A classical statue of a man, possibly a philosopher or scholar, stands in a grand, arched doorway. The statue is made of light-colored stone and is draped in a long, flowing robe. The doorway is supported by several columns and features intricate carvings and inscriptions. The overall scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting an interior or a well-lit outdoor space.

You'll wish you  
could go back  
to school

# DISCOVER

CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

*The essential guide for parents*

# TAKE THE EDUCATION QUIZ

With which statement do you most agree?

- 1 Success in college and in the job market are the primary reasons I send my child to school.
- If my child's education builds wisdom, the natural result will be success in life.

Fathers and mothers have lost the idea that the highest aspiration they might have for their children is for them to be wise... Specialized competence and success are all that they can imagine. Allan Bloom

- 2 Education should be entertaining so that children can enjoy their childhood.
- Education is a joy unto itself for the student who is taught to love learning.

The test and the use of man's education is that he finds pleasure in the exercise of his mind. Jacques Barzun

- 3 Education trains children in the knowledge and skills that they will need.
- Education teaches children the art of learning; it trains the mind in how to think well.

Is not the great defect of our education today... that although we often succeed in teaching our pupils "subjects," we fail lamentably on the whole in teaching them how to think: they learn everything, except the art of learning. Dorothy Sayers



4

Education at school can be value-neutral. We teach our family values at home.

All education teaches an inherent value system. Therefore, school should instill values consistent with your family's.

Education without values, as useful as it is, seems rather to make man a more clever devil. C.S. Lewis

5

Students need up-to-date training emphasizing technology and science to be prepared for the future.

Students need broad-based knowledge in the context of a Christian worldview to be prepared for an uncertain future.

We don't even know what skills may be needed in the years ahead... We must train our young people in the fundamental fields of knowledge, and equip them to understand and cope with change. ... We must give them the critical qualities of mind and durable qualities of character that will serve them in circumstances we cannot now even predict. John Gardner

Who are these people? Some of the greatest minds of the last 100 years have been warning us about the direction of American education. These represent but a few. Most were academics. All were best-selling authors. All were well-educated. All were deeply concerned about the future of our children and our culture.



# ONE INVESTMENT

A lifetime of benefit

**Leadership**

**Discernment**

**Resourcefulness**

**Eloquence**

**Honor**

**A Christian Worldview**



## **Structure that rewards self-control and personal diligence**

- ✧ Students thrive as they meet a higher standard of classroom behavior.
- ✧ Homework and project work emphasize self-reliance and a love of discovery and learning.
- ✧ A lifelong work ethic is encouraged at a young age.

The entire object of true education is to make people not merely to do the right things, but to enjoy them; not merely industrious, but to love industry; not merely learned, but to love knowledge; not merely pure, but to love purity; not merely just, but to hunger and thirst after justice.

John Ruskin

## Content and method that develop thinking articulate students

- ✧ Time-tested methods that have been staples in Western culture and the Church since the second century.
- ✧ Socratic teaching, debate, subject integration, and written and oral defense all provide the mental exercise to cultivate powerful minds.
- ✧ Students see the big picture by studying history, philosophy, literature, art, theology, Latin, Greek, logic and rhetoric, math and science.
- ✧ An emphasis on cultivating wisdom rather than just teaching facts and skills.



## An environment that challenges students and creates a love of learning

- ✧ A tone of inspiration, fulfillment, joy, and respect are visible throughout.
- ✧ Students cultivate an interest in first principles and ultimate purposes.

Isolating the student from large sections of human knowledge is not the basis of a Christian education. Rather it is giving him or her the framework for total truth, rooted in the Creator's existence and in the Bible's teaching, so that in each step of the formal learning process the student will understand what is true and what is false and why it is true or false.

Francis Schaeffer

# THE DILEMMA

## Facing modern educators

Manufacturing jobs are going overseas. The American workforce must now be prepared for 'knowledge worker' jobs. But there's a catch. Knowledge worker jobs will go overseas just as quickly unless Americans can excel in education.

As modern education trims "non-productive" subjects like the humanities in a rush to put more emphasis on practical subjects like math and science, it undermines the foundation of education AND students' application of the math and science skills they do have. In the process, the modern approach creates technicians who cannot think, do not have common sense, and do not write or speak well.

