

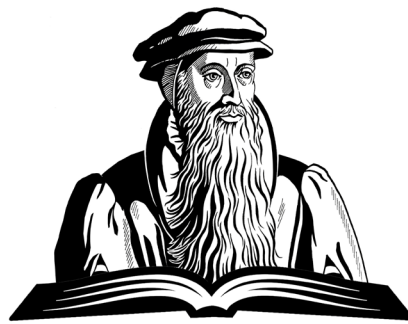
Video Lecture Series

Classical Christian Education

by Rev. Jonathan Mattull

LECTURE #14

Continuing the Quest: Lifelong Learning



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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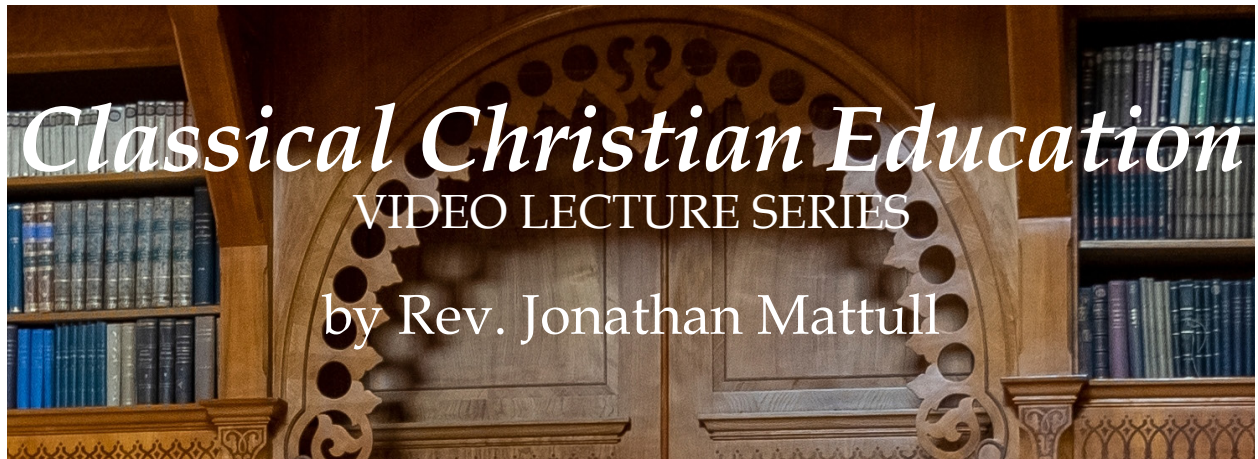
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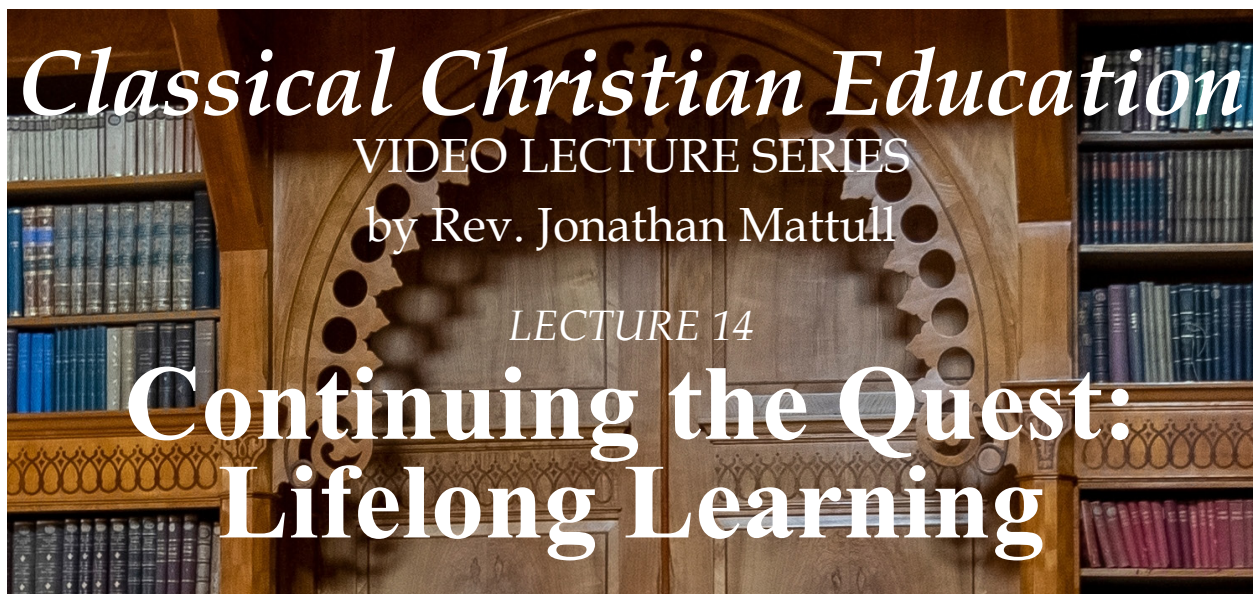
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i) Introduction

