

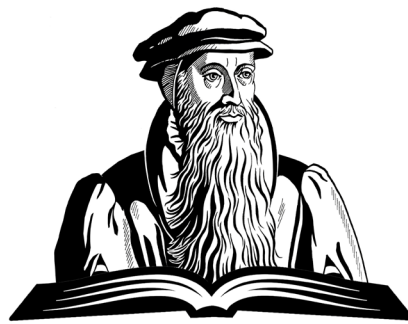
Video Lecture Series

Classical Christian Education

by Rev. Jonathan Mattull

LECTURE #13

Getting Started with
Classical Christian Education
in the Home or School



The John Knox Institute
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Entrusting our Reformed Inheritance to the Church Worldwide

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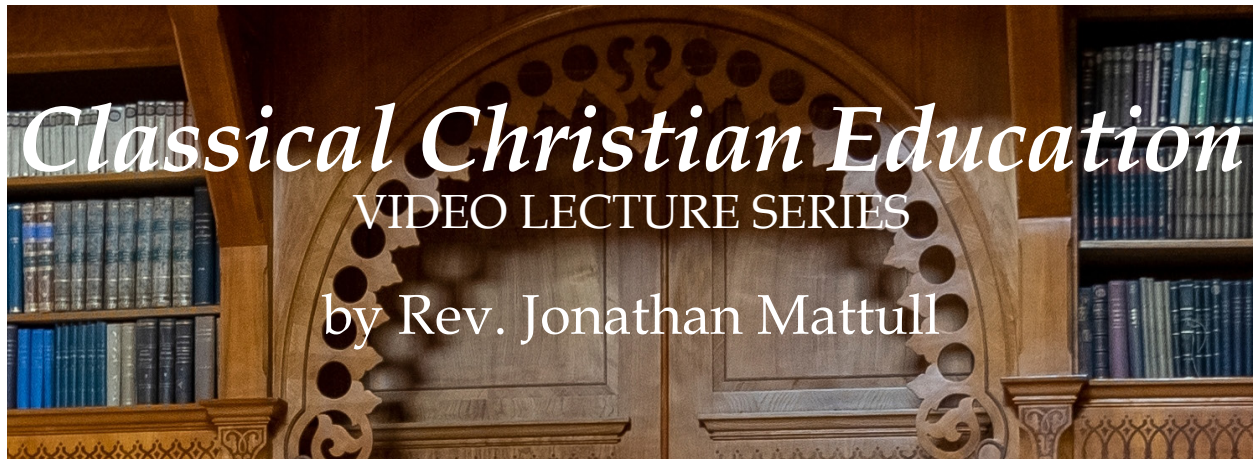
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Rev. Jonathan Mattull is minister of the gospel at Sovereign Grace Presbyterian Church, in St. Louis, Missouri, a congregation of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing), Presbytery of the United States of America.

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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
8. Historical Overview of Classical Education
9. Learning from Our Heritage: Education from the Protestant Reformation
10. Potential Dangers in Classical Christian Education
11. Benefits of Classical Christian Education
- 12. Navigating the World of Education Today**
- 13. Getting Started with Classical Christian Education in the Home or School**
14. Continuing the Quest: Life-long Learning
15. Remembering the End: Serving the Lord to God's Glory



i) Introduction

1. Commitments to Keep
2. Circumstances to Consider
3. Categories to Cover
4. Three Words of Counsel

Introduction

We have focused mainly on the meaning, historical background, and principles of Classical Education thus far in our lessons. In this lesson, we give some attention to practical aspects of implementing Classical Christian Education today. Now, everyone's circumstances are unique to them. So, you'll need to take what is presented here and consider well your own situation. Nonetheless, whatever your circumstances are, we trust that the counsel provided in this lesson will help you as you seek the Lord in teaching your children.

So three primary things to consider as you hope to implement Classical Christian Education, whether in your home, or in your school, before we conclude with some counsel. First, *Commitments to Keep*; second, *Circumstances to Consider*; and third, *Categories to Cover*.