If a student wants to be a doctor, some would provide him only with hands-on medical experience and teach him human anatomy and mathematics. Why? Because it is obviously beneficial to specialize your education, right? Sometimes, the obvious answers are wrong.

We learn to think and relate to others through the process of education. By focusing on vocational training, we fail to make either great doctors, great engineers, or great thinkers and citizens.

This is where C.S. Lewis said modern educators make their mistake. They presume that classical education is an unnecessary luxury. Why read Plato or Aquinas or Burke? Why learn Latin or Greek? In our example, what relevance could it possibly have to medicine? The answer is simple, but not obvious. We are not machines to be programmed— we are works to be made. Classical Christian education requires parents to look deeper into the foundation of education. Once you understand its value, you'll wish you could go back to school!

For years, progressive educators have been changing education. By almost every standard, academic performance has declined. The dilemma will continue until we take a fresh look at what works and why.

### CAN YOU "PROGRAM" YOUR TEEN? ARE WE MEN OR MACHINES?

If we are bundles of cells that make up a complex organic machine, then our brains must be like a computer. Education would only require that we be programmed and filled with data. Thinking is merely electrochemical. Wisdom comes with knowledge and skills. Art is an illusion. Faith is a crutch.

#### Christian Answer

If we are creatures made in the image of God, then our minds must be cultivated to grow into their potential. To educate, we must read the great thinkers in history and evaluate their work in the light of God's Word. The mind must be practiced in logic and reason. Art and music provide a unique insight into the mind of God.

#### Post-Modern Answer

The three great essentials to achieve anything worthwhile are: Hard work, Stick-to-itiveness, and Common sense.

Thomas Edison

# CLARITY

In the contrast

## Most Modern Education

"Democratic": Every student should attain the same level of achievement.

"Multicultural": Critical of our Western cultural roots, strongly emphasizing imperialism, slavery, and historic Christianity as "what is wrong with America."

Naturalistic: Emphasizes math and science at the expense of art, literature, and history.

Secular: Holds the "spiritual" as personal and separate from education. Avoids deeper philosophical issues.

Values-neutral: All moral positions are relative and hence all positions must be equally treated.

Broken into many subjects: By breaking knowledge into pieces, it can be more carefully studied and thus understood.

Teaches facts and functional skills: Students primarily learn *about* subjects, particularly ones that help them "get good jobs."

Progressive: Always experimenting with new techniques and methods.

Entertainment learning: Entertain students to engage them in the learning process.

## Classical Christian Education

Excellence: Take each student to their highest possible potential.

Western: Recognize the great contribution of Western culture to America and the world, including its triumphs and failures while also recognizing the beauty in other cultures.

Universal: Emphasize the humanities, arts and sciences to bring a full perspective.

Integrated: Education is necessarily tied to philosophy and religion in order to train thoughtful students.

Idealism: Standards of right and wrong exist in all subject areas. Students are taught to make judgments accordingly.

Integrated subjects: Subjects should be taught in an integrated way so that students understand the whole as well as the parts.

Teaches critical thinking: Students learn to think beyond subject-matter. Content is not the goal—wisdom is.

Traditional: Hold to educational standards that have a clear record of success.

Engage and challenge: Students will meet a high standard and enjoy the sense of achievement.

# WHAT CHANGED?

## The legacy of the founders

When our form of classical education was refined in 18th century America, it produced some of the greatest thinkers, scientists, pastors and leaders who ever lived. What changed?

In 19th century America, educators adapted education to meet the needs of the immigrants. Later, the technological push of the 1950's put yet another face on education— training technologists. The irony?

Classical education accomplishes all of these goals better than what replaced it. It prepares students for life.

Many of the world's best schools still use classical methods. Why? Because they



know what works. From SAT scores to career success, from character to wisdom, it happens that the classical method prepares students better than any other form of education.