1. Why We Should Continue this Quest of Lifelong Learning
2. How We May Continue this Quest

Introduction

As you have seen, Classical Christian Education is not about completing a class, or a course, or a curriculum. Classical Christian Education aims at a more noble goal—a mature man or woman. If one is to exercise faith, hope, and love; if one is to be wise, courageous, prudent, and righteous, then one must pursue these virtues forever, and practice them—all of this by the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

So in this lesson, we'll consider ways to continue this quest, even after it is one has passed through primary and secondary education. While we often think of education as the season of teaching focused upon children and young adults, we ought to see that education, truly understood, is a lifelong calling. You never graduate from this calling in this world. We gain clarity by remembering that true education is ultimately about cultivating maturity, and that according to the image of God, as made known to us in the Scriptures. Certainly, the childhood years provide the foundation. This determines the reason we focus upon childhood and youth when we discuss education.

However, if one passes through the normal courses of learning that span from roughly five years of age to eighteen or so, and decides to stop, it's hard to call that person “educated.” Individuals will need to continue learning skills in their various vocations. If a young man graduates and enters into the working world as an engineer of any sort, will continue to learn various skills, so that he can better serve in that field. Likewise, if a young lady were to become a nurse, she'll continue to learn ways to care for the sick, and how to operate certain technology. This is true of whatever field or service one enters.

However, when we speak of continuing the quest of education, we're referring to what we've mentioned before—as the ancients emphasized, it's the quest for more fully embracing the virtues: wisdom, justice, courage, and temperance; and thus, with the aid of Scripture, we would include

the Christian virtues of faith, hope, and love. Or, as Johannes Sturm¹ stated, pursuing a wise and eloquent piety. In other words, to continue the quest of education is a lifelong pursuit of gracious wisdom, to the glory of God, and that by the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

So as we near the end of our lessons together, this lesson focuses on ways to continue our education, as we would mature in our bearing of God's image. And perhaps we can say it focuses upon what follows our formal education in our primary and secondary stages. So, for this lesson, let's consider two primary points: first, *Why We Should Continue this Quest of Lifelong Learning*; and second, *How We May Continue this Quest*.

1. Why We Should Continue this Quest of Lifelong Learning

Well, for our first point, *Why We Should Continue this Quest*. Well, first and foremost, as Christians, our Lord calls us to continue this Quest of true education throughout our lives. The very fact that Christians are referred to as "disciples" establishes this point. A disciple is a learner. But more than merely filling the mind, a disciple is one whose life is transformed and conformed to his master's, and this according to his master's guidance, and his master's image. We see this reflected in a number of passages, for instance, Philippians 3, verses 12 through 14. There, we read: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Though Paul was well-instructed, very intelligent, and a grown man, he didn't think of himself as having arrived. He pressed on. And what he sought was not mere growth of intellect. He labored to mature in Christ, to God's glory, throughout his whole person.

