Phillip Donnelly both for their enthusiasm for this project and for their critical reviews. We thank Matthew Clark and Rachel Lockridge for their handsome artwork and Rob Baddorf for his artistic direction of this work. We also thank the editors, Lauraine Gustafson and Maya Myers, for their tireless efforts.

The revised edition of *The Liberal Arts Tradition* was born from interaction with Early Rain Covenant Presbyterian Church in Chengdu, China. The Christian classical school and liberal arts college they began were both a source of inspiration and instruction to us. We wish to thank Su Bingsen, Wang Yi, Li Yingqiang, and the other elders and members of that church who have unjustly suffered so much, as well as all of the teachers and leaders throughout the underground church in China who have inspired us. May God deliver them from persecution, and may he continue to build and bless his Church through their bold witness. We also wish to thank our friends and colleagues across the Christian classical renewal who have embraced the vision of *The Liberal Arts Tradition*. We continue to be amazed, humbled, and greatly encouraged. We are

particularly thankful for the excellent critical advice Dr. Brian Williams offered on the new moral philosophy sections. His insights have been invaluable.

Kevin would also like to note:

A few particular words of thanks are in order. First here is my coauthor Ravi Scott Jain. This project would never have left the whiteboard of his classroom were it not for his determination and tireless effort. I would also like to thank Jim and Dayle Seneff for their encouragement and generosity; Luder Whitlock for his advice and kind attention and oversight; and Bob Ingram for his unflagging support of my work in this and other projects. I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge Chris Perrin's vision for this work, as well as the helpful criticism of many of the Alcuin Fellows—it is difficult to imagine how this work would have seen the light of day without these folks! Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Taryn, for her patience and support. Before anyone else, my work is for her.

Ravi would also like to note:

To write on education is necessarily to reflect on one's own. And because education is, at least in part, a gift from others, there is much thanks to go around. I must first thank the many fine teachers and staff at both the public and private schools which trained me. For my passage from Troy Montessori kindergarten through H. B. Plant High School, I owe these first teachers much thanks. I also appreciate the influence of my professors at Davidson College, who often preserved a remnant of an older, richer vision of education. Further, I would like to thank the professors at Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando; I am especially indebted to John Frame, Steven Childers, Charles MacKenzie, and Richard Pratt. Many others have ministered to me and taught me since youth, and to all of those pastors and friends who have nurtured in me a love for Christ and a reverence for Scripture I offer thanks. Finally the Geneva School itself has continued to educate me. Bob Ingram, Jim and Dayle Seneff, and Kevin Clark have all played crucial roles in this. I must additionally thank Ken Myers for his intelligent direction on multiple occasions, which has helped hone my vision.

Of all, I am most grateful to my wife, Kelley Jain, who has been a source of constant support, often setting aside her own wishes in order to

make time for me to write, edit, or annotate the manuscript. Moreover, I owe to my mother, Peggy Reindl, and my grandmother, Erma Owens, my first intuitions of piety. They taught me to love and be loved by God and man. It is now to my immediate family, Kelley, Judah, and Xavier Jain, that I owe my deepest convictions of filial piety. They remind me that Paul's words regarding the mystery of the unity between Christ and the Church are not mere metaphor but speak of a profound reality. It is both for them that I write and on account of them that I am able to do so. For my hope is that the education which our children receive will be a faithful participation in our own inheritance.

The Paradigm of the Liberal Arts Tradition

The Christian classical liberal arts model is as complex and harmonious as the great medieval synthesis that gave birth to it. In his masterpiece *The Discarded Image*, C. S. Lewis wrote that the medieval synthesis is "as unified and ordered as the Parthenon or the *Oedipus Rex*, as crowded and varied as a London terminus on a bank holiday."[1] Lewis's image is instructive for us as we emphasize both the unified integrity and the innerconnectivity of the liberal arts tradition. The traditional seven liberal arts are part of the wealth we have inherited from the classical world. Many in the Christian classical renewal reflect this heritage by identifying the major divisions in their schools according to the names of the first three of these liberal arts—*grammar*, *dialectic*, and *rhetoric*, the three arts constituting the medieval *Trivium* (from the Latin meaning "the meeting of three paths"). The latter four liberal arts—*arithmetic*, *geometry*, *astronomy*, and *music*, known as the *Quadrivium* (from the Latin meaning "the four ways," or "the four paths")—have been somewhat less celebrated though just as traditional. The ancients believed that these seven "arts" were not merely subjects to be mastered, but sure and certain ways of forming in the soul the intellectual virtue necessary for acquiring true wisdom.

The Christian classical renewal is indebted to the insights Dorothy Sayers enumerated in her famous essay "The Lost Tools of Learning."[2] It is also indebted to the vision for the recovery of those tools that Doug Wilson pioneered in his foundational book *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning*.[3] Their identification of the crisis in modern education as the failure to cultivate these traditional arts of learning is prophetic. In addition to this, their exposition of the classical educational tradition—especially the Trivium—has effected a seismic shift in Christian education. We are also indebted to the suggestions of Littlejohn and Evans in their stimulating book, *Wisdom and Eloquence*, for offering a living model.[4] Their contribution could be summarized succinctly, perhaps, by the proposition

1. C. S. Lewis, *The Discarded Image: An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 10.
2. Dorothy L. Sayers, "The Lost Tools of Learning," *National Review*, August 1, 1959, 237–244.
3. Douglas Wilson, *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning: An Approach to Distinctively Christian Education* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1991).
4. Robert Littlejohn and Charles T. Evans, *Wisdom and Eloquence: A Christian Paradigm for Classical Learning* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2006).

that the Trivium is not enough: a full-orbed education requires not merely cultivation of the *language arts* of the Trivium. A full-orbed education also requires the cultivation of the *mathematical arts* of the Quadrivium and the formation of moral virtue as well. There are many other thinkers and teachers who have shaped the movement at various levels, but these three represent well the philosophical trajectory the Christian classical renewal has taken thus far.

What we present here is a vision of the liberal arts as a central part of a larger and more robust paradigm of Christian classical education.

Continuing in this trajectory of recovering the tradition and applying it to contemporary contexts, we seek to enlarge upon our predecessors' visions for a classical liberal arts education. Hitherto, thinkers in the renewal have understood the Trivium itself (Sayers and Wilson) or the Trivium and Quadrivium together with moral formation (Littlejohn and Evans) as constituting the Christian classical curriculum. What we present here is a vision of the liberal arts as a central part of a larger and more robust paradigm of Christian classical education. Our thesis is simple, though perhaps controversial: the seven liberal arts were never meant to stand on their own as the entire curriculum, for they are designed particularly for cultivating intellectual virtue. Since human beings are more than just intellect, however, the curriculum must develop more than just intellectual virtue.[5] Creatures

5. Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 3rd ed. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 141. See MacIntyre's account of the virtues at Athens. Gymnastic trained courage in the will, music trained temperance in the appetite and affections, the liberal arts trained wisdom in the mind, and piety and philosophy trained justice, which holds them all together.

> What does reason enjoin? That each part of the soul shall perform its specific function. The exercise of each specific function is a particular virtue. So the bodily appetites are to accept the restraint imposed by reason; the virtue thus exhibited is *sôphrosunê* [temperance]. That high-spirited virtue which responds to the challenge of danger, when it responds as reason bids it, exhibits itself as courage, *andreia*. Reason itself, when it has been disciplined by mathematical and dialectical inquiry, so that it is able to discern what justice itself is, what beauty itself is, and above all the other forms what the Form of the Good is, exhibits its own specific virtue of *sophia*, wisdom. These three virtues can only be exhibited when a fourth, the virtue of *dikaiosunê*, is also exhibited; for *dikaiosunê*—which on Plato's account is very different from any of our modern conceptions of justice, although "justice" is the translation used by almost all of Plato's translators—is precisely the virtue of allocating each part of the soul its particular function and no other. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 141.

Of course these notions of the cardinal virtues are transformed by Christian revelation, where love becomes the chief virtue accompanied by faith and hope as well.

formed in God's image must be cultivated in body and soul—mind, will, and affections. As we will seek to show, the Christian classical educational tradition embodies just the kind of holistic and fully integrated curriculum that a thoroughly Christian understanding of human nature demands. It does so, however, *only when the seven liberal arts are taken as part of a larger model* consisting of what we here term piety, gymnastic, music, liberal arts, philosophy, and theology. This full-orbed education aims at cultivating fully integrated human beings, whose bodies, hearts, and minds are formed respectively by gymnastic, music, and the liberal arts; whose relationships with God, neighbor, and community are marked by piety; whose knowledge of the world, man, and God fit harmoniously within a distinctly Christian philosophy; and whose lives are informed and governed by a theology forged from the revelation of God in Christ Jesus as it has been handed down through the Church in historic Christianity. This model presents a truly integrated Christian classical education where the intellectual tools of the seven liberal arts are formed within the context of a Christian life and moral imagination that is governed by a thoroughly Christian philosophy and theology. We propose it as a faithful summary of the Christian classical educational tradition and a compelling model for schools in the Christian classical renewal.