America's K-12 Education— then and now			
	Leadership Education	Immigrant Education	Technology Education
Education's Focus	Citizens who could govern and think well, with integrity	"Americanizing" new emigrants and literacy (3R's)	Train for good jobs and equality
	pre-1860 <i>(Founding Fathers)</i>	c. 1860-1940	1945-Present
 <p><b>Classical education accomplishes all three goals</b></p>			
<small>Sources: Derived from PBS Documentary "School: The Story of American Education" and other sources.</small>			

At the time this nation was formed, our population stood at around 3 million. And we produced out of that 3 million people perhaps six leaders of world class— Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Franklin, Madison, and Hamilton. Today, our population stands at 245 million, so we might expect at least 80 times as many world-class leaders— 480 Jeffersons, Madisons, Adams, Washingtons, Hamiltons, and Franklins. Where are they?

John Gardner, American novelist and classicist

# A RESTORATION

## Time-line



1947

**Dorothy Sayers**, a classicist, mystery author, and Christian writes *The Lost Tools of Learning* which points out the dangerous shift away from "true education." In this essay, she recalls the ancient foundation of education-- the trivium-- and explains why it is essential to education.



1981

**C.S. Lewis** writes *The Abolition of Man* in which he establishes the fundamental failure in modern education. In his famous "men without chests" passage, Lewis accuses modern educators of stripping Truth and humanity from education, resulting in the Abolition of Man.



1982

**David Hicks** writes *Norms and Nobility* in which he closely associates classical education with moral education to create a new model for classical Christian education.



1991

**Mortimer Adler** writes *The Paideia Proposal* and launches the successful Paideia Group for the restoration of classical education. Adler is best known for editing *The Great Books of the Western World* and *The Encyclopedia Britannica*.



1994

**Douglas Wilson** writes *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning* which recounts Sayers essay and makes a case for restoring classical education in Christianity. He also discusses the development of Logos School in 1981.



1994

**Association of Classical Christian Schools** founded which now represents over 150 schools.



1996

**New Saint Andrews College** is founded as a Classical and Christian College.



1998-2003

**Torrey Honors Institute** founded by Dr. John Mark Reynolds using the classical Christian approach at BIOLA University.

**ACCS schools demonstrate academic excellence.** For example, Logos School wins statewide competitions and generates several National Merit Scholars (scoring in the 98th or 99th percentile on the PSAT's).

2007

**Conferences** of the ACCS, Society for Classical Learning, The CiRCE Institute, and other regional meetings attract thousands of teachers, administrators, and parents to study classical Christian method and content.

Sources include *Classical Education: Towards the Revival of American Schooling*. Gene Edward Veith and Andrew Kern.

# THE LOST METHOD

## How does it work?



Thousands of parents are rediscovering what education can mean. Rather than assuming a full classroom, a good teacher, and 7 hours at school equates to “education,” these parents realize that what happens in those 7 hours matters.

### THE FOUNDATION

The educational system called “classical education” was developed over two millennia with the goal of developing young minds to be wise. The foundation of classical education is the trivium. The trivium's three phases of learning are adapted to three phases of development in children—grammar, logic, and rhetoric.

### GRAMMAR

Young children (grades k-6) are uniquely adapted to memorize. They learn chants,

Socrates sought to guide his student into authentic knowledge. He did it via a method of discreet, guided questioning. He engaged his student in deep dialogue [forcing] the student to think his way to a sound conclusion. Socrates wanted to teach his students to think. The goal of thinking is truth. With this method, knowledge is supported by understanding and the student goes beneath the surface to penetrate the truth of the matter. RC Sproul

songs, and rhythmic verse well and can be taught an enormous amount of information, much of which is retained for a lifetime. By exercising this ability, students remain practiced in the art of memorizing. Modern educators often overlook memorization once the student learns to read and write well in about the third grade. As with many skills, if you don't develop memory at this phase, you'll lose it. Students so enjoy memorizing that they will make up playground songs or chants on their own!

### LOGIC

Early adolescent children (grades 7-8) become argumentative. Their ability to draw conclusions from a series of facts begins to develop. This is called the dialectic or logic phase. Most modern educators overlook this phase, except with regard to higher math. Classical schools teach formal logic, logical fallacies, and reasoning skills through tools like the Socratic method and Aristotelian logic. These subjects are foreign to most of us unless we learned them in college. They practice students in the science of accurate thinking. In this phase, the subject matter is not as important as what conclusions the students may draw from knowledge.