So, first,

1. Commitments to Keep

As with any pursuit, there will be known and unknown pressures and attractions that may nudge us off of our main goal. You can think of it this way. If you made a commitment to hike a certain trail to a certain destination, you know that there will be things along the path that could deter you from reaching your destination. Some of these things might be difficult. Some of these things could be very attractive. Perhaps your trail means you need to hike up a steep and rocky incline—that's difficult, and could tempt you to go back, or to try and find an easier path. But if you consider ahead of time that you'll face that, you'll be better able to maintain your commitment.

On the other hand, you may know that there are beautiful vistas and landscapes that could tempt you from making progress as you should, and delay your arrival at your destination on time. But if you're aware of that, you can keep your focus on the destination, and keep a right pace toward reaching it on time.

So it is with education. Education, after all, is a pathway that we are leading our students or our children in. There's a commitment you are making to the Lord, and you have a window of time to keep that commitment. If they're young, from that age, until they enter upon their adulthood, this commitment must be kept, and in order to keep it, you have to keep pace.

Well, we could divide this commitment into two parts: primary and secondary. Well, what is primary to our commitment to teach our children? There are many things, but we can break them down into two.

First, *Seeking to Glorify and Enjoy the Lord*. Now, this is primary in all of life. But we wish to emphasize it this way—if we're the parent teaching our children, or if we're parent sending our children to school, or we're the teacher, teaching these children who aren't our own. We have, as our primary and fundamental commitment, a calling to glorify and enjoy the Lord forever. That includes what we present to our children, what we teach our students. And so, in other words, education is not to be thought of as something neutral. We don't leave our commitments to Christ behind us when we take up teaching our children. We, individually, need to be glorifying the Lord. And so, that means that what we're providing our students or our children has to be honoring to Him, and yet, it's honoring to him in such a way as would promote our own enjoying of Him.

And so, this is a commitment that should be in the forefront of our mind. Is what I'm doing in the home, or in the class, promoting the glory of the Lord, and promoting my own enjoyment of Him? This will help us avoid the pitfalls and compromises, sinful compromises, that would, in our minds, be justified because it's going to help our education, or our teaching our children in the way of education. But if we keep this commitment front and center, by God's grace, we would be kept from those sinful compromises.

Again, with this primary commitment, we can think, second, of teaching our children to glorify and enjoy the Lord. This is primary: first for us, second for them. And so, what we're teaching them, we aren't simply interested in the subject itself, though we give all attention to it. The subject itself, the lesson itself, the assignment itself, in one way or another, is to promote the glorifying of God and the enjoyment of him. When we keep this before us, it helps us think through decisions to be made in what curriculum we choose, or what lessons we teach, or how we teach them, and other aspects as well. This is our primary commitment. Our primary commitment is not to see our children graduate. Our primary commitment is not to see them master this subject or that subject. Our primary commitment, first, is that I, as the parent, or teacher, or both, glorify and enjoy the Lord, and do so in teaching my children or students; and related to that, that I am facilitating their learning to glorify and enjoy the Lord in their education.

That's primary. And this has to be turned to again, and again, and again. Don't just write this down, and then turn and do something else and forget about it. This is something that should be brought up, and reviewed, and thought through, and prayed through regularly. Fall into a rhythm of this, whether that's weekly, or even daily. "Lord, help me, personally, as a parent or teacher, to glorify and enjoy you as I teach; and help me to facilitate my children, or my students in their learning to glorify and enjoy you.

Well, with this commitment, we turn to consider what is secondary, and this is, of course, flowing from the primary. The primary is like the foundation. The secondary is like the building

that is built upon it. What is secondary, then, in our commitment to teach our children? Again, there are many things that we could identify, but we can focus upon two things.

Among the secondary aspects of our commitment, first, we note that we are to *Aim at Their Maturity*. Remember, that education is leading one unto virtue—maturity. Now, the ancients divided these into four, as *Wisdom, Justice, Prudence, and Courage*. And searching the Scriptures, there's been the summary of three others: *Faith, Hope, and Love*. When we keep this before us, of course, this is helping us think through how we are teaching our children to glorify and enjoy the Lord, it means that our curricular choices are filtered through this lens. Is this curriculum not only saying that it will, but is it moderating, and facilitating, and helping the student to grow in wisdom and all of these virtues? In other words, in one way or another, every curricular choice, every lesson, every assignment needs to be developing these virtues. This means that we aim to instruct the mind and win the heart. Because virtues aren't just labels that people write down, they are habits and practices that are developing within the heart and desires, and the speech and thought of the human being. So we want them to know what these virtues are, to be able to discern what they are. We also want them to love what is good and hate what is evil. Well, this means that we need to model these virtues personally, and likewise, curricularly. For instance, the literature that we choose should, in one way or another, be showing the beauty of virtue, or the horror of vice. We ourselves, or the teachers we hire and delegate authority to must exemplify these virtues. The stories our children or students read, the assignments they are given, must be exemplifying and cultivating these virtues. That's a commitment we're unwilling to break.