This paradigm will doubtlessly challenge some of the categories commonly held by our schools. It is, however, a faithful representation of crucial elements of a long and varied tradition. We hope to show that it is also a reflection of the educational philosophy that most Christian classical schools already embrace, whether consciously or not. Our summary of the classical curriculum adopted by the medieval Christian universities and schools can be represented by the ordering of the six curricular categories we have mentioned, each subsequent one depending on and expanding upon the prior. These categories are piety, gymnastic, music, liberal arts, philosophy, and theology, reflected by the acronym "PGMAPT" (the *A* stands for "liberal arts").[6] Drawing from these categories, one can then offer a brief definition of Christian classical education. Grounded in piety, Christian classical education is the transmission of the culture of the Church through a faculty of friends who love the truth by cultivating virtue in the students in body, heart, and mind, and nurturing their love for wisdom and faithful service of the Lord Jesus Christ.

6. There is a strong parallel between our ordering and what John Senior refers to as the "Five Modes of Knowledge: Gymnastic . . . Music . . . The Liberal Arts . . . Science . . . Practical Science." John Senior, "The Idea of a School" (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), 19.

This thesis can be further explored through five points, which we state here in summary and which will provide a compact snapshot of the book. The ensuing discussion may be too dense for some readers. Those who stumble may profitably move on to the next section and return to this preview as a summary after finishing the book. But since following tradition requires us to listen carefully to the dialect of another era, we thought it wise to offer at least a preliminary sketch of how the genius of the ancients gave us a coherent and holistic education.

Grounded in Piety, Governed by Theology

The foundational distinction between traditional education and modern education is that the ancients believed education was fundamentally about shaping loves. What one loved and treasured could be right or wrong depending on how that love accorded to the structure of reality. A prescribed set of cultural norms reflected this understanding, and these values could indeed be taught. It was an education in love. This is most clearly seen in the work of St. Augustine, who claimed that virtue is ordered loves. Love is the chief virtue binding all the others together. This is very scriptural: "And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity," says Colossians 3:14. Of course, the two greatest commands in Scripture are to love God and love neighbor. But for ancient education in general, personal values were not simply explored or discovered on one's own; they were passed down and lived out. This required trust and commitment, and therefore piety, the proper love and fear of God and man, was the critical virtue. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Proverbs 9:10). This piety aligned the student's will with the family, with society, and with God. Piety expected the young pupils' desires, beliefs, and habits to be shaped over years in the process of incarnating them. It was more than just head knowledge. Piety required faithful devotion manifest in action.

Education comes from a Latin word, but the original Greek word used in the New Testament was *paideia*. An education that was true *paideia* meant not just passing along ideas but enculturation: passing along the entire culture. What culture was being passed along? It was the culture of the Church, which sought to cultivate piety, virtue, and wisdom, as the students would grow in the grace of Christ. And it is for this goal of passing along a culture that the curriculum existed.

In this context, the words of the twelfth-century theologian St. Anselm are intelligible. He said, "*Credo ut intelligam*." "I believe in order that I may understand." Thus, theology, the science of Scripture, rested at the apex of education after belief, obedience, and active dependence on faith had been cultivated. Growth in piety was the foundation and preceded by many years the critical study of doctrine that could only be done with great intellectual care and wisdom. But the metaphysical and theological beliefs passed down through the culture, Church, and universities truly governed the form and content of the curriculum as the faculties of universities sought to understand the ways of God at work in the world. Theology was the queen of the sciences, but she was a servant queen. So from Augustine to today, the Christian tradition has recurrently affirmed that *grace does not set nature aside but perfects it*. Theology sought not to intrude upon the lower disciplines from without but to offer nourishment to their basic principles from within, allowing each subject to explore the artistry of a creative God. Education in this manner, coupled with the grace of Christ, was not a matter of indoctrination, but one of bringing each nature to its fullest potential in a living and vibrant community. Thus, the curriculum was grounded in piety and governed by theology.

Gymnastic and Music: The Training of the Bodies, the Tuning of the Hearts

The ancients recognized that humans are not disembodied minds, but unities of body and soul—mind, will, and affections. The gymnastic and the musical educations trained the bodies and tuned the hearts of the young and were the next stage following the early development of piety. Developing the virtue of an athlete was an essential element of the gymnastic training. Coming from the same root word as "museum," the musical education was an education in wonder. It formed the heart and the moral imagination of the youth.

The musical education was not primarily or exclusively about instruments and singing. Rather, it studied all the subjects inspired by the Muses (from epic poetry to astronomy) in a poetic and precritical manner. This is an important point: it is not subject matter so much as it is the poetic mode of knowing that distinguishes musical education from later study.[7] As we explore in more detail later, the liberal arts join discov-

7. See James S. Taylor, *Poetic Knowledge: The Recovery of Education* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998).

ery and demonstration; poetic and precritical education is essential for developing this capacity for discovery.

This ordering of the curriculum reflected the ancient notion that imitation precedes art. The musical education, directed toward joyful engagement with reality, offered an imitative foundation for the later learning of the arts and sciences. The musical and gymnastic education fitted the students' hearts and bodies to reality. The training of the body and the tuning of the heart to love what is lovely helped nurture the virtues of courage and temperance (bodily restraint). It taught proper passions more than skills and content. By awaking wonder, it would also nourish the seeds that would grow into a lifelong love of learning.

The Liberal Arts: The Seeds and Tools of Learning in Language and Mathematics

The exponential growth of information today overwhelms the student. The liberal arts, on the other hand, offered a particular canon of seven studies that provided the essential tools for all subsequent learning. The subjects of the liberal arts were not only linguistic but included mathematics and mathematical science as well. The significance of the study of mathematics has often been downplayed by those in the Christian classical renewal, but this is a major historical error. Mathematics is a central discipline of traditional Western education and owes its inclusion in the curriculum to its role at Plato's Academy. Moreover, understanding the meaning and power of language is no easy task. Much of the malaise of contemporary philosophy is a result of having lost the classical understanding of meaning in language. The arts of language and mathematics are the seeds and tools of learning.

Recovering the primacy of both the language arts and mathematical arts is a pivotal piece of the paradigm of the liberal arts tradition. Together they help train the student not just in what to think but in how to think. The liberal arts then winnow the infinity of available arts and sciences to a canonical set of seven crucial liberal arts that provide the tools of learning needed in the three branches of philosophy or science. One may ask, what are *arts*? According to Aristotle, *scientia* (science) is a body of knowledge justified by reason which can be in the mind alone. But an art is imitation (action) joined with reason, or a science joined with practice. An art is, in short, a skill. What are liberal arts, then? The liberal arts are the seven unique skills used to create and justify *scientia*.

How would a scholar justify that his knowledge is true? He would do so through the liberal arts. The arts of the Trivium—grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric—are the tools of language. The arts of the Quadrivium—arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music—are the tools of mathematics.

The three arts of language taught reading, hermeneutics, debate, persuasive speech, and writing. The four arts of math taught counting, calculation, measuring, empirical discovery, and theoretical proof. Also notice how the imitative practice of the music and gymnastic form the poetic, precritical foundation to which reason will be joined in the liberal arts. The students will already have basic practice with public speaking in the elementary school, but the rhetoric classes in the liberal arts training will hone their reason so they can carefully understand why some speech and writing is more persuasive than others. Put another way, the liberal arts join discovery with demonstration.

Recovering the primacy of both the language arts and mathematical arts is a pivotal piece of the paradigm of the liberal arts tradition. Together they help train the student not just in what to think but in how to think.

The liberal arts, even coupled with piety, gymnastic, and music, do not comprise a complete education. The liberal arts are only intended to be the *seeds* and *tools* of learning to be used in all other studies.[8] As tools they cultivate the rich soil prepared by piety, gymnastic, and music. As seeds, they themselves sprout forth into knowledge. The goal of education is not simply knowledge for knowledge's sake, however; the goal of true education is for our knowledge of God, man, and creation to come to full flower in wisdom and for this wisdom to help up us better love and serve our neighbor.

The liberal arts cultivate reason and by doing so develop the virtue of *sophia*, wisdom.[9] In this way, the three branches of philosophy and in addition theology contain the integrated tapestry of all other knowledge as represented by the innumerable particular sciences, such as biology, ethics, economics, and chemistry. Moreover, professional degrees, to be acquired later, recognize that other skills (arts) are needed for one's vocation. There are as many arts for these other skills (law, medicine, business, etc.) as there are sciences, and the skills of these would be understood as the other *techne* (Greek for "arts" or "skills"). It is in fact this idea of an

8. We borrow the metaphor of the "seeds of learning" from Baylor University professor Phillip Donnelly.
9. See footnote 5 on page 2.

art as an applied science that leads to the word "technology" (study of the arts or skills), a legitimate pursuit in the right context. In fact, the trades such as blacksmithing, farming, and architecture indicated a pursuit of the seven common arts advocated by Hugh of St. Victor to accompany the seven liberal arts. Studies unto medicine, law, and theology were considered the professional degrees most often followed by scholars after completing their introduction to philosophy. The study of the liberal arts is not intended to substitute for the legitimate later studies of other professions, common arts, or sciences. It is, on the contrary, the path that is designed to discipline reason and thus make the acquisition of all later studies most simple and effective.