### RHETORIC—AN ESSENTIAL SKILL

In high school, students begin to develop a sense of how others perceive them. They become self-conscious about fashion, vocabulary, mannerisms and various other forms of expression. Classicists called this the rhetoric phase. Students in this phase learn to speak and write well. They learn to relate to their audience with clarity and persuasion. Without the ability to communicate, the best ideas go unheard and are impotent.

### INSPIRED TO LEARN

Beyond the foundation of the trivium, the classical method inspires learning. Because

classical education cuts with the grain through the developmental phases of the trivium, it naturally appeals to students. Rather than “bawling words into the ears” of students, classical education engages their minds. Gifted classical teachers inspire students to investigate, contemplate, debate, and pursue knowledge. By encouraging students to love learning, a lifelong gift is communicated.

### INTEGRATION

Finally, integration between subjects presented with a Christian worldview ties the world together. Math, science, philosophy, and history are interwoven in a way that relates all subjects to a whole. As students integrate subjects, scriptural truth is integrated as well. This affects students deeply. The continuity between a student's faith and his rational mind is a reward few Christians enjoy. Classicism provides this perspective unlike any other form of education. The peace of knowing Christ's truth as it integrates with His world provides a powerful shield against the hostile questions posed in college and later in life.



## NO RIGHT ANSWERS?

Over 2000 years ago, Socrates taught his pupils by asking them questions. In today's classrooms, teachers refuse to judge anyone's idea.

Socratic discussions have all but disappeared from the k-12 classroom in the past 50 years. Why? Modern educators don't see the point. Since they believe all people express their own truth, it's a waste of classroom time to hear anyone's opinion.

Classical Christian education continues to invest classroom time in Socratic discussions. Christ taught that He was Truth. That Truth could be found. And that there was only one Truth. Socrates believed this principle as well, though he did not know Christ.

In this context, classical Christian education believes that you learn to discern Truth more accurately when you have a well-trained mind. Discussions in our classroom develop the skill of discernment. Everyone is encouraged to answer, but not every answer is correct. That's why we invest the time. There is Truth and we value it enough to help students develop the skill to understand it. The subject matter is not as important as the process of discovering Truth.

Teaching must be the development of natural inclinations, for which purpose the tutor must watch his pupil and listen to him, not continually bawl words into his ears as if pouring water into a funnel. Good teaching will come from a mind well-made rather than well-filled.

Montaigne

# TRIVIUM

## The lost tools of learning

### Stages of t

#### Pre-Grammar



#### Grades K-2

##### Traits

- ✧ Obviously excited about learning
- ✧ Enjoys games, stories, songs, projects
- ✧ Short attention span
- ✧ Wants to touch, taste, feel, smell and see.
- ✧ Imaginative and creative

##### In the classroom

Guided discovery; explore; find things; use lots of tactile items; sing; play games; chant; recite; color, draw, paint; build; use body movements; short creative projects; show and tell; drama; hear/read/tell stories; field trips.



#### Logic

##### Traits

- ✧ Still excitable but needs challenges
- ✧ Critical, enjoys debate
- ✧ Likes to organize items
- ✧ Shows off knowledge
- ✧ Wants to know “behind the scenes” facts
- ✧ Curious about *why* for most things
- ✧ Acts as though they are more knowledgeable than adults



#### Grades 7-8

##### In the classroom

Time lines, charts, maps (visual materials); debates, persuasive reports; drama re-enactments, role playing; evaluate and critique (with guidelines); formal logic; research projects; oral/written presentations; guest speakers, trips.

# the Trivium

## Grades 3-6

### Traits

- ✧ Excited about new, interesting facts
- ✧ Likes to explain, figure out, talk
- ✧ Wants to relate topic to their own experiences
- ✧ Likes collections and organizing items
- ✧ Likes clever chants and rhymes
- ✧ Easily memorizes
- ✧ Can assimilate another language well



### In the classroom

Lots of hands-on work, projects; field trips; drama; make collections, displays, models; integrate subjects through above means; teach and assign research projects; recitations, memorization; drills, games.