Similarly, Peter exhorts us to diligence, in 2 Peter 1, verses 3 through 8. He grounds that exhortation in the grace we've received from God in Christ; and from that grace, and the exercise of faith upon God's promises, he exhorts us to pursue a robust maturity in the Lord. Notice the verses: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Well, in Peter's exhortation, you can hear the various virtues identified, and with greater specificity. But you'll notice, the fundamental argument is that we are to grow and not stagnate.

Well, further to theses two passages, our Lord himself is exhorted much the same; Matthew 16, verses 24 to 26: "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

¹ Johannes Sturm, or, Jean 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. He implemented a gradation of the course of study, and novel methods of instruction, and his work shaped the practice of secondary education in Germany, England, and France.

Well, of course, none of these verses touch directly upon formal education. But each of them instructs the Christian in the ongoing pursuit of maturity, which demands our growth of understanding, our growth of skill, exercised to God's glory, and all by the grace of God. This is the very point. The reason we're to continue growing in maturity and virtue, bearing God's image more clearly and faithfully, by God's grace, is because the Christian is called to do so; and, we should add, equipped to do so by the Word of God, which instructs us, and the Spirit of God, who indwells us.

Well, the second reason to continue this quest, we could say it this way: To ignore this continued pursuit is to dehumanize ourselves. Now that's a strange argument, perhaps someone would say, but moreover, think of it this way. Humans are made to exercise their minds to the glory of God. As they do so, they are meant to live according to the truth they learn. This has no age limit. We don't graduate from our human calling. It's our calling, so long as we're human, to love the Lord our God with all of our heart, with all of our soul, with all of our mind, and with all of our strength. Because Proverbs 25, verse 2 states, "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter." Then even kings are to give themselves an ongoing pursuit of learning. To have a mental ability to grow in understanding and wisdom, to have access to the means that we may grow, and then to ignore the pursuit of understanding and wisdom, is to take steps backwards from what are as humans made in God's image.

Well, there's much more that could be said of that, but simply notice that both by God's grace, as Christians, but also by the very nature of what we are as humans, we are to continue this quest of growth unto maturity. So, now that we've considered why, we now continue our lesson by considering how we pursue this. So for our second main point,

2. How We May Continue this Quest

To answer this, let me give you four ways to continue the quest of learning. First, live out your discipleship in Christ. Now, this is the most basic and foundational element in how we continue this quest. This grows out of what we stated earlier—the Christian life is a life of discipleship. In this life, the Christian never arrives at the perfect state of maturity. He's always to be pressing on. There's always more to learn, not just in the fields of general knowledge, though that's true, but with particular reference to personal growth and maturity to God's glory. This pressing on, this growth, this development in maturity demands a source of life and ability, and this is found only in union and communion with Christ. Now we don't deny that there is a way that even unbelievers grow, and can experience throughout their days some maturity, as they learn more about and exercise a type of wisdom, righteousness, self-control, and courage. The world would be outwardly better did unbelievers pursue these ends. However, for true and ultimate virtue to abound, one must come under Christ, the one in whom are hid all treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and one must learn of him. It is only as one follows Christ that one will truly become wise. But it is only as we do so in Christ that that wisdom will permeate all that we are. Whatever else you do or don't do, if you're going to continue this quest, you must live as a disciple, following Christ, as he's instructed in his Word. But it must be done in fellowship with Christ, trusting him, and depending on him. As Christ says, in John chapter 15, he is the vine, we are the branches. Apart from him, we can do nothing. And that's true with reference to this particular matter of our ongoing growth in wisdom.