It doesn't mean that the literature they read or the stories they learn will not include vices. But it does mean that when it includes those vices, they're shown to be vices, and they're shown to be wicked and ugly. The Bible does this. It doesn't only contain for us virtuous examples. It includes those that are vicious, wicked. And yet, the Bible perfectly shows the beauty of virtue, by God's grace, and the horror of vice. So should all of our teaching.

Well, second, among the secondary aspects of our teaching, we note that we are to progress our students toward the mastering of knowledge and skill. This means that we have a plan, a curriculum that is not just filling space—what do I need to do?—but it is pursuing a goal. So, just like when we are taking a journey, we have the destination as the end in mind, which then determines the route we're going to take; so we are committed to identify the goal of mastering knowledge and skill.

Knowledge of history—well, you can't just master the knowledge of history in one fell swoop, but rather, there needs to be a gradual development. And yet, in order to make gradual progress, there needs to be an end in mind. And so, the end, what is history? Well, it goes from the creation of the world to the present day—that's a lot. But if we have that as the goal, we want our children to have been exposed and familiar with the key dates, and the epochs, and the key men and women, and all of these relationships, and how this era of history led to that era of history, in God's Providence. That means we're going to start with that as our end, and break that down coming back. That will ensure, by God's blessing, the mastery of these things. Similarly, in our teaching of the Bible, we want them to master their understanding of the Scriptures. Not that they'll ever reach that perfectly, but in essence, we want them to be familiar with the Old Testament, and the New Testament, key persons, and key teachings and promises, and commandments. That means that we have to have that as our goal. By the time our children or students graduate, they'll have mastered the content of the Bible, which means we're going to break that down over the course of their time in class.

And if we want further example, we think of Latin. We'll touch on this more. If we want them

to be able to read Latin on their own, which is a mastery of knowledge and skill, that means they're going to have to break that down, and gradually move toward that. This is a commitment. We want them to progress toward mastery.

And that's true of every subject in our teaching. So these are commitments to keep, and that's important to emphasize. It's not just that we make the commitment; it's that we are watchful to protect that commitment. Many have noted this, and it's important for us to emphasize that the pursuit of the best is often disrupted by good ideas. And so, we labor to articulate this ideal goal, as Johannes Sturm¹ articulated it, "eloquent piety". And yet, along the course from where we are to reaching that, there are a lot of good ideas that little by little bring us off of the pathway. And so, if we articulate well our commitment, then that means regularly we are asking, and assessing, and examining, are these curricula helping us to reach that goal? Has this book facilitated that? So we keep it, we guard it, we protect it, and so, we commit it to the Lord as well.

Well, the second matter would be,

2. Circumstances to Consider

I've heard seminary professors talk about building a theological library. Now, you can imagine that most students of theology at seminary don't have much money. And so they speak about factors to consider. This would include reading level, and current books that they have or have read, a purpose for what they are pursuing, and tangibly, finances available. As one example, if someone has ten dollars to begin building a library, that necessarily limits what they can purchase, versus, if someone had one hundred dollars. It does not mean that someone with ten dollars cannot begin to build an excellent library. It simply means that there will be fewer volumes to begin with.

Well, similarly, in order to teach our children or our students Classically, we need to consider several circumstances. And here are a few that you need to weigh personally. So each of these that I give, you should write down, and return to them with prayerful consideration and thoughtful assessment, because you need to be a steward of the finances, the time, the ability that you have, if you're going to pursue this course.

The first of them would be *Finances*. What finances do you have to devote to teaching your children, or sending them off to school, or even starting a school? It makes no good use of time, if you don't have much money, to be considering curriculum that would cost thousands of dollars over three, four, five, or six years. You need to consider well, through sacrifice, what you can provide to this effort. And it may not be much. That doesn't mean you can't do much, it just means your resources that you'll be able to purchase or use will be more limited. There's much that you can do with few financial resources, but you need to know that in order, then, to start considering what those options are.