## Grades 9-12

### Traits

- ✧ Concerned with present events, especially related to their own lives
- ✧ Idealistic, interested in justice and fairness
- ✧ Moving toward special interests or topics
- ✧ Can synthesize and do more independent work
- ✧ Desires to express feelings, own ideas
- ✧ Concerned with how others view them

### In the classroom

Drama, oral presentations; guide research in major areas with goal of synthesis of ideas; many papers, speeches, debates; give responsibilities, e.g. working with younger students, organize activities; in-depth field trips, even overnight; worldview discussions.



Source: Adapted from the Lost Tools Illustrated Chart. Copyright: Tom Garfield, Logos School, Moscow, ID

Grammar

Rhetoric

# THE LOST CONTENT

## If it works, don't fix it



**GREAT MINDS** begin by reading great books. Progressive educators see the great minds of history as stair steps toward our present enlightened society. As such, they are behind us and irrelevant. Classical Christian educators view history as a valuable learning tool.

**LITERATURE** brings the great ideas of history alive. Students who read great literature write better because they have history's best teachers. Great books let you think and feel the brilliance of history's most influential people.

**PHILOSOPHY** asks the age-old foundational questions about man, God, and nature. In Christianity, we have the answers. Classical Christian education sets students on a firm foundation for understanding and integrating all of life.

**THEOLOGY:** Scripture provides us with everything we need to know about God. Theology organizes it. Students who know their theology have a better grasp of the Bible. Classical educators call theology the "Queen of the Sciences."

**ART:** People's beliefs about the world are reflected in their art. By studying music, theater, and the fine arts in their historical context, we come to know the views that produced them.



### HISTORY: PURSUE MORE THAN TRIVIA

In 390 AD, the Roman Emperor Theodosius attacked a village called Salonica for rebelling against the local Roman garrison. Historical facts like this seem to be of little consequence today. Why study them? Even if you learn the facts in grade school, you'll probably never use them, right? Wouldn't it make more sense to study recent history, science, or math?

The study of history is central to classical education. As with many great accomplishments, the link between *what* we study and *why* it makes better thinkers is not always obvious.

Western history, art, and literature provide a unique window into the formative cultures of our own. If you simply learn the who, what, when, and where of history, you probably won't get

much out of it.

When a student immerses himself in the mind of historical people, he develops a sense of perspective. He slowly comes to realize the limits of his own worldview and how those limits affect his thinking. This is the great power of the classical approach-- it permits us to act with reason rather than presumption.

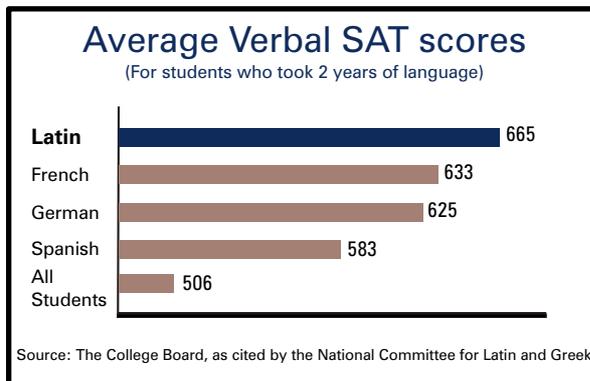
Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, threatened Theodosius with excommunication for his role at Salonica, which reshaped the role that Christianity would play in government to the present day. The student develops a clear understanding of church-state separation without taking anything for granted because he understands the principles at work. Wisdom depends on knowledge in the proper context. History is that context.

**SCIENCE AND MATH:** From Archimedes to Newton, from Galileo to Pascal, the golden era of science belonged to classicists. One distinction between classical education and a liberal arts education is our emphasis on science and math. Students at classical schools perform well in advanced science and math.

**LOGIC AND RHETORIC** are not only methods, they are also subjects. Aristotle systematized logic and rhetoric. We study these to learn the science of thinking and the art of verbal and written communication.

## LATIN'S POWER ON THE SAT

According to those who administer the SAT, students who take 2 years of Latin score an average of 152 points higher on their SAT's. Why is Latin such a valuable academic tool?



