

# STUDY GUIDE

for

# *Classical Christian Education*

Video Lecture Series  
*by Rev. Jonathan Mattull*

LECTURE #1

## An Introduction to Classical Christian Education



The John Knox Institute  
of Higher Education

**John Knox Institute of Higher Education**  
*Entrusting our Reformed Inheritance to the Church Worldwide*

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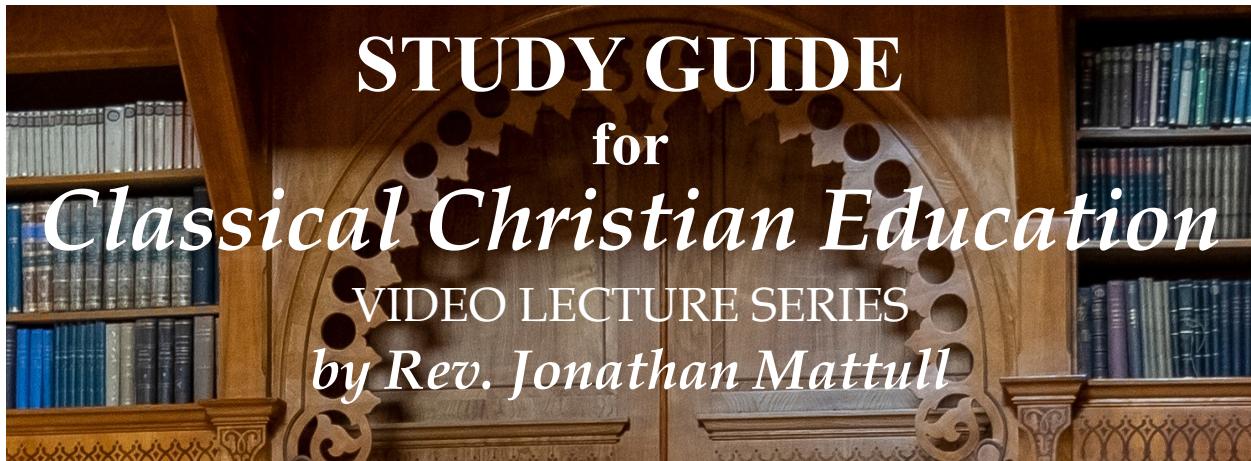
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Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from the Authorized King James Version.

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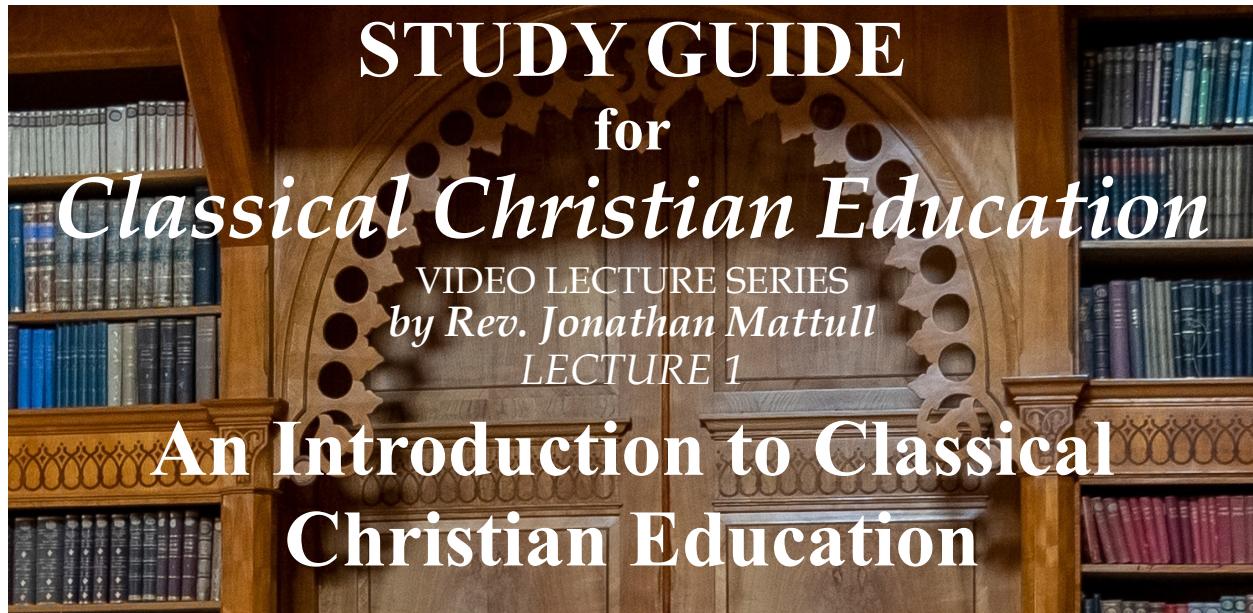
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## **1. An Introduction to Classical Christian Education**