So you need to assess your budget. What, realistically, are you able, with sacrifice, to devote to this important cause. And that may be home schooling. It may be a private schooling. It may be a mixture, where you're doing a lot of home schooling, but you're able to make use of internet resources, and your children can study remotely. It may be by purchasing a curriculum, and then supplementing it with other options. But before you can really weigh in to that, you need to have a clear objective number of what you can spend. Now, some of you may be saying, "I don't have anything." Well, most likely, if you're listening to this lesson, you have access to the internet.

¹ Johannes Sturm, (1507–1589), a German educator and Protestant Reformer who was influential in the design of the gymnasium system of secondary education. Sturm was generally regarded as the greatest educator connected with the Reformed Church.

And what I would say is, though it will take more work, if you make a good use of the internet, the resources that you need are largely available free of charge. It's not the most efficient way, but if you have no money to spend, but you have an internet access, you are able to make use of excellent material. It will simply take more effort. But it starts by understanding your financial circumstances.

The second circumstance is *Time*, and we can ask a few questions about this that you need to consider.

How much time do you have to plan before you begin teaching, or before your children begin school? In other words, is your child already thirteen years old, or have you just discovered that you're expecting? These circumstances determine how much time you have to plan and prepare. So if your child is about to be pulled out of a school, and is about to need to start their next grade in three months, well, you have three months to plan this first year of Classical Christian homeschooling. If you're planning, because you've just been married, and you plan, in the Lord's mercies, to have children, you have a few years before you need to begin the schooling process.

But the importance, first and foremost, with assessing your time, is considering how much time you have to plan. If you have three months, that means you need to be very diligent and disciplined with your time in assessing all of these things. If you have a few years, it doesn't mean that you should just defer. It means that you should map out those years and start thinking. Perhaps that's starting to look online at curricular options. Perhaps that's visiting schools, or talking to Christians in the church, and finding out what they would be able to teach or help you teach. The point is, identifying the timeframe before schooling starts is going to give you a map, by which you can start thinking through what needs to be done by what time.

But a related aspect to this is, *How much time is left to teach your child or student?* If the child is two years old, you have many years, not only to plan, but also to teach, both primary and secondary education, from four, five, six years old, to sixteen, seventeen, eighteen years old. But if your child is thirteen, well, you have less time to plan, and fewer years to teach, and that necessarily reduces the number of things you're going to be doing.

The point is, while everyone's circumstances are different, you need to find out where you are on the timeline, so you can plan well and teach well. And if you have less time, that's going to identify a goal, and it's going to bring the planning in order, in a more compact way. If you have more time, you can identify a goal, and you're going to have a longer runway to reach that. But you can't know that with clarity unless you've identified the time.

Well, a third circumstance is *Availability of Resources*. You can think of resources, for instances, as curriculum. Presently, there are many options of fully-developed curricula available in English. And so, if you're an English speaker, or you can read English, you have many options to consider, which is both a blessing, but also a difficulty. Because, when there's many options, that means there's a lot to consider. When there's fewer options, well, you have fewer things to consider. Thankfully, other languages are beginning to see their options increase as well.

However, you need to consider what resources are available in your language. If you speak only Mandarin, it doesn't make much sense to be considering all of the available resources in English, unless you have the ability to translate, or someone else could do that for you. So you need to determine what scope of curricula are available by virtue of your own language.

You may consider another circumstance of schooling options, as far as resources are considered. In other words, as you assessed your finances, and your language, and its options, or your space where you are and what options are around you, and you may be limited to homeschooling

only as a schooling option. You may have the opportunity for homeschooling with the use of online resources. You may have an excellent Christian Classical school nearby. You may have an individual who's well educated, whom you could hire on, or that person may be willing to volunteer, an opportunity to tutor your children. The point is, this resource of schooling option needs to be considered.

So, in the United States of America, there are many Classical Christian schools that have been established, and others that are still being established, and there are many opportunities with reference to online education. But there are other places in the United States where there's not an option as far as a school that you could attend in your region. Well, that would mean that you're limited, then, to online, or to homeschooling.