Well, our second way of how we may continue this quest is simple, in one sense—read. You must commit to regular reading. Now, while there is, at least arguably, a place for light reading, it is important that you read nourishing and challenging works. It should go without saying that

the preeminent book to dominate our reading is the Bible. If ever to be virtuous, if ever to grow, it will only be as we master—or rather, are mastered by—God’s Word. As Paul writes, in 2 Timothy 3, verses 16 and 17, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” The Bible alone is sufficient to lead us to Christ. The Bible alone is sufficient to instruct us in every circumstance. The Bible alone is sufficient to nourish and strengthen our souls, that we may grow.

Now, any Christian worthy of such a description will acknowledge this. So let me challenge you a moment to ask yourself two questions. First, how often do you read the Bible? And second, for how long do you read the Bible? Now, while it’s certainly the case that mere frequency in Bible reading is not sufficient for one who’s growing in wisdom, then it’s also true that, for one who’s growing in wisdom, the Bible will dominate his reading and meditation. And so it is that these two questions don’t answer all that we need to think about with reference to our lives, but it opens up a beginning, and raises questions that we need to consider. Is the Bible central in our pursuit of this education? No other book holds forth Jesus Christ, the way, the truth, and the life. No other book holds forth him in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily. No other book is able to hold forth Jesus. And so, restructure your day. Restructure your week. Restructure your life, so that the Bible dominates your intake.

But second to the Bible are weighty and time-tested Christian books. These would include books by early church fathers, the medieval theologians, Reformed theologians of the sixteenth century, and others, like the Scottish Covenanters and English Puritans, and of course, there are others that follow after. But to give you a place to begin, let me propose a basic list of books. They’ll challenge you, but they’ll also deepen and mature you as you read them with attention and prayer. Now, I don’t give these to you as a perfect list, or as the best list, even. But I do give them to you as an example of the kind of books a Christian should continue to read all his or her life. By God’s blessing, they will form us into more mature image-bearers of God through Christ. And so, the following list.

Augustine²—his *Confessions*; and *The City of God*. Both of these demand attention, and both of them, in different ways, will prove difficult, and they will remind us that we’re tapping into an author who lived in a far different culture than we live, wherever we live today. And yet, as you continue to wade through these books you’ll be astounded at the insight, both to the human experience, the struggles and temptations of sin, and the great beauty of Christ, but also the way in which you view God’s kingdom. And by it, you’ll be challenged to grow.

Another book, **Anselm**³—*Cur Deus Homo*, or, *Why the God-Man*. Why is it that Christ was incarnate? Why is it that he came as the incarnate Son of God, and why is it that he died? It’s a beautiful and lasting testimony of a fundamental truth.

Thomas à Kempis⁴—*The Imitation of Christ*. And though certainly, there’s more to be said about such a subject, as you read this book, you’ll be challenged and think through carefully how

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 Anselm of Canterbury (AD 1033/4–1109), was an Italian Benedictine monk, abbot, philosopher, and theologian, who served as Archbishop of Canterbury from 1093 to 1109.

4 Thomas à Kempis (AD c. 1380–1471), was a German-Dutch Roman Catholic canon regular of the Augustinians and the author of *The Imitation of Christ*.

it is you're following Christ.

Martin Luther⁵—both *The Bondage of the Will*, and *The Freedom of a Christian*. These two books, among others of his, will challenge, instruct, and encourage you.

John Calvin⁶—*The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, a work that will show you great skill in understanding the Scriptures and interacting with then current matters.

Wilhelmus à Brakel⁷—*The Christian's Reasonable Service*, a book which strikes us as truly astounding, when we realize that he wrote this book largely for young adults.

A book I hope that you're familiar with already, **John Bunyan's**—*The Pilgrim's Progress*, which if you haven't read, it should be near the top of your list.

John Owen's⁸—*The Glory of Christ*, as well as his *The Mortification of Sin*. These two books will both instruct you in the beauty, and the wonder, and the majesty of our Savior, and instruct us in the way of putting to death our sin, by His grace.