- 1 Latin is a powerful vocabulary builder. Over 50 percent of English words come from Latin. The power comes because a single Latin word may represent the roots of five or ten English words. By learning Latin prefixes and endings, as well as Latin roots, students are capable of comprehending many English words that they've never heard.
- 2 English is an amalgamation of several different languages and therefore has many exceptions—its structure is hard to follow. Because of this, English speakers may never learn the structure of the language. Latin's syntax and grammar are an excellent "ideal" language from which to learn. A student of Latin is better equipped to write well in English.
- 3 Training in Latin not only gives the student a better understanding of the roots of English vocabulary, it also lays the foundation for learning other Latin-based languages like French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, and Romanian. Perhaps 80% of each of these languages derive their vocabulary from Latin.
- 4 For professional careers like law and medicine, Latin provides yet another bonus. Because these fields require precision in language, Latin is typically their base for technical terms and names. Students of Latin are readily prepared for these professions.
- 5 The power to persuade is one of the strongest powers a human can exert. The precision of Latin and Greek provides their students with an English linguistic tool that cannot be achieved in any other way. Using the right word, at the right time, in the right context is empowered by the study of classical languages.

Most of all, perhaps, we need an intimate knowledge of the past. Not that the past has anything magical about it, but we cannot study the future. *C.S. Lewis*

# LOST CHRISTIANITY

## Worldview

### IDEAS, CONSEQUENCES, AND WORLDVIEW

Only 9% of Americans who call themselves "born again" Christians have a Christian worldview.\* The consequences of shallow Christianity are evident both inside and outside the church. Many of us grew up going to modern schools learning "secular" subjects and attending Sunday school or Bible class. This has conditioned our minds to think categorically about the world. Our brains inadvertently think in terms of the spiritual and the day-to-day. Inconsistencies between our formal education and our Christianity have further polarized our thinking. This mental separation results in a dysfunctional worldview. Students who develop an accurate Christian worldview are able to take God out of His compartment.

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*Today we have a weakness in our education process ... We tend to study all our disciplines in unrelated parallel lines. This tends to be true in both Christian and secular education. This is one of the reasons why evangelical Christians have been taken by surprise at the tremendous shift that has come to our generation.*—Francis Schaeffer

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Classical Christian education solves this problem in several ways. Through intellectual and spiritual integration, students develop a thorough Christian worldview. We take a more integrated approach to literature, art, history, science, math, and theology with the latent philosophies of each subject brought to the forefront.

Rather than confining Christianity to a Bible class, we view all subjects through the lens of Scripture.

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*No single truth is adequately comprehended till it is viewed in harmonious relations to all other truths of the system in which Christ is the centre.*—A.A. Hodge

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### THE IMPACT OF A CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

We seek to graduate mature students who are well-suited to challenge the conventions of our society, rather than falling prey to them.

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*The right defense against false sentiments is to inculcate just sentiments. By starving the sensibility of our pupils we only make them easier prey to the propagandist when he comes.*—C.S. Lewis

---

Often, even Christian educators adopt the tool box of the modern educator. Their texts, their educational structure, and their educational frameworks inadvertently compromise true education.

### WHERE'S THE CHAPEL? OR THE BIBLE CLASS?

They're in the classroom. We integrate biblical truth into every subject. This is why our form of education is uniquely able to build solid Christian worldviews.

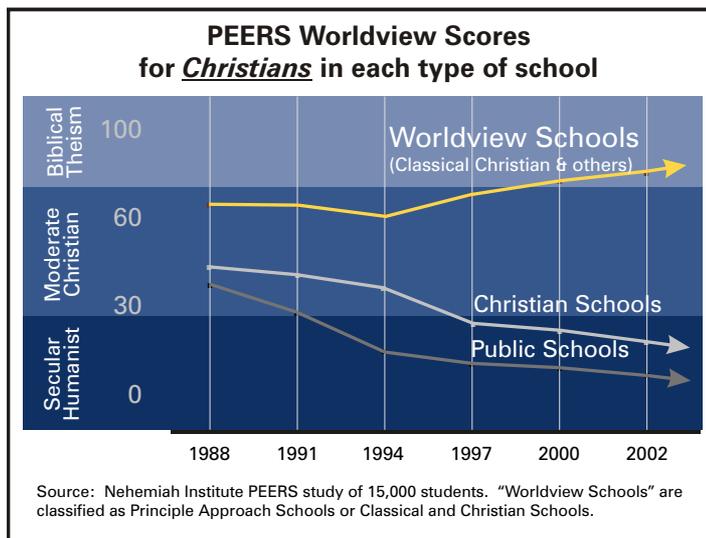
Why is *infinity* an essential concept in higher math? What was the historical context for Christ's coming? How is art a reflection of our divine image? What does DNA tell us about design? How does language help us relate to God?