So you need to assess, what are your real options. If you're going to teach your children well, you need to do the difficult work of establishing what your circumstances will permit you to do well. So, finances, schooling options, time, and others also. So again, these circumstances need to be thought through prayerfully.

And before we move on to a third category in our lesson, let me say that you don't need to go this alone. Lord willing, you have Christians with whom you could discuss these things, ask for advice. Or online, you could reach out to people and say, "Here's where I am—do you have any recommendations?" And so, we're grateful for these opportunities we have to work with other people. Make use of that. As you start formulating what money you have or don't have, you can ask people, "Here's what I have," or, "Here's what I don't have. Do you have any recommendations?" Or if you're aware of an online option, you should reach out to them, and say, "Here's where I am. Are you able to help me with it." So don't try—though you need to do the work of working through these thoughts initially—don't try to shoulder it all on your own. You do the hard work of figuring out these circumstances, and then, with counsel of others, you can find out good answers or options.

Well, the third point in our lesson,

3. Categories to Cover

So, we've had *Commitments to Keep*, *Circumstances to Consider*, and now, *Categories to Cover*. As you begin to think through implementing Classical Christian Education in your home or school, you need to get a bird's-eye view of what you plan to do. You'll remember that the Classical Liberal Arts are divided into the Trivium—grammar, logic, and rhetoric; and the Quadrivium—arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy. However, you need to think through the educational categories or subjects more specifically.

So, for instance, when we think of arithmetic, we think of two plus two, or four minus three. But arithmetic is, in general, mathematics, and these things need to be thought through more fully. For instance, grammar includes the basics of learning to write, learning to spell, learning about syntax. So, if you're going to teach Classically, you need to ensure that these are managed well in the curriculum you implement. So let me provide you with a few categories to consider well.

First, as far as a curricular category, *Scripture and Theology*. This is a category that needs to be part of the home of course, the church, but also, a Classical Christian school, whether homeschooling or private schooling. We should be aiming at biblical literacy. They should know the books of the Bible. They should know the basic timeline of Scripture. They should be able to have an idea of what one book of the Bible is about versus another book of the Bible. They should be able to identify themes, and have a general functioning biblical literacy. Who was Paul?

Who was Isaiah? When did Paul live? When did Isaiah live? These are the kinds of things that we want them to know. And this will obviously gradually increase over time. So they're learning basic Bible stories in their early years; and they may be learning themes of Bible introduction—authorship, date, and purpose, and outline of books—in their later years.

But we don't only want them to have biblical literacy, we want them to have facility with theology. This doesn't mean they're going to be reading the most refined and scholastic of theology textbooks in their primary or secondary levels, but they are going to be exposed to the theological contributors throughout history. So, they'll read, perhaps, certain excerpts from or works by Augustine,² John Calvin,³ or the Puritans,⁴ and so on. They're going to be familiar with these main things. They're not going to have time to read every major work, but they're going to work through, especially in their older years, and perhaps, even in Latin, these great works.

The point is, this is a category of the curriculum that needs to be covered throughout their time. So, as you're thinking about this, you need to be thinking, if you have them from five years old to sixteen, seventeen, or eighteen years old, what it is that they need to have mastered, and work backwards from there, beginning with things like the stories of the Bible.

A second category would be *The Language Arts*—spelling, grammar, composition, reading, logic, and rhetoric. And depending on the number of years that remain, remember that the Language Arts will include both your native language, and Latin, or even Greek, as well. But again, you're going to work toward mastery—that's your goal, and you're going to work backwards in your planning, then. And so, just like the ancients learned the formation of the letters, they learned the sounds of the various letters and syllables, and they learned how to put them together and how to speak. They saw the models of excellence and starting imitating them, and then gradually worked toward their own ability to compose their original addresses, and speeches, and writings, so it is if we're working toward mastery, we're gradually going to be working toward that as well. Which means, there's a lot to cover. And it's not just covering, of course, but it's filling out a curriculum aiming at mastery, and ensuring that the steps leading up to it are in sequence, to reaching that in the end.