Philosophy Is the Love of Wisdom in Natural, Moral, and Divine Reality

The label "philosophy" should not be misunderstood as contemporary academic philosophy. Instead "philosophy" is the word used, from the fourth century BC until the turn of the twentieth century, to describe the unity of knowledge that covered all subjects. In the medieval system, philosophy had three branches: natural philosophy, moral philosophy, and divine philosophy (metaphysics). Natural philosophy is the traditional home for modern natural science. Moral philosophy is the traditional home for modern social science. And metaphysics, the study of being, guards the secrets of reality and discloses its transcendental unity. The terms "natural science" and "moral science" were often used as synonyms for "natural philosophy" and "moral philosophy." In this vision, all the subjects were integrated into a holistic wisdom.

Particular natural sciences, such as mechanics, biology, and chemistry, would have fallen under the umbrella of natural philosophy. The particular moral sciences, such as ethics, politics, or economics, would have been contained by moral philosophy. But even the very notion of science was bigger for preceding generations than it is for us today. Science for them was still the pursuit of truth. Today the pursuit of science is almost the same thing as the pursuit of technology. If something works, then it's true. This is a utilitarian notion of truth. But for the ancients and medievals, natural science and technology were two different things. The term they used for technology was "the common arts." These arts of service allowed people to provide for one another in vocations such as baker and

blacksmith. But natural science was a part of natural philosophy that considered the pursuit of truth in the natural world for wisdom's sake.

One can see this older vision of science even in the word they used. The Latin term *scientia*, from where the English word "science" comes, was the translation of the Greek word *episteme*. Aristotle used *episteme* to mean "a demonstrable knowledge of causes." There are two key words in that phrase: "demonstrable," which means "to be demonstrated as true," and "causes," which refers to invisible relationships behind the appearances we see. The liberal arts were used to *demonstrate* something as true. Thus, since the liberal arts were the tools and seeds of learning, they had to precede the sciences. One had to learn how to demonstrate causes to others with the liberal arts before they could employ those demonstrations in the sciences.

But for the ancients, the notion of cause was also bigger than it is for us today. Cause for us means only simple cause and effect, what they would have called efficient cause. But for Aristotle there were four causes to be studied in science: material, formal, final, and efficient. Material cause asks: What is this thing made of? What is its matter? Formal cause asks: What is the essence or form of a thing? What is this thing? Final cause inquires about an object's purpose: What is this thing for? And efficient cause answers the question: What made this thing occur? So for a marble statue, the material cause is the marble itself. The formal cause is the shape of the statue, which exists in the statue but also in the sculptor's mind beforehand. The final cause is to delight an audience in the garden where it is placed. And the efficient cause is the sculptor and his chisel.

Contemporary natural and social science since Galileo have discarded open appeals to formal and final causes, to meaning and purpose, as irrelevant to science. Instead modern sciences have reduced everything to material and efficient causes, now known as matter, force, and energy. A similar transition took place in the moral sciences beginning with Machiavelli, who ignored human essence and purpose and only described how he observed humans to behave. Adam Smith did likewise and patterned his study of moral philosophy based on the new natural science. All four of these causes should be recovered in order to restore a holistic approach to natural, moral, and divine philosophy. When science is understood merely as technology, it only cares about how to control things. It doesn't care about what a thing is and what its purpose is in God's broader creation.

The ancients instead believed that art imitates nature. Nature possesses a wisdom that was put there by the divine, and we should search for it therein. Thus, the medievals often studied natural philosophy as preparation for moral philosophy. Christian metaphysics (or divine philosophy) helped connect the moral with the natural as well as the created with the divine. The belief that all things hold together in Christ is a principle of theology that came to have implications in the sciences. In Christ are reconciled the mysteries of the one and many, of grace and justice, of body and soul. It was the job of metaphysics to guard and adjudicate these kinds of principles.

It is also within the subject of metaphysics that major philosophical battles would play out, such as that between nominalism and realism. This conversation asked whether there are real essences behind the objects and things we perceive. Moreover, metaphysics would eventually explore how Christ the incarnate Word could redeem the possibilities of mathematical form for matter. Thus, Christian metaphysics provided theoretical foundations for many of the advances in modern science. Divine philosophy considers all these deeper, hidden, transcendent aspects of reality that become manifest upon closer observation and reflection or after divine illumination.

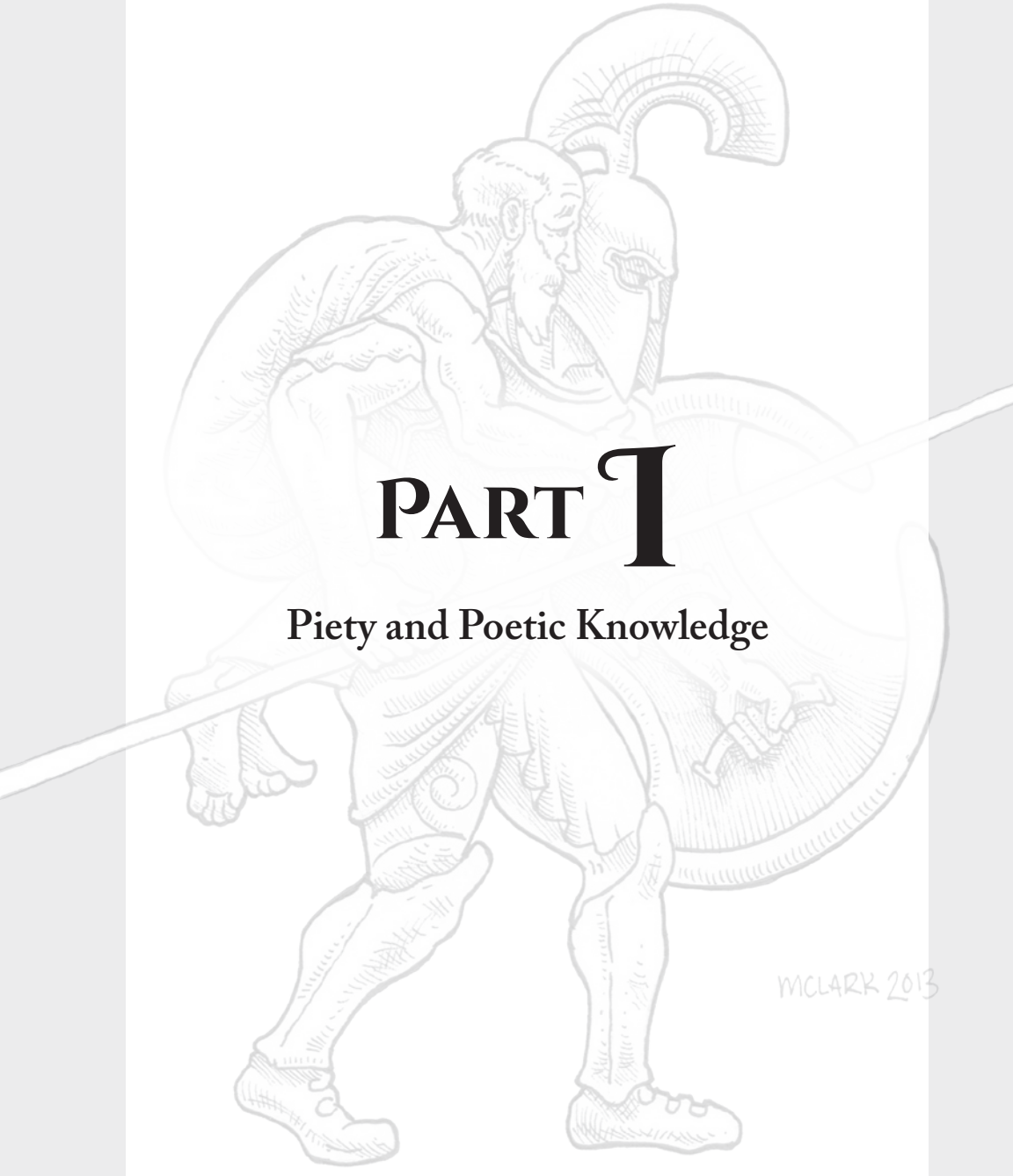
When science is understood merely as technology, it only cares about how to control things. It doesn't care about what a thing is and what its purpose is in God's broader creation.