2. Christian Commitments in Education
3. Classical Elements for Education from Antiquity
4. Reading Authors from Antiquity with Discernment and Benefit
5. How Christ Transforms Classical Education
6. The Liberal Arts in Christian Education
7. The Importance of Language in Classical Education
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### Introduction

“We have proposed that the goal of studies is a wise and eloquent piety”—so wrote Johannes Sturm, an educator from the time of the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century. We begin a course of lessons on *Classical Christian Education*, and I hope that you’ll be moved through this course of lessons to seek a wise and eloquent piety. I hope, moreover, if you have influence, that you would invest in the cultivation of that wise and eloquent piety in our children. This series is intended to help parents, to help schools, and to help churches understand and implement an education that is faithful to the Holy Scriptures and proven throughout history.

### Theme

This course of lessons and what they are intended to do.

### Key Points in this Introduction

1. Some limitations to these lessons.
  - a. Rev. Mattull did not himself have a robust Classical Christian Education, though he’s been involved in it himself for 20 years, first as a teacher, then as a headmaster; plus he is a father and a Christian minister of the gospel.
  - b. The perspective of the lessons is limited to the speaker’s own experience and culture.
  - c. The lessons do not provide detailed instruction for the day-to-day work of education.
  - d. Much of the lessons will be delivered in broad brushstrokes giving general information.
2. The need for Classical Christian Education today.
  - a. Basic definitions:
    - 1) Education—to lead others along a path of learning to a particular goal.

2) Classical—uses insights and goals of the “Classical Age” of ancient Greece and Rome, from 700 BC to AD 600.

3) Christian—in this sense, means a commitment to educate our youth according to the teachings of Jesus Christ.

4) Classical Christian Education is an approach to education which acknowledges the supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ in all things, and derives insights and goals from the Classical Age.

b. Why the need for Classical Christian Education?

1) The Christian’s calling—parents are to provide the child a culture enriched with the knowledge of Christ.

2) The nature of man—made is in the image of God, so children need to be led in the proven paths of wisdom and virtue.

3) Prevailing errors of our day—morals, academic standards, changing approaches to education, teacher training, school funding, political agendas.

c. Progressive Education was developed in the late 19th century.

1) Historical development of Progressive Education.

2) The goal of Progressive Education for the student is to get a job, make money.

3) Its focus is on technology—it tends to set aside language, spelling and grammar.

4) Established standards and ordered learning were removed from education, and students became the facilitators.

d. Classical Christian Education.

1) Historically, the goal of Classical Education has always been to cultivate “the good man,” with the cardinal virtues of *courage, moderation, wisdom, and justice*; Christianity added *faith, hope, and love*.

2) Classical Christian Education includes a Liberal Arts Education—the seven arts are divided into two groups:

The Trivium consists of Language arts of Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric.

The Quadrivium is Arithmetic, Music, Geometry, and Astronomy.

3) Christians throughout history have adopted these seven arts.

3. Conclusion: The unique goal of Classical Christian Education is wise and eloquent men and women, wise and eloquent Christians.

**Study Questions**

1. How would you explain the quote by Johannes Sturm, “We have purposed that the goal of studies is a wise and eloquent piety?”

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2. How familiar are you with Classical Christian Education? From what you have seen in this introductory lecture, are there areas or topics which are new to you?

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3. What are the four limitations that Rev. Mattull mentioned in regard to these lessons? Do you recognize these limitations in your own situation? How can we look beyond them?

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4. Pertaining to the subject of this series, please define the terms, Education, Classical, and Christian as given in this lecture? How did Rev. Mattull summarize this approach to education in contrast to other educational approaches?

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5. What are the three main reasons given that show the need for Classical Christian Education today? Please explain each one briefly.

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6. What is Progressive Education and who started it? Briefly show the historical background for this approach to education in the West.

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7. What is the main goal for students in Progressive Education? What influence does that have on thinking, education, and society? How has that affected morality in Western society?

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8. What is “the good man” referred to in Classical Education? What are the four cardinal virtues in Classical Education, and what are the three virtues added by Christianity?

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9. What is a “Liberal Arts Education”? What are the seven arts in a Liberal Arts Education, as explained in this lecture? How are they divided historically into two groups?

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10. How did Rev. Mattull summarize “the unique goal” of a Classical Christian Education?

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### Further Study

1. You may have already noticed the footnotes in the PDF transcript of this lecture. These notes can be helpful in understanding the historic move from Classical Christian Education to modern Progressive Education in the West. Please study those footnotes for future reference and keep them handy to help you in the upcoming lessons.

2. *The Westminster Shorter Catechism*, question and answer #1, says, “The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.” What is the connection between “the chief end of man” and the end goal of Classical Christian Education? What does that connection imply about the importance of our children’s education?