Samuel Rutherford⁹—*The Letters of Samuel Rutherford*, in particular. This will show you how to suffer in a gracious way, by Him, and supported by Him who is our life.

William Guthrie¹⁰—*The Christian's Great Interest*, a work well worth your reading, as you will come to an assurance of saving faith.

Now, this is just a sample. There are those who lived after these men. The sermons, for instance, of **M'Cheyne**,¹¹ or of **Charles Spurgeon**,¹² or even more recently, as **Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones**.¹³ All of these are great books to read, but it's the Classics which have stood the test of time, which have stood the test of time for a reason, that we ought to prioritize.

Nor should the Christian, in his or her quest to mature, ignore the important works of wisdom and literature written by unbelievers, and even by pagans. Now, earlier lessons have answered the question as to why or how, and so I refer you back to those lessons, if that's still a question. Here, let me just highlight some to begin reading, some of which I've mentioned already.

5 Martin Luther (1483–1546), was a German priest, theologian, author, hymn writer, professor, and former Augustinian friar, who was the seminal figure of the Protestant Reformation in Europe.

6 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.

7 Wilhemlus à Brakel (1635–1711) aka “Father Brakel”, was a Reformed Christian minister and theologian in the Netherlands and was a major representative of the Dutch Further Reformation.

8 John Owen (1616–1683) was an English Puritan Nonconformist church leader, theologian, and vice-chancellor of the University of Oxford, one of the most prominent theologians in England during his lifetime, a prolific author, much reflected the Reformed tradition of Protestant Christianity.

9 Samuel Rutherford (c. 1600–1661) was a Scottish Presbyterian minister and theologian, and one of the Scottish Commissioners to the Westminster Assembly; known for his book, *Lex Rex*, and his *Letters*.

10 William Guthrie (1620–1665) was a Scottish Covenanter minister and author, known primarily for his book on assurance, *The Christian's Great Interest*.

11 Robert Murray M'Cheyne (1813–1843) was a minister in the Church of Scotland from 1835 to 1843.

12 Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834–1892) was an English Particular Baptist preacher, highly influential among Christians of various denominations even now, and was known as “Prince of Preachers” opposing liberal and pragmatic theological tendencies in the church.

13 David Martyn Lloyd-Jones, aka Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones (1899–1981) was a Welsh Congregationalist minister and medical doctor who was influential in the Calvinist wing of the British evangelical movement of the 20th century; he was minister of Westminster Chapel in London for almost 30 years.

Homer¹⁴ is to be read and re-read. His *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are worth reading every year, or every few years. **Virgil**'s¹⁵ *Aeneid* is another example. These works, even in translation, give us examples of virtue and vice; they provide us insight into tragic decisions and the consequences of them, as well as heroics of sacrifice and the benefits that come, not only to the one who sacrifices, but unto others as well. They help us understand what humanity is, and what life in this world looks like. There are many other works, of course, as by **Shakespeare**¹⁶ and **Milton**,¹⁷ and as with anything, they must be read with discernment. But they give us an insight to humanity, and examples of excellent language. We shouldn't ignore **Plato**'s¹⁸ *Dialogues*—instructive, insightful, and penetrating, and similarly, entertaining all at once. Reading **Cicero**'s¹⁹ speeches will reward the time it demands. Again, these are simply starting points. But were a Christian to cultivate a life of reading such works as these, and related works in other fields, a Christian will always, by God's grace, grow as a human.

And to be a bit more specific, to get you started in these foundational classics, we've mentioned Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Virgil's *Aeneid*. You can also add to that, in specific ways, Plato's *Dialogues*, which are many, but let me recommend first, those *Dialogues* that surround the final days of Socrates.²⁰ These give you a good insight into Socrates in Plato's writings; plus they're fairly short and engaging: *Euthryphro*, his *Apology*, *Crito*, and *Phaedo*—these four works surround the final days of Socrates and allow you insight into some of the emphases that he's known for. From here, you can move to other of Plato's *Dialogues* —*Symposium*, *Meno*, *Minos*. Eventually, you'll want to read his *Republic*, a lengthier work, well worth re-reading. And it's in this book that he provides his famous *Allegory of the Cave*. Now, while you could jump right into the *Republic*, it will likely serve you better to read a bit to get familiar and used to Plato and Socrates.