Calling and Culture Determine Curriculum

The last section of the book discusses the biblical and theological foundations of education. It is titled "Calling, Culture, and Curriculum," and it explores the biblical calling of parents to raise their children in the *paideia* of the Lord and to pass on the culture of the Church. The section culminates by discussing how the various elements of the Christian classical educational paradigm here enumerated are grounded in the Christian calling of parents and the culture of the Church. Hence the liberal arts must flower as seeds of learning unto philosophy and be employed as the tools of learning unto the arts of service. And all of these lose their way unless oriented toward the ultimate beauty, the glory of Christ, the resurrected one who gave himself up for the life of the world. The school is a faculty of

friends who love the truth, and Christian culture turns on the anticipation of the ultimate festival, the marriage feast of the Lamb. Thus, the instruction of the liberal, common, and fine arts in this Christian context form an excellent basis for a curriculum for friends on the path to festival.

While these five theses and their implications are dense and weighty, we believe they encapsulate the significance of returning to the tradition. It is certainly a grand endeavor, but one we believe is worthy of our devoted efforts. Let us now begin our exploration of the six categories: Piety, Gymnastic, Music, Liberal Arts, Philosophy, and Theology (PGMAPT).



Part I

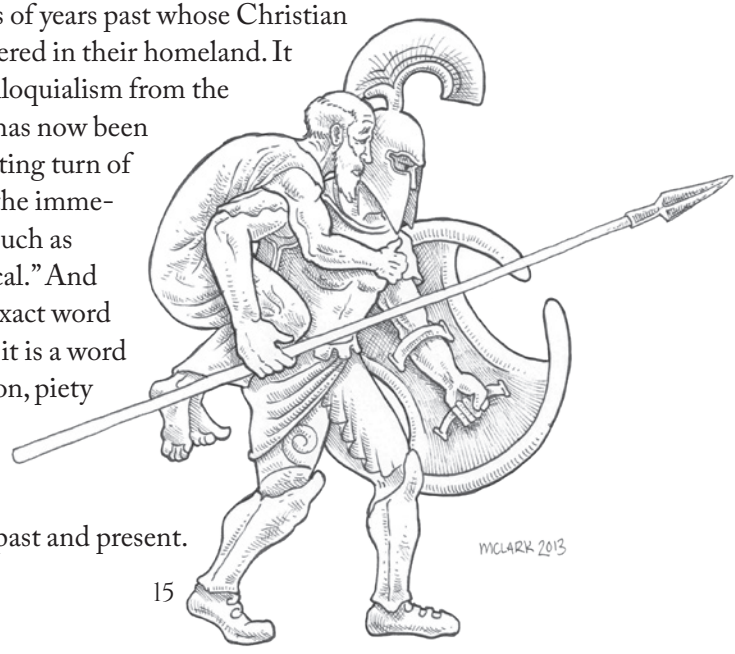
Piety and Poetic Knowledge

Piety: Proper Loves, Proper Fears

I see no way to sum up the offense of modern man except to say that he is impious. . . . He has taken up arms against, and he has effectually slain, what former men have regarded with filial veneration. He has not been conscious of crime but has . . . regarded his action as a proof of virtue.

—Richard Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences*

"Piety" is a word nearly lost on our contemporary culture. It summons pictures of wonderfully sincere Europeans from hundreds of years past whose Christian legacy nevertheless faltered in their homeland. It sounds faintly like a colloquialism from the King James Bible that has now been replaced by a more exciting turn of phrase. It doesn't have the immediate appeal of a word such as "transparency" or "radical." And yet maybe piety is the exact word we need today. Though it is a word eluding simple definition, piety signifies the duty, love, and respect owed to God, parents, and communal authorities past and present.



It connotes the cultivation of faithfulness in relationships and commitment to one's tradition as historically situated in place and time.

In *Ideas Have Consequences*, Richard Weaver asserts that the loss of this critical element in culture may be the most fundamental malaise of our contemporary society. He charges modern man with impiety, calling these actions a rebellion against nature, our neighbor, and the past.[1] It is an interesting diagnosis and one not at all obvious. Could the litany of revolutions characterizing the modern era offer the evidence? The American, French, and Bolshevik Revolutions reflect profound political upheaval, each in its own way. The Scientific and Industrial Revolutions effected massive change in worldwide structures of knowledge and production. The Cultural Revolution of China in the 1970s was just that, but maybe no less so was the 1960s sexual revolution in America. And while some of these revolutions have brought welcome advances, could it be that our delight in slaying the past might be a sign of dysfunction? Could the positive advances have come without a concomitant attitude of rebellion? Would we be quite so tickled to call the seventeenth century a scientific renaissance instead of a revolution? Enshrined forever in Virgil's *pius Aeneas*, piety was the central virtue of Augustus Caesar's Rome. This virtue is lost on contemporary man. Weaver suggests, therefore, that this rejection of the past, our neighbor, and nature, may, in fact, be the hallmark of modernity. This attitude is in sharp distinction to the wisdom of traditional cultures.[2]

1. Richard M. Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 172.
2. C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man, or, Reflections on Education with Special Reference to the Teaching of English in the Upper Forms of Schools* (New York: HarperCollins, 2001). Lewis explores the implications of this "impiety" when he describes two divergent approaches to education. In the first, he describes the men of one era reshaping the foundations of society into their own vision with a disregard for the past and tradition—revolution. In the second approach, he describes educators as following the well-worn paths of their ancestors. Like Weaver, Lewis calls for a return to tradition or, in a word, piety. For Lewis, this is not just a matter of the Western tradition. Nearly every enduring culture has always called for a respect of the past and one's heritage. Without this, a culture cannot last. See the appendix of *The Abolition of Man* for a summary of similar moral traditions from diverse cultures. For an illustration of Lewis's point, consider the Indian emperor Ashoka, who in the third century BC used the term "piety" (Greek *eusebeia*) as a translation for the Sanskrit word *dharma*, a foundational concept in Buddhist and Hindu thought. Moreover, early Catholic missionaries to China, such as Matteo Ricci, and the popes of the time concluded that the Chinese veneration of ancestors was a civil matter and not antagonistic to Christian faith. While debated among Catholics for two hundred years, in 1939, Pope Pius XII finally vindicated the evaluation of those first missionaries: these particular Chinese rites were an appropriate cultural expression of filial piety and not contradictory to Christian faith.

Many will know that the Deuteronomic code of ancient Israel called for respect of parents, tradition, and the elders. While piety to God is prescribed in the first four commandments, piety to one's elders is required by the fifth. It is the first of the Ten Commandments to deal with social relations, and it also carries a promise: "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you" (Exodus 20:12, ESV). Piety formed the crucial foundation for Hebrew society. Classical Greco-Roman culture called for a similar respect of one's authorities and the divine. Socrates was sentenced to death because he was charged with corrupting the youth and with impiety, charges he vehemently denied.[3] Filial loyalty to one's city-state was a foundational value for ancient Greek culture. A Theban was not an Athenian nor a Spartan, for each city had its own loyalty. Piety defined who one was. The city made the man and the men made the city. This basic human intuition of piety shaping our being is even more pronounced for Christians. Consider Paul's admonition to Timothy: "If we are faithless, [Christ] remains faithful, for he cannot disown himself" (2 Timothy 2:13). Our fundamental ordering of ourselves toward Christ as Lord and Savior unites us with him forever because of his faithfulness, not our own. Our participation in his body, the Church, is thus a reality and not a mere metaphor—or even better, it is a real metaphor. Piety shapes our being and identifies who we are.

The Roman concern for filial piety was even greater than that of the Greeks.[4] It is from their word *pietas* that the English word is derived. Cicero defined *pietas* as the virtue that "admonishes us to do our duty to our country or our parents or other blood relations."[5] John Calvin was so impressed with the classical emphasis on *pietas* that he suggested that

3. Socrates was charged with *asebeia*, the opposite of *eusebeia*, the Greek word for "piety." For an account of Socrates's defense, one can reference Plato's *Apology of Socrates*. In the New Testament the Greek word *eusebeia* is also commonly translated as "godliness," as in the ESV translation of 2 Peter 1:3, "His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness."
4. Hendrik Wagenvoort, *Pietas: Selected Studies in Roman Religion* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1980), 4–7. An early Latin poet says concerning virtue, "The interests of our country come first, then those of our parents and, in the third and last place, our own." This is quoted from Wagenvoort, a Dutch classical scholar, who is referring to the satirical poet Lucilius who belonged to the circle of Scipio. He later notes that Georg Wissowa, a nineteenth-century classicist, said that for the Romans, *pietas* "meant the conduct of the man who performed all his duties towards the deity and his fellow human beings fully and in every respect."
5. "*Pietatem, quae erga patriam aut parentes aut alios sanguine coniunctos officium conservare moneat*." Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Inventione* 2.66, as noted in Wagenvoort, *Pietas*, 7.

