

# STUDY GUIDE

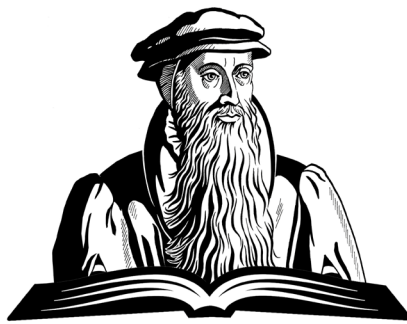
for

## *Classical Christian Education*

Video Lecture Series  
*by Rev. Jonathan Mattull*

LECTURE #10

## Potential Dangers in 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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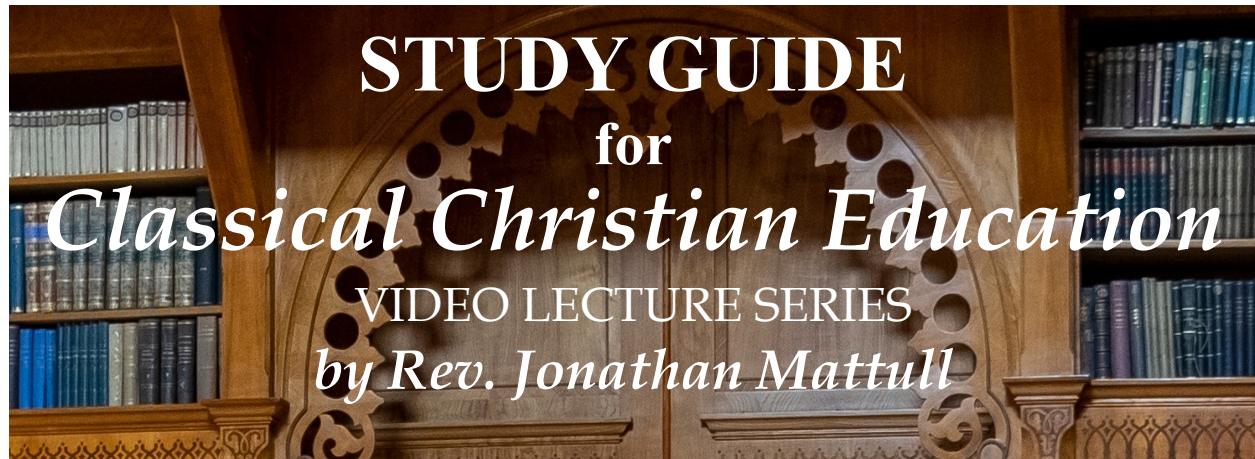
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Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from the Authorized King James Version.

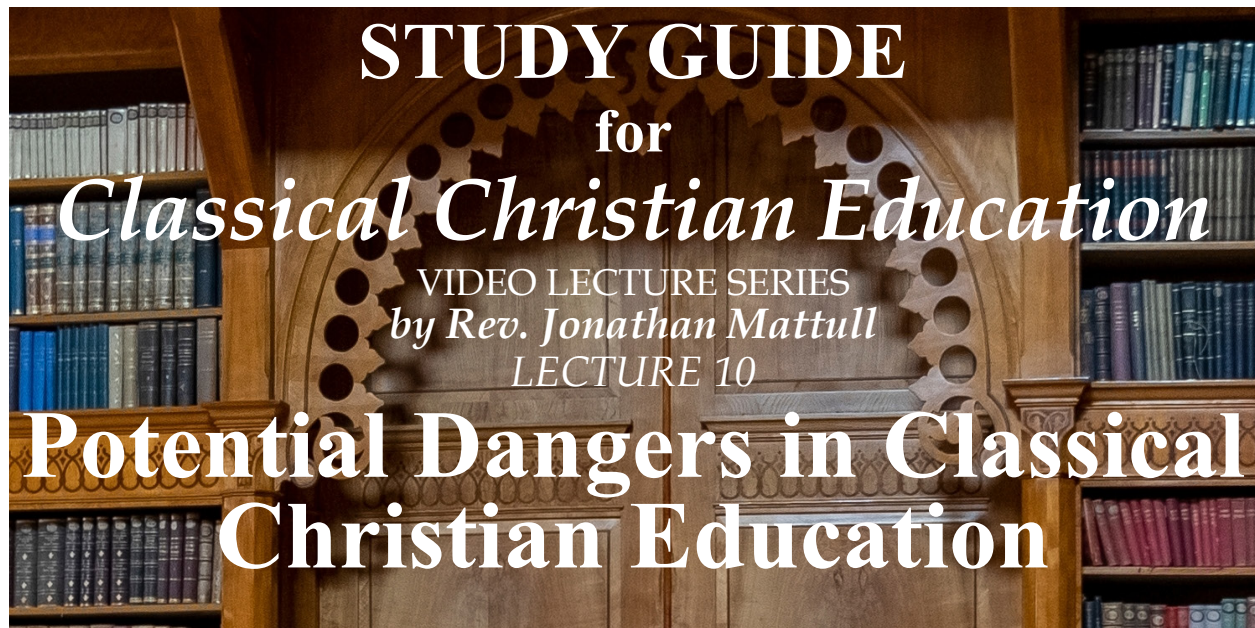
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2. Christian Commitments in Education
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### Introduction