A third category would be *Math and Science*—arithmetic, geometry, algebra, potentially calculus, or even statistics, biology, physics, chemistry, earth science. All of these are things that need to be thought through, the children need to be exposed to. And not even going through, and those certainly including rote memorization, and drilling, and an ability to understand multiplication tables, etc.; but also cultivating a wonder and a delight in these things. Some curricula do that really well, where they manage both the rote memorization, and the theories to memorize, but also expose the children to a wonder and a delight in these things. Or, if you're in a school, some teachers do that really well, where they ensure that there's a mastery of the fundamental basics of their subjects, while also opening the understanding of the beauties that these subjects provide.

Whatever the case, if you're approaching this, you need to think through: "If I want them to have, perhaps, even reached the level of calculus or statistics, what are the mathematical bodies of

2 Augustine of Hippo (AD 354–430), was a Christian theologian of Berber origin, was the bishop of Hippo in Numidia, Roman North Africa. His prolific writings influenced the development of Western Christianity, and is viewed as one of the most important church fathers in the patristic period.

3 John Calvin, or, Jean Calvin, (1509–1564) – was a well-known French theologian, pastor, writer, and well-known Reformer in Geneva during the Protestant Reformation, after whom many Reformers patterned their teachings.

4 The Puritans were English Protestant Christians in the 16th and 17th centuries who sought to rid the Church of England of Roman Catholic practices, pressing for more piety and reformation.

knowledge and skills that they need in order to reach that? Or, “If I want them to be able to handle advanced physics, what are the scientific bodies of knowledge and skills that are needed to reach that?” So, it’s a category that we need to consider.

A fourth category, *History*—this would include a typical breakdown of ancient, medieval, and modern. This would include general world history, as well as church history in particular. The idea is to get a working awareness of the grand scope of the story of the world. So, from creation, all the way to the modern day. And of course, there’s the ability, perhaps, to do a rapid survey from all the way at the beginning, all the way to the end. But a more likely scenario is going to be breaking down those things, and even, perhaps, breaking them down at various levels. So if you think in terms, for instance, of ancient history, medieval history, and modern history, well, if you were just going to use those three breakdowns, you have several cycles you could work through. And the first cycle, as you introduce ancient history to a young child, is going to look far different than the advanced cycle, where they’re reading original sources, and they’re reading it, perhaps, in their original language. The point is, this is a category of the curriculum, you need to ensure that you’re reaching towards, striving towards mastery, and thus, breaking it down, all the way to the first years.

And then, a fifth category would be *Music*, and this would include both the theory, but also the instrumental or the vocal practice. And so, our children should learn the beauties of harmony and how to produce them, with their own voices. The Lord has given us a voice that we are to use. We are to make a beautiful sound in our singing of his praise, and the Scriptures tell us, “Make a joyful sound to the LORD” (Psalm 200). And though not every voice is perfectly attuned, yet we can learn, especially if we start early, how to manage our voice well. Instrumental music helps us learn, not only how to move, perhaps, our hands well, but how to understand what we study in theory and put into practice. And if our voices aren’t as good as others, we can learn how to manage an instrument well. Not everyone is going to make the same attainments, but even exposing them to these things will serve them well. And at the very least, vocal music is a part of living as a Christian. The Lord has called us to sing praises to his name.

And so, we can see the overlap of Classical and Christian coming together in this category. And so, we’re going to expose them to excellence in music. We’re going to help facilitate them, at least with a working knowledge of what music is, and we’re going to help them sing to the glory of the Lord

Well, sixth would be a category of *Physical Education*. This would include the basics of nutrition, and fitness, general wellness. It’s unfortunately an area where we often presume that they’re picking up. And certainly, in our homes, we model it, we hope well. But it’s wise to teach them, here’s why certain foods are basic and needed. And here’s why, for instance, this amount of sleep is generally recommended. And we’re teaching them, as well, with their fitness, not only to exercise their bodies, but they learn to walk with dignity, and to carry themselves with a beauty and grace that is becoming of an image-bearer of God.

And so, again, there are many things that they need to master, but we start very early, in learning basic mechanical abilities with their hands, and their ability to form things, their ability to run, and jump, and leap, sprint, and all of these different things. We want them outside playing. We want them not just running, as it were, all over the place, but with order, and challenging them. Perhaps it’s as simple as we want them to have a healthy approach to fitness. And, whereas our goal might be that when they’re sixteen, seventeen years old, they can run for three or four miles; well, they’re not going to do that early on, but we want them to be able to run early on, if the Lord has

given them legs that work well.