the Christian interpretation of it, often translated in the New Testament as "godliness," could be understood as the entire calling of the Christian life.[6] Calvin defined true *pietas* in the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* succinctly as "that reverence joined with love of God which the knowledge of his benefits induces."[7] Piety for the ancients and for Calvin suggested a faithful devotion manifest in one's actions—piety in word and act.[8] This devotion was not merely an emotional commitment to God or one's elders. It included the subjection of one's will and the patterns of one's life. Thomas Aquinas wrote of how piety directs us both toward God and others: "As by the virtue of piety man pays duty and worship not only to his father in the flesh, but also to all his kindred on account of their being related to his father, so by the gift of piety he pays worship and duty not only to God, but also to all men on account of their relationship to God."[9]

Piety can thus be even more simply stated as *the proper love and fear of God and man*. In this sense, it is demanded by Christ as the greatest commandment, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind," and the

6. Ford Lewis Battles, *The Piety of John Calvin: A Collection of His Spiritual Prose, Poems, and Hymns*, reissue (Phillipsburg: P & R Publishing, 2009), 35. See Battles's description of John Calvin's view of *pietas* as a summary of the Christian life. In the introduction, Battles quotes Calvin's *First Catechism* to emphasize the point. "True piety does not consist in a fear which willingly indeed flees God's judgment, but since it cannot escape is terrified. True piety consists rather in a sincere feeling which loves God as Father as much as it fears and reverences Him as Lord, embraces His righteousness, and dreads offending Him worse than death. And whoever have been endowed with this piety dare not fashion out of their own rashness any God for themselves. Rather they seek from Him the knowledge of the true God, and conceive Him just as He shows and declares Himself to be." John Calvin, *Catechism (First)*, ed. and trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 1972), 2. Both fear and love can be identified in this definition given by Calvin. Interestingly, St. Augustine cites fear and piety as the first two steps toward wisdom: "After these two steps of fear and piety, we come to the third step, knowledge, of which I have now undertaken to treat. . . . Such a son ascends to wisdom which is the seventh and last step, and which he enjoys in peace and tranquility. For the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. From that beginning, then, till we reach wisdom itself, our way is by the steps now described." Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, in vol. 2, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. James Shaw, 1st ser. (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature, 1887), 2.7.9–11. See also the section on Calling: Education as Discipleship, which begins on page 214 of this book.
7. Battles, *Piety of John Calvin*, 13.
8. A phrase used by Battles.
9. Thomas Aquinas, "FS: Q57 The Intellectual Virtues: A3 Whether the Intellectual Habit, Art, Is a Virtue: Reply to Objection 3," in *Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (London: T. Baker, 1920), 483.

second greatest, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27). Maybe it is for this reason that Calvin can summarize the entire Christian life in this one word, *pietas*; perhaps he believes it is Christ's own summary.[10] Piety is thus intimately tied to the word "love," though including the notions of reverent fear, duty, and action. The important evangelist to the Cappadocians, Gregory Thaumaturgus, identifies piety as "the mother of the virtues,"[11] though he is not the first to do so. The notion that piety is the foundation of virtue was attributed to Cicero by Russell Kirk in his book *Roots of American Order*. He writes,

> In the twentieth century, this word "piety" generally implies strong religious observances; it meant that to the Romans, but also it meant more. A pious man, in the Roman understanding, was one who fulfilled his duties, religious and social—one who subordinated his own desires to the claims of others. "Piety is the foundation of all other virtues," Cicero would write when the Republic was falling to its ruin.
>
> A man was pious who gave the gods their due, through worship and sacrifice; who honored his father and mother, and indeed all his ancestors; who stood by his friends; who was ready to die, if need be, for his country. A pious man, that is, submitted himself to things sacred, and believed unflinchingly that it was better to perish than to fail in his sacred duties. A

10. Wagenvoort, *Pietas*, 20. Wagenvoort notes that the theme of piety was most popular during the end of the Roman Republic and the beginning of the monarchy during Augustus's reign in the first century BC. In addition to *pietas*, the Romans also spoke of *humanitas*, especially in the era ca. 100 BC. If *pietas* signified a more restricted love of persons, *humanitas* spoke of the brotherhood of man. Wagenvoort notes that the influence of *pietas* wanes under the emperor Tiberius, unless one considers a surprising possibility:
    > The idea of *pietas*, taken from Greece but brought to flower in Rome: it is inseparable from the names of Posidonius and Cicero. Consequently Greek wisdom and Roman energy collaborated harmoniously and aspired together toward the ideal commonalty [sic] of mankind for over two hundred years. After Augustus's death this came to an end . . . unless, that is, we search outside the sphere of Hellenism. For, under the same Tiberius, the ethics of Christianity were summarized in a couple of words: love of God and our neighbour—this was piety and humanity combined. Now, however, they were no longer directed toward self-preservation but toward self-surrender. I cannot help feeling that this development contains an element visible to anyone willing to see it: the fullness of time. Wagenvoort, *Pietas*, 20.
11. Gregory Thaumaturgus, "Oration and Panegyric Addressed to Origen," in vol. 6, *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Works of the Fathers down to A.D. 325*, ed. Kevin Knight, Alexander Roberts, and James Donaldson, trans. S. D. F. Salmond (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature, 1886), arg. 12.

society held together by such a cementing belief would offer strong resistance to forces of disintegration.[12]

This conception of piety as the mother of virtue offers a clue to Augustine's definition of virtue. In *The City of God* Augustine says that true virtue "cannot exist save in those who have true piety."[13] Augustine defines virtue as "properly ordering one's loves," *ordo amoris*.[14] The love of God should always take precedence over other loves; and the appropriate preference for family, church, and others should mark one's self-denial.[15]

12. Russell Kirk, *Roots of American Order*, 4th ed. (Wilmington, DE: Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 2003), 103–104.
13. The whole passage from Augustine reads:
    > For if these are true virtues—and such cannot exist save in those who have true piety—they do not profess to be able to deliver the men who possess them from all miseries; for true virtues tell no such lies, but they profess that by the hope of the future world this life, which is miserably involved in the many and great evils of this world, is happy as it is also safe. For if not yet safe, how could it be happy? And therefore the Apostle Paul, speaking not of men without prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice, but of those whose lives were regulated by true piety, and whose virtues were therefore true, says, "For we are saved by hope: now hope which is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." [Romans 8:24.] As, therefore, we are saved, so we are made happy by hope. And as we do not as yet possess a present, but look for a future salvation, so is it with our happiness, and this "with patience;" for we are encompassed with evils, which we ought patiently to endure, until we come to the ineffable enjoyment of unmixed good; for there shall be no longer anything to endure. Salvation, such as it shall be in the world to come, shall itself be our final happiness. And this happiness these philosophers refuse to believe in, because they do not see it, and attempt to fabricate for themselves a happiness in this life, based upon a virtue which is as deceitful as it is proud.
    >
    > Augustine, *The City of God against the Pagans*, trans. Marcus Dods, in vol. 2, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, 1st ser., ed. Philip Schaff (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature, 1887), chap. 4, 403.
14. Leo Spitzer, *Classical and Christian Ideas of World Harmony: Prolegomena to an Interpretation of the Word "Stimmung"* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1963), 20. Spitzer, in an excellent book also relevant for the liberal art of music, said that the Greek cosmic harmony became Augustine's ordered loves. "According to the Pythagoreans, it was cosmic order which was identifiable with music; according to the Christian philosophers, it was love. And in the *ordo amoris* of Augustine we have evidently a blend of the Pagan and the Christian themes: henceforth 'order' is love." Spitzer, 20. Considering the Greek reverence for the cosmos, the ideas of piety, harmony, and love may have intertwined for the Greeks as well. This line of thought is well summarized in an article passed to us by Stephen Turley: Jean Pepin, "Cosmic Piety," in *Classical Mediterranean Spirituality: Egyptian, Greek, Roman*, ed. A. H. Armstrong (New York: Crossroad, 1986).
15. James D. Garrison, *Pietas from Vergil to Dryden* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), 12. So Augustine, while allowing that piety in common parlance often referred to family and country, used the phrase *vera pietas* to describe the "true worship of the true God." Augustine's definition of true piety was the dominant

This proper ordering cannot be done apart from the grace of God, due to the sinful nature of man, and maybe this is why Aquinas distinguishes the gift of piety from the virtue of piety. God's grace offered in Christ alone can form the sufficient foundation for offering true grace to others. The work of the school thus depends on the Christian formation students receive in the church and family, but the school must develop and support that foundation. For the ancients, the proper ordering of loves was the crucial edifice that all moral and intellectual education hung upon. Therefore, as part of its mission, the school culture must incarnate piety, virtue, and grace. For inevitably, the culture of the school educates as much as its curriculum.