In our series of lessons, we've already highlighted several benefits of Classical Christian Education. Before we handle those benefits, it would be good for us to be made more aware of the dangers of this approach to education. By doing this, we do not mean to imply that the dangers are directly embedded in the actual education itself. Today, in the West, at the very least, there are dangers of secular public schooling, and these dangers are actually embedded in that approach to education. The Progressive public schooling of today actively cultivates godlessness in a variety of forms and degrees. Classical Christian schools, on the other hand, necessarily emphasize the truths of God's Word, and hold forth the need of Jesus Christ as Savior. The dangers are not embedded in Classical Christian Education itself, but are due to a misunderstanding, both of the nature of Classical Education, and the nature of true Christianity.

### Theme

Potential Dangers in Classical Christian Education.

### Key Points

1. Dangers Due to Misunderstanding the Nature of Classical Education.
  - a. Mislabeling Progressive approaches to education as "Classical."
    - 1) Progressive Christian education just replaces immoral content with moral content.
    - 2) Classical Christian education uses moral content to master the student, cultivate virtue.
    - 3) The key danger is in thinking we've turned a Progressive education into a Classical education simply because we've replaced immoral content with moral content.

b. Neglecting the ultimate end of Classical Christian Education.

- 1) The end of Progressive Education is to prepare the student for college, or for a job.
- 2) The end of Classical Education is to transform the student into a wise and eloquent person.
- 3) The ultimate end of Classical Christian Education is to promote the glory of God, to enjoy Him forever.

2. Dangers Due to Misunderstanding the Nature of True Christianity.

a. The importance of the means of grace: the Word of God, preaching of the gospel, the sacraments, and prayer.

- 1) Parents sometimes take children out of Progressive school and put them into a Classical Christian school, but do not take them to church.
- 2) Christian education does not replace the weekly public worship of God in church.
- 3) Classical Christian Education is not the means that God appointed for the conversion of souls.

b. The necessity of true conversion.

- 1) Christian education and morality is not conversion, it is not salvation.
- 2) Conversion is the fruit of God's sovereign, regenerating work; the exercise of saving faith, embracing Jesus Christ, relying upon Jesus Christ, and the evangelical repentance, whereby we turn from our sin unto God through Christ.

c. The failure to exercise religious discernment in Classical Christian Education.

- 1) There are many publishers who have other faith traditions.
- 2) There are many fully-committed Roman Catholic authors.
- 3) There are many man-instituted devotions; true devotion is gleaned from God's Word alone.

d. The danger of ignoring the subtlety of pride.

- 1) True Christianity fights against pride.
- 2) Beware the refined form of pride because of an excellent education.
- 3) The use of learning is not only for God's glory, but it is for the help of others.
- 4) The goal of education should not be about making money, but to serve Jesus Christ, and to serve our neighbor.

3. Conclusion—we must exercise watchfulness, and be in humble, diligent prayer.

**Study Questions**

1. If one removes the immoral content from the curriculum of a Progressive school, and replaces it with moral content, will that make into a Classical curriculum? Why, or why not?

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2. What is the main difference between a Progressive Christian school and a Classical Christian school?

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3. What are the dangers of thinking that a Classical education is an end in itself?

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4. How is it that parents or teachers in Classical Christian education might fail to prioritize the means of grace? Can a Christian education replace the means of grace? Why is the means of grace so important?

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5. What is the danger that parents can fall into by teaching their children to embrace a form of Christian morality?

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6. What is true conversion, according to the Bible? What is it not, as shown in this lecture?

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7. What are the ways in which we must exercise religious discernment when planning a Classical Christian curriculum? What are the dangers of not having such religious discernment?

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8. How does the need for religious discernment encourage us to know and teach a thorough mastery of the Bible? What is the only true source of doctrine and devotion?

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9. What subtle and refined form of pride is sometimes seen in relationship to having a good education? What must we cultivate in ourselves and our students to fight against such pride?

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10. Rev. Mattull says that education is not about how many dollars the students end up making. If that is so, then what should be the goal and purpose of education? What should the student's attainments be used for?

***Further Study***

1. What other potential dangers may you have seen in your own experience with Classical Christian Education? How have you recognized and avoided these dangers in your own school or classroom?

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2. Rev. Mattull told us that a mastery of the Bible will help us to discern between truth and error when reading the Classical authors and in discerning man-instituted devotions. Why is this understanding of true Christianity so vital for all educational activities we engage in?

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