And so, we do things like mark a line, and we're going to time them, and we're going to see how fast they can run, and we're going to encourage them. And then, the next day, we're going to see, and over time, we're tracking that. The point is, there are many ways to pursue this, but we're helping them develop their bodies, so that, with the Lord's blessing, and a healthy body, they may be able to serve the Lord.

4. Three Words of Counsel

First, something that we've been emphasizing is, *Begin with the End, or the Target in Mind*. This is an emphasis of Classical Christian Education. It's a theme we've returned to again, and again, in our lessons. If you start with the end in mind, you can then think through the pathway to get there. Once the end is determined, you can ask if this is the knowledge, and this is the skill that will help them pursue that mastery. And when you've determined what those skills and that body of knowledge would be for the end, well, then you will necessarily break it down over time. It will help you identify the curriculum, or the curricula that you should use.

For instance, let me give you one example, with reference to Latin. I'm not trying to prescribe anything, whether a goal or a curriculum. But let me give you one example.

If you have your child from the beginning of their educational experience, and you think, "By the time that they're sixteen, seventeen, eighteen years old, I want them to be able to sit down and read"—what is typically a goal—"Caesar's Gallic Wars," well then, you need to ensure that each year prior to that goal, they're moving forward to reaching that goal. They'll need to have mastered Latin grammar, and they'll need to have built a strong Latin vocabulary, while also learning to read excerpts of Latin over time. There's a great series of texts for this, one by a man named Hans Ørberg,⁵ *Lingua Latina*. And if, by seventeen or eighteen years old, you want them reading *Caesar* on their own, or with a reader that would help, well, by sixteen or seventeen years old, they should be able to read various adaptations of Latin, or even selections from original sources. Perhaps, by fifteen or sixteen years old, they'll have read *Lingua Latina's Roma Aeterna*.⁶ Or, by fourteen or fifteen years old, which would lead them up there, they'll have completed *Lingua Latina's* first book of *Familia Romana*. Perhaps by thirteen or fourteen, they've begun that book, and by twelve or thirteen, they've mastered the Latin paradigms. The point is, if you have that as the goal, you need to break down the plan of getting there.

Well, the second part of counsel, as we conclude—take time to consider your curricular options well. Ask these questions: *How does this help me reach my overall goal? Are there weaknesses that I need to consider? Are there dangers I need to consider and address?*

As one example, there are options of curriculum published by various Roman Catholic sources. This needs to be considered thoroughly. It may be that it's so overwhelmed with Roman Catholic error, that it's not worth it. It may be that, though not overwhelmed, there are influences of the false gospel of Roman Catholicism, but, by your foresight and your interaction, you're able to correct. The point is, you need to be well aware of those weaknesses and dangers, so that you can address that and guide safely.

⁵ Hans Henning Ørberg (1920–2010), was a Danish linguist and teacher. He held a master's degree in English, French, and Latin from the University of Copenhagen, and was the author of *Lingua Latina per se Illustrata*, a widely used method for learning Latin through the natural method.

⁶ *Roma Aeterna* is the main book of Pars II of the *Lingua Latina per se Illustrata* series. *Roma Aeterna* introduces some of the most celebrated authors of Roman antiquity in the Latin language.

Well, lastly, by way of parting counsel, *Always Pray*—at the beginning, at points of decision, once curriculum is implemented, lessons, assignments, and corrections you need to make. It's as the Scriptures tell us, "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:5–6). Pray; pray now; pray as you assess your circumstances; pray as you consider what options are available to you; pray as you implement, whether in the home, or as you send them off to a school, or hire on a teacher.

Pray, because, as we've stated many times now, the Lord must bless these efforts. You could have the best curriculum; you could have the best instructor, the best tools; you could be spotless in your approach; but if the Lord doesn't bless it, it's in vain. Likewise, you may not have the best curriculum, you may not have access to the best teacher; you yourself may be conscious of all your weaknesses; but, if the Lord blesses, you will go forward to his glory—pray.

Well, we're nearing the end of our lessons together. May the Lord bless these to your own encouragement, and to the well-being of your children or students.