While the proper ordering of the love of God and persons is crucial for moral formation, piety is also an essential prerequisite to true understanding, a lesson taught by Christ and reiterated by the Church fathers.[16] Characteristic of medieval philosophy was the phrase *Credo ut intelligam*, or, "I believe that I may understand." Proverbs says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Proverbs 9:10). In a reflection of this verse, Augustine points out that piety is one of the six essential steps toward wisdom.[17] The dogged pursuit and even love of wisdom was enjoined by both Socrates and the Proverbs.[18] And both the classical and Christian cultures recognized that virtue and piety played a role in this pursuit of wisdom.[19]

This unfolds practically in a school in myriad ways. If piety shapes who we are and orders our loves, then it clearly affects one's relationships and actions. Consider the attitude a student must have toward his or her

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one for nearly one thousand years after him. He distinguished *vera pietas* from *pietas erga parentes*, which represented the duty toward parents and country. During the medieval period, Aquinas affirmed the broader and more traditional semantic range that emphasized piety as including God, family, and country.

16. John 7:17 reads, "Anyone who chooses to do the will of God will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own." Christ here emphasizes the link between obedient action and knowledge.
17. Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana* 2.7. Following the book of Proverbs, Augustine explicitly places both fear and piety as two steps prior to knowledge on the journey to wisdom. The definition here offered, *piety as the proper love and fear of God and man*, blends Augustine's and Calvin's emphases. Piety stands for both the fear of God that is the beginning of wisdom and the love of God and man that is the summary of the commandments.
18. Proverbs 4:6. Also Socrates's use of the word "philosophy" will be discussed in the later section so entitled.
19. The section on the musical and gymnastic education will explore Plato's thoughts on this in depth. The section on moral philosophy will also include references from Aristotle to this theme.

teacher and the import of piety becomes immediately apparent. Consider the role that manners play in ordering the actions of children toward one another and how bound these are to inherited cultural norms. These practices curb individual autonomy, the pervasive malady of modernity, and situate the student in space and time, or better yet, in place and history. Consider the process that a faculty undertakes when deciding what content is crucial to teach from literature or history. All these decisions are rooted in commitments of piety. Thus, piety is a critical foundation to the entire educational enterprise.

While today school is seen either as vocational training or an opportunity for self-discovery among a buffet of potential selves, this was not the traditional approach. Education in the West since the Ancient Greeks had centered on enculturation. *Paideia*, as they called it, meant transmitting the entire culture.[20] How one generation can pass its culture on to the next comprised the central question of education. It is this robust kind of education that Paul meant when he charged the Ephesians to train up their children in the *paideia* of the Lord (see Ephesians 6:4). Problematically, though, today, because of our impiety, we don't have any fixed culture to transmit. Our culture's ultimate commitments are up in the air.[21] Yet all education takes place in a context of *mythos* (story), *logos* (reason), and practices.[22] Without the commitment to a tradition that establishes these, education is adrift from its moorings. Weaver summarizes the situation well: "Among the Romans piety was considered a part of *aequitas*, which expressed the Platonic concept of justice, or the rendering to each his due. . . . Something is due to nature, and to our fellow-men, and to those who have passed out of temporal existence. Modern civilization, having lost all sense of obligation, is brought up against the fact that it does not know what is due to anything; consequently its affirmations grow fee-

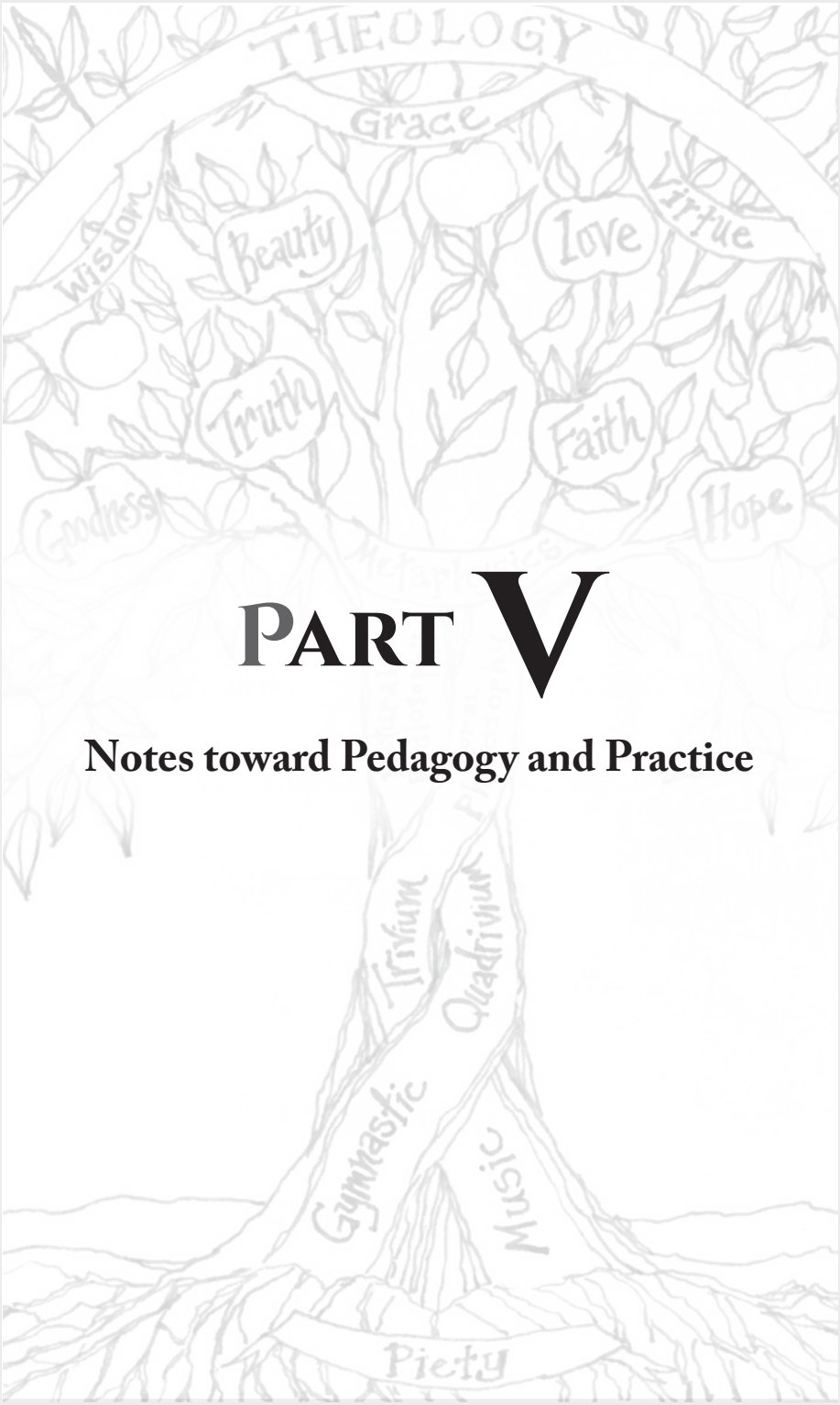
20. Werner Jaeger, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1939). This three-volume work is an exceptional resource on Greek culture and educational practice.
21. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996). In this influential work, political scientist Huntington says that the only hope for the West to retain its strength is for it to rediscover its roots. "The futures of the United States and of the West depend upon Americans reaffirming their commitment to Western civilization" (307). If it continues trying to reinvent itself, Huntington asserts that it will be swallowed up by other civilizations. "In a multicivilizational world, the constructive course is to renounce universalism, accept diversity, and seek commonalities" (318).
22. This is the common refrain of an educator and friend, James Daniels, which he adapted from David Hicks. David V. Hicks, *Norms & Nobility: A Treatise on Education* (New York: Praeger, 1981).

bler."[23] The contemporary educational project, which tries to educate in a value-neutral way, is not sustainable. Or to put it differently, whatever it does, it is not what would have traditionally been considered the kind of real education that transmits a culture. It is fundamentally *impious*. It is a barely passable substitute to keep a limping culture running. It certainly will not produce a leading edge over other rising civilizations, and technological solutions alone will only protect us for a time.

Thus, piety is the central tenet of Christian classical education. It is that *sine qua non*. In America, our twenty-first-century sensibilities have obscured our status as inheritors of a long Western tradition. And without a respect for this Western Christian heritage and a desire to emulate the great leaders and thinkers of the past, Christian classical education surely unravels. Without the students internalizing a fundamental respect for God, their teachers, parents, and elders, the entire process of education likewise fails. When it comes to the critical moral and ethical truths, a child must be open to submission if he is to learn anything. A child in a state of active or passive rebellion will never be enculturated in a way consonant with the tradition. Before learning can begin there must be an education in love. It begins in the home and church but must be supported, nourished, and not undermined, in the school. For this multitude of reasons therefore, a Christian classical education must be grounded in piety.

While today school is seen either as vocational training or an opportunity for self-discovery among a buffet of potential selves, this was not the traditional approach.

23. Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences*, 177.



Part V

Notes toward Pedagogy and Practice

The reader will notice that the bulk of this book has been dedicated to presenting an overview of what classical education has been in the past (its history) and how it has been organized and for what purpose (philosophy).