Some Christian schools emphasize a great Bible curriculum. They may even use "Christian" curriculum for science or history. Classical Christian education goes a step further.

For us, Bible is not a subject, but a lens. It provides perspective. It enlightens every subject as we use the light of scripture to help us understand every subject in every way. The difference is evident in every classical and Christian classroom.

\* Source: The Barna Group of Ventura, CA. Christian worldview defined as believing absolute moral truths exist and that they are defined in the Bible; Jesus lived a sinless life; God is the all powerful and all knowing creator of the universe; He still rules it; Salvation is a gift of God that cannot be earned; Satan is real; Christians have a responsibility to share their faith; and the Bible is accurate in all of its teachings.

The Nehemiah Institute has tracked the worldview of high-school students in a variety of school settings since the mid-1980's. The news has not been good. Both Christian and public schools are failing to teach students to think Christianly. The test measures a variety of attitudes. While the test is not perfect, it presents a generally realistic picture of worldview in America's schools. The test measures biblical attitudes about all areas of life, including moral, social, political, and economic.



*What we want is not more little books about Christianity, but more little books by Christians on other subjects--with their Christianity latent. ... Our Faith is not very likely to be shaken by any book on Hinduism. But if whenever we read an elementary book on Geology, Botany, Politics, or Astronomy, we found that its implications were Hindu, that would shake us. ...In the same way, it is not books on Christianity that will really trouble [the unbeliever]. But he would be troubled if, ... the best work on the market was always by a Christian. — C.S. Lewis*

The academic excellence permeated by a Christian worldview in classical Christian schools allows our students to become good stewards of their God-given minds. However, we don't stop there. We value students who serve with their hearts as well as their minds. To the extent God's grace allows, we seek to encourage great servants with great minds.

For more information on worldview education, please see our reading list on page 19.



We need prayer, Bible study, worship, fellowship and witnessing. But if we focus exclusively on these disciplines and in the process we ignore our responsibility to redeem the surrounding culture our Christianity will remain privatized and marginalized.

Charles Colson

# MYTHS

## Three common misperceptions



**Myth:** Classical education was fine back then, but we need modern education in a modern world.

**Fact:** Classical education teaches students facts, provides them with logical tools to use those facts, and perfects the student's ability to relate those facts to others. This fundamental skill-set is more valuable today than it has ever been. The process of teaching students to think extends far beyond filling their heads with knowledge. Modern education, to varying degrees, has succeeded in teaching facts and some skills. Classical education helps students draw original, creative, and accurate conclusions from facts and then formulate those conclusions into logical and persuasive arguments.

Modern subjects based in science and technology are taught in classical schools, through classical methods. Parents who are exposed to classical education recognize that its "back to the basics" approach contrasts with the distractions of modern education. Is the classical method applicable in a modern, technological age? The technology we have today was invented, in large part, by the classically educated.

Classical education teaches children the timeless skills of thinking, reasoning, logic, and expression. Our subject matter is as up-to-date as that found in other schools. We simply add a depth and dimension through this time-tested method.

**Myth:** Classical education is unnecessarily difficult.

**Fact:** Children enjoy learning. They are wired for it. Assuming that a child will not be able to succeed in a challenging environment is tempting, but simply untrue.

A common assumption is that a demanding curriculum results in unhappy children. As adults, learning new things can be uncomfortable. However, children are fascinated by what they learn. The excitement of children learning Latin grows as they become able to describe the world in a language that most adults do not understand. The rich and complex texture of classical literature is amplified by youth. Science and the history of Western Civilization come alive for those who hunger to know about their world. For the unconvinced, a visit to a classical Christian school is sure to demonstrate that our students love to learn.