In the brief section that follows, we set forth some suggestions about the practical application of classical Christian education, supplying a few of our ideas about how leaders, teachers, and parents can implement classical education in a school or co-op setting. This section is brief, but we think it is illustrative of the ways a classical curriculum can be deployed and taught as a means of cultivating wisdom and virtue in our students. There is much more that can and should be said about how to implement the philosophy of education described in this book. We hope to contribute to that conversation in our future writing and also look forward to the contributions others will make.

Principles of a Christian Classical Pedagogy

> It seems I was called for this: To glorify things just because they are.
>
> —Czeslaw Milosz, "Blacksmith Shop"

> For the wise men of old the cardinal problem had been how to conform the soul to reality.
>
> —C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*

It was Aristotle who first expressed the great educational truth that both inspires and directs classical Christian pedagogy: the love of wisdom (philosophy) begins with wonder. Therefore, if the goal of classical Christian education is to cultivate lovers of wisdom, our pedagogy must begin by awakening wonder. However, we are offered no method for guaranteeing wonder as an educational outcome, but instead are presented with a pedagogical principle—*ad rem*, "to what is real"— to follow. The first result of following this principle was the recovery of the classical curriculum. The next will be the discovery of a robustly classical pedagogy.

The emphasis upon what is good, true, and beautiful is not simply curricular. Rather, wonder is awakened by directing students to the goodness, truth, and beauty of things themselves. The natural world is wonderful. Language is wonderful. Numbers are wonderful. The story of human history, along with the artifacts of human ingenuity and creativity, is wonderful. Even more so, God is wonderful, in himself and in his

works. Our pedagogy, therefore, must everywhere and in manifold ways beckon students to these inexhaustible sources of wonder. Realizing this as our task delivers us from the hollow promises found in expensive classroom technology or manipulative techniques, setting us free to teach both deeply and from rest. It also marks our departure from the familiar techniques and methods of modern education.

This brief essay provides some guidance for classical Christian educators who seek to grow deeper in their pedagogy. We look first to the liberal arts to show how beckoning students to what is real sheds light on the practices of language and math education in which we are likely already engaged. From there, we provide suggestions for how teachers can put the *ad rem* principle into practice as they plan new lessons, perhaps in areas of the classical Christian curriculum that are less scripted. Finally, we conclude by considering how a pedagogy that directs students to what is real is the answer to current questions about so-called twenty-first-century learning as well as to perennial concerns about how to maintain appropriate urgency without being frantic (*festina lente*) and to ensure our students enjoy a rich education without being overburdened (*non multa sed multum*).

Beckoning Students to What Is Good, True, and Beautiful

Classical Christian educators are familiar with how the principle of *ad rem* transforms the curriculum: good books and great books have replaced textbooks as the focus of our study. It is important to see how radically it transforms instruction as well. We begin appropriately enough with how it affects our approach to the great literature we have recovered. As classical educators, we are not primarily interested in teaching the skills of analysis or critical thinking, as important as these may be, much less in making literature fun or interesting. We know that the great works of literature are already interesting in themselves and that reading them is enjoyable. We know as well that the main challenges for our students are neither the inability to analyze a text nor the propensity to be taken in by specious reasoning. Rather, students need to learn how to read—not simply to decode text, but to have the text speak to them. For, like Pilgrim meeting Virgil in the Dark Woods, our students often cannot hear the voice of the text speak because it "seems faint because of the long silence."[1] If the teacher's goal is for students to join the Great Conversation contained in the literary canon, students must learn to hear and to speak. In other words, they need grammar education.

1. Dante Alighieri, *Inferno*, 1.61.

The demands of this task transform our pedagogy. In the earliest years, it means that students must learn to listen, to be attentive to language. The familiar practices of dictation, copy work, memorization, oral reading, and narration place the students in direct contact with language itself—now in through their ears and eyes, now out through their hands and mouths, now in their minds and hearts. As students become familiar with language through these poetic and imitative practices, they begin to hone their sensibilities as to what words mean and how that meaning is conveyed (grammar), training their minds to perceive truth and validity (dialectic) and tuning their ears and voices to clarity of style and beauty of expression (rhetoric). This must happen with what is real—first rhymes, poems, and fairy tales and later with good books, and ultimately with great ones. In later years, when students have become well acquainted with the language arts, the classical Christian educator will introduce Socratic questioning and dialogue. Importantly, this is not simply a technique for leading students to right answers. It is rather an essential tool for forming intellectual virtue. Students often find reading literature difficult because they cannot follow the line of thought an author is developing. Additionally, they are at times unable to learn from literature because they are smug in their own opinions. By being continually put to the Socratic question, students are made both vigilant and humble interlocutors in the Great Conversation. They are skilled at following the question and are prepared to receive the truth.

Consider next the pedagogical transformation when teachers apply the principle of *ad rem* to mathematics. That is, as we begin to teach mathematics as a liberal art rather than simply as a set of methods and techniques for solving problems. As with fine and performing arts such as dance and drawing, painting and piano, skill in the art of mathematics is acquired by joining understanding to imitative practice. This is why the liberal art of mathematics engages students in the discovery of mathematical principles in the world of experience and the application of mathematical reasoning, not only as a culmination, but as the foundation of mathematics education. But it does so by directing students to what is real. In early years, students will be measuring and comparing items in the class, field, and garden, imitating their teacher by drawing and constructing figures. In this way, mathematics instruction does with numbers what dictation, memory, reading, and narration do with language. Indeed, just as the practices of language arts instruction connect students to language, these mathematical practices enable students to perceive mathematical principles in creation. As they progress, the teacher will

introduce the great mathematical problems, leading students through recapitulations of the historical mathematical discoveries that solved them. Again, the pedagogical logic here is the connection with what is real. The teacher will also present the students with puzzles and problems to work on themselves, encouraging them to conjecture, to solve, and to prove as they learn to ply the tools of learning. As such, students realize their full potential as a means of demonstrating the truth. As specifically *liberal* arts, the goal of instruction in them is to equip students to make free and creative application of the arts of learning and to take part in the joy of discovering truth for themselves.

Putting the *Ad Rem* Principle into Practice

Perhaps it is becoming clear that our task as classical Christian teachers is not simply to direct students to what is real, but also to determine the mode of engagement that will help students connect with it. We must accommodate our teaching to the capacity of the student. Etienne Wenger's concept of *legitimate peripheral participation* is a helpful way of developing this idea and applying it in practice.[2] By "legitimate" he means real practice with real things, and by "peripheral" he means a kind of engagement with these real things that is accommodated to the abilities of the learner. "Participation" gets at the idea that what is learned is done so in practice or apprenticeship. For instance, though not directly educational, children's participation in the Thanksgiving feast brings all of these ideas together. Children's participation in the feast is legitimate—they partake of the same main dishes, sides, and desserts as the adults—but peripheral, since the children's parents provide selections and portions that best fit their tastes and appetites. The peripheral aspect also applies in the fact that there is often a "kids' table," which is close by but not adjoined to the adult table. Note how children participate in the feast as an event and not simply as a meal and how this participation prepares them one day to plan and hold the feast themselves.

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Students in classical Christian schools are similarly invited to attend a feast spread from what T. S. Eliot called "the total harvest of thinking

2. For information on this concept, see Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger's *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

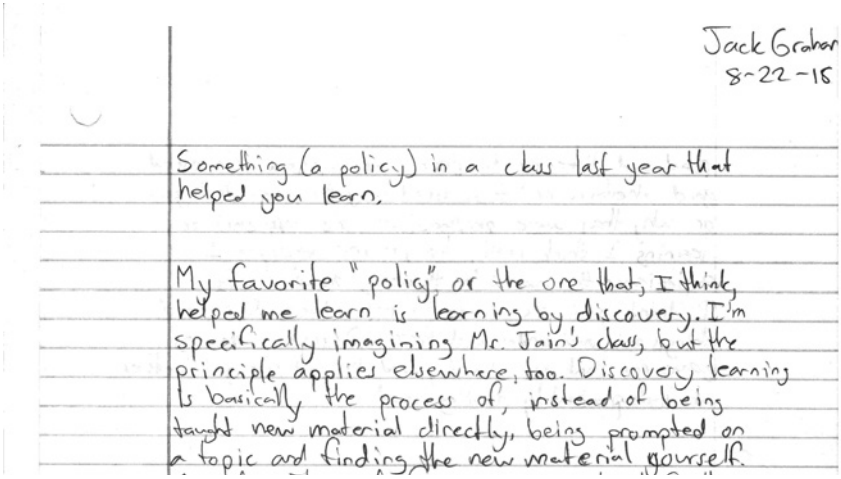
[and] feeling."[3] Teachers must spread the table with what is real. They must serve the students from the very true, good, and beautiful things that nourish their own souls. Like parents at the Thanksgiving feast, teachers provide selections and portions that both fit and expand their students' intellectual appetites, planning each lesson by asking: (1) How am I engaging students in an imitative practice that directs them to what is good, true, and beautiful? (2) How do I ensure that their participation is peripheral but legitimate? and (3) How is this practice equipping them over time to make this connection to what is real not only imitatively and peripherally but directly and for themselves? Music instruction provides a wonderful example of how this works in practice. Consider the emergent violinist playing in a school orchestra. She plays whole notes on the open D string as the orchestra performs "Ode to Joy" from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Is she engaging in imitative practice? Yes, for she learned to articulate the open D string by imitating her teacher. Does this practice connect her to what is real? Yes, because she is playing a universally recognized, beautiful piece of music. Finally, is her practice legitimate but peripheral? Yes, since she is not merely playing along; she is performing as part of the orchestra.

We will look to two areas of the curriculum to show how this principle is applicable to academic studies. First, consider science. The natural philosopher must learn to observe natural phenomena in detail and with discernment. The natural historian's practices of drawing and observing are essential for cultivating these skills through legitimate peripheral participation. Though not as refined as formal laboratory observations, drawing and taking copious observational notes attune the budding natural philosopher to the natural world, sharpen his skills of observation, and, most importantly, awaken a love and appreciation for the beauty and mystery of creation. We submit that labs, demonstrations, and expensive technological devices do not have as deep or enduring an effect within the heart and mind of the emergent young natural philosopher trained in natural history.

Consider language arts education as well. With the language arts, our primary goal must be to connect students to what we might call the effect of language—the way words and phrases combine to create and convey meaning. Reading aloud, narrating, copying, remembering, and delivering well-said and well-written words are various ways in which we engage

3. T. S. Eliot, "The Idea of a Christian Society," *Christianity and Culture* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014), 5.

students with this wonderful and mysterious effect of language. It is also how we instruct them most effectively in what we often speak of as the rules or structures of language. By narrating, remembering, reciting, and delivering what is well-said, our students are already applying grammar and rhetoric. Again, they are doing so legitimately but peripherally.


Jack Graham
8-22-18

Something (a policy) in a class last year that helped you learn.

My favorite "policy" or the one that, I think, helped me learn is learning by discovery. I'm specifically imagining Mr. Jain's class, but the principle applies elsewhere, too. Discovery learning is basically the process of, instead of being taught new material directly, being prompted on a topic and finding the new material yourself.

Figure 11. Student work. Essay on discovery learning written in response to a prompt for Nathan Raley's rhetoric class. (full essay printed below and on the next page). Used by permission of Jack Graham.

The following is the full version of the student essay:

Jack Graham

8-22-18

Something (a policy) in a class last year that helped you learn.

My favorite "policy," or the one that, I think, helped me learn is learning by discovery. I'm specifically imagining Mr. Jain's class, but the principle applies elsewhere, too. Discovery learning is basically the process of, instead of being taught new material directly, being prompted on a topic and finding the new material yourself. This doesn't work for everyone, but for those who have a natural curiosity, and a bit of practice, it is very rewarding. Specifically in math, this transformed math from a list of patterns and equations that seemed kind of arbitrary to new chapters in a story I get to write. We weren't told how to find a derivative, we began playing with the idea of slope and instantaneous slope and ended up finding the pattern behind it. The derivative wasn't just a thing you did to a function, it was shorthand for the entire process and understanding we went

through to get there. Things became easier to remember since we knew why they were true or useful. Proofs had the same effect. Even outside Mr. Jain's class, this same idea worked. In English, we weren't just taught the themes of a book to memorize, we talked about what the author was doing, why they might try to be saying, and how we think they accomplished an effect we felt. It was similar in Rhetoric with Dr. Clark. We didn't merely memorize the common topics and the cannons of rhetoric, we read and listened to pieces we agreed exhibited good rhetoric and then asked why they sounded good or why there were persuasive. This approach to learning I think really helped me because I experience the world by thinking about it. So, I didn't just memorize to reproduce, I figured things out and understood them. Discovery learning gave me that opportunity, and helped me get better at independently finding truth.

Setting Us Free to Teach Both Deeply and from Rest

As C. S. Lewis noted in *Surprised by Joy* while reflecting on his own education, learning is often stunted or spoiled by too many subjects of study. Learners are often like travelers who are so anxious to see everything on their itinerary that they do not take the time to see anything in particular. They have no distinct memories; all they can say is they have been to such and such a place. Sadly, how many graduates from classical Christian schools are like these poor travelers? They can say that they have read a book, but cannot recall what it was about. It is important for us to recognize that learning many things but not much is a real danger for our schools. Teachers are anxious to cover content and not to leave anything out, and school leaders are eager to present students who can demonstrate encyclopedic knowledge. If, however, teachers realize that it is not the curriculum but the connection with reality that awakens wonder and forms a student's soul, then they are set free from the anxiety that comes from trying to cover it all. They are free to apply the principle of *non multa sed multum*, "not many but much." The natural world, language, math, the story of human history, the artifacts of human ingenuity and creativity, and God are not only wonderful, they are deep and inexhaustible sources springing up into a lifetime of learning. By directing student learning to what is real, we enjoy a twofold effect: we are able to slow down and to teach from rest, knowing that even if the subjects of study are few, the learning will be great indeed. Students will make haste slowly, or in Latin—*festina lente*.

There is a further effect as well, and it applies directly to contemporary discussions of teaching and learning. We find ourselves caught on the horns of a pedagogical dilemma, in which twenty-first-century learning is opposed to the teaching methods of the last century. Conventional education, we are told, with its lectures, tests, and academic disciplines, is teacher-centered and leaves students the passive recipients of techniques for delivering content. Twenty-first-century learning, however, is student-centered. It promises, by means of practices such as shared inquiry, individualized instruction, and project-based learning, to engage students more actively in the learning process. As we have seen, there is an element in each of these emphases (at least the latter two) that resonates with the liberal arts tradition. However, while teaching students to learn for themselves is certainly a goal of classical Christian education, classical educators are suspicious of this approach's emphasis upon technological devices, individualized instruction, and the way curriculum is determined by the interests of contemporary students. To escape the dilemma of trying to balance the positives and negatives of the twenty-first-century emphases, classical Christian educators often align with conventional educational practices. Unfortunately, the conventional education of last century is just an older model of modern education. Only by adopting a pedagogy that directs our students to what is real—to what is true, good, and beautiful in and of itself—can we escape the downfalls of both centuries' models. As we do, we find ourselves part of a community in which teachers and students are united in the project of growing together in knowledge, self-discipline, and virtue. In this way, where modern education leaves us with a negotiation between teachers and students for priority of place, the classical Christian model welcomes us into a school.

Checklist for Creating a Report Card

Sample report cards crafted by other schools seeking to emulate the ideas in this book are available at ClassicalAcademicPress.com, under the "Support" drop-down (found beneath the product photo).

- ❒ Recognize that report cards often carry too much weight for both parents and students—sometimes trumping all other efforts to help parents and students understand education primarily as virtue formation rather than a numerical performance index tied to the cash value of college admission and potential scholarships. Look for ways to de-emphasize the weight of modern, numerical grades.
- ❒ In grades K–8, consider not using numerical grades in your school or report card. Since colleges only view transcripts from grades 9–12, you can adopt a reporting system that in K–8 (or at least in K–6) that does not contain modern "grades."
- ❒ Consider other ways of assessing and reporting progress to students and parents. See the mastery.org website for an organization actively pursuing this and seeking to assess students with various mastery rubrics.
- ❒ Consider crafting a report card that features the acquisition of student virtues in addition to assessments and reports on academic performance. See ClassicalAcademicPress.com, under the "Support" drop-down (found beneath the product photo) for examples of report cards from classical schools that seek to do this.
- ❒ Consider including a section on the report card that allows teachers to compose a written, narrative assessment of the student's growth in virtue as well as academic performance. While in lower school a 4–6 sentence narrative is appropriate, in the upper school each teacher need only contribute a 2–3 sentence assessment. This cultivates in students a greater goal to strive for than just a grade: their teacher's honest praise.

In grades K–6 or K–8, consider various alternative designations for academic performance such as this four-tier rubric:

- ❒ MCL = *Magna Cum Laude*: going above and beyond expectations, beyond praiseworthy work
- ❒ CL = *Cum Laude* (with praise): praiseworthy work, the expectation for all or most students who are properly placed and working with diligence and virtue
- ❒ S = *Satis* (satisfactory work): the student may progress with ongoing learning
- ❒ NS = *Non Satis* (not satisfactory): the student must remediate in order to keep progressing

Consider a three-tier variation of this rubric for academic performance such as:

- ❒ MCL = *Magna Cum Laude*: going above and beyond expectations, beyond praiseworthy work
- ❒ CL = *Cum Laude* (with praise): praiseworthy work
- ❒ NS = *Non Satis* (not satisfactory): the student must remediate in order to keep progressing