Classical schools maintain order in the classroom. This does not translate to stoic classes where interaction is limited to an occasional, downcast "yes sir." Students are not allowed to be disruptive, but they are constantly encouraged to offer observations, ask questions, interact, and make comments. The classical method encourages a stimulating and enjoyable learning environment for students.

**Myth:** Classical education is too extreme.

**Fact:** Classical education teaches children "with the grain" - complementing their developmental phase with the appropriate teaching method. Parents are rightfully skeptical of anything that differs boldly from the norm. However, classical education was the norm 100 years ago because it worked.

Conventional education has taken an experimental approach to educating our children over the past four decades. Many different methods have been tried and later scrapped when they failed. This constant state of change in education creates an environment where anything "traditional" seems extreme. Classical education provides a basic structure upon which we can build effective, successful students. We are not advocating an experiment. Rather, we are seeking a return to a system proven for over 1,000 years.

# YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION

It's worth reading about



Written 10 years after “Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning” this book is a fascinating look at what works and why. Far from a treatise on educational theory, this book provides hard hitting evidence of why a classical Christian education is important for every Christian. Why do only 23% of American 8th graders test proficient in math? How does television impact our children's education? What does the Bible say about charter schools? Why have the worldviews of Christian students plummeted since 1988, even in Christian schools? What two types of schools return the highest Christian worldview scores? Who should read it? Everyone. If you only read one book on classical Christian education, this should be it.



Douglas Wilson's 1991 seminal work jump-started the restoration of classical and Christian education in America. Mr. Wilson points to the serious problems with modern education and presents a revolutionary alternative that redefines what we think of as “education.” He points out that k-12 education must be thoroughly Christian, in a way that brings every subject into perspective through God's word. He uses Dorothy Sayers' essay “The Lost Tools of Learning” (included in the book) to prescribe a better way to restore the educational excellence of the Christian tradition. If you're new to classical Christian education, or if you've never read this book, read it!



In fewer than 50 pages, Dr. Perrin explains the essentials of classical education in a colloquial, engaging style. How did classical education come to be? Why does classical education work? Why does it prepare students well for college? If you want to understand the “why’s” behind this time-tested education, or if you want to know the essential “nuts and bolts,” this book helps you to a higher level of understanding. There are plenty of excellent “weighty” books on classical Christian education. If you're looking for a quick, convincing read, this book is worth your time.



If history creates perspective, this book provides perspective on classical education and American education in general. Coauthored by Gene Edward Veith and Andrew Kern, you can walk through the recent history of classical education. Veith and Kern demonstrate the variety and depth of numerous school movements that continue to grow as they restore education in America. From the inner city, to the evangelical Christian suburbs, the restoration takes many forms. You'll find them all intriguing.

We are having a revival of feelings but not of the knowledge of God. The church today is more guided by feelings than by convictions. We value enthusiasm more than informed commitment.

-1990 Gallup poll on religion

**A FULFILLING LIFE:** When the grace and Truth found in scripture are matched with a mind that thinks Christianly, we can live in the harmony that only a consistent Christian worldview brings about. Romans 12: 1-2 calls this “renewing your mind.”

**A CLOUD...** American education is in trouble. Academically, kids are less capable than they were 50 years ago. This problem is dwarfed by the moral crisis. Even Christian kids are failing to think or act like Christians. In a culture that is marching away from God and away from standards, our youth need the lost tools of learning.

**... WITH A SILVER LINING:** Christians have an opportunity to break away from the influence of modern education and return to education that instills a Christian worldview *and* prepares students academically. Since the 1990’s, classical and Christian education has enjoyed rapid growth as it expands worldwide. Imagine the potential impact as Christians return to their traditional role as intellectual leaders in the culture.

**HELP RESTORE CHRISTIAN CULTURAL LEADERSHIP:** As mainstream educators struggle, the opportunity to return Christianity’s intellectual leadership to the fore is upon us. We can impact the culture for Christ when we remain relevant. If we yield intellectual ground, we marginalize the Gospel. Please join us as we accept the challenge to glorify God with our minds and take back the culture for Christ.

*"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is that which is good and acceptable and perfect." Romans 12:2*