Well, beyond Plato, you should read **Aristotle**.²¹ In Aristotle, you'll encounter an even greater body of work. You can start anywhere, and many people have their own ideas. I would

14 Homer (c. 8th century BC), ancient Greek poet credited at the author of *The Iliad*, and *The Odyssey*, two epic poems. One of the most revered and influential authors in history.

15 Publius Vergilius Maro, aka Virgil or Vergil (70 BC–19 BC) was an ancient Roman poet of the Augustan period.

16 William Shakespeare (c. 1564–1616) was an English playwright, poet, and actor, widely regarded as the greatest writer in the English language and the world's preeminent dramatist.

17 John Milton (1608–1674) was an English poet, polemicist, and civil servant. His 1667 epic poem, *Paradise Lost* was written in blank verse, addressing the fall of man in the garden of Eden.

18 Plato, *nee* Aristocles (c. 428–348/7 BC), famous ancient Greek philosopher of the Classical period, considered a foundational thinking in Western philosophy, and innovator of written dialogue and dialectic forms. His main studies were Epistemology, Metaphysics, Political philosophy. He was teacher to Aristotle.

19 Marcus Tullius Cicero (106 BC–43 BC), a Roman statesman, lawyer, scholar, philosopher, orator, writer, and Academic skeptic, who tried to uphold “optimate” principles during the political crisis that led to the establishment of the Roman Empire. He's know for treatises on rhetoric, philosophy, and politics, and he served as consul in 63 BC, and was assassinated by Mark Antony's followers.

20 Socrates (c. 470 BC–399 BC), famous Greek philosopher from Athens, he is credited as the founder of Western philosophy, one of the first moral philosophers of the ethical tradition of thought. Accused of impiety and corrupting the youth, Socrates was sentenced to death by drinking poison.

21 Aristotle (384–322 BC), Ancient Greek philosopher and polymath. His writings cover a broad range of subjects spanning the natural sciences, philosophy, linguistics, economic, politics, psychology, and the arts. He founded the Peripatetic School of philosophy in Athens, and began the Aristotelian tradition which set the groundwork for development of modern science.

recommend you start with the *Nicomachean Ethics*, a work that has proved influential since it entered into the public's notice. Additionally, it's less technical than some of his other works on logic or dialectic. You could then take up his *Politics*, in some sense flowing from his work on *Ethics*. From here, you would eventually want to get into some of his other works on logic, a compellation called *The Organon*, or *The Instrument*, and this begins with his work titled *Categories*. Of course, his work on *Rhetoric* is a standard work that is still used in classes today.

You must certain read **Cicero** if you have the opportunity. If you haven't before, perhaps begin with his work on friendship (*Laelius de Amicitia*), and eventually you'll need to get into his speeches. His orations against *Catiline* will be a great place to start, showing you his skill and his mastery of language, even in translation, but also giving you insight into argument and how to approach a topic.

There are many ancients you should read in addition to these mentioned, however, these will provide you a foundation, and a good foundation at that. Christian, read. Take this simple list of recommended resources and start working through them. Don't be discouraged when it is that they prove difficult. Read them with discernment. Test all things against the Scriptures. Reject what is bad, what is wrong, what is wicked. And yet, learn from it. Ask, "Why is it bad?" "Why is it wrong?" "Why is it wicked?" And then reject it. Embrace the good, learning from all. Read with meditation. The best books are not simply to be read; they're to be embraced; they're to be thought upon, even eaten.

Discernment must be exercised, but once truth and beauty have been discovered, the Christian who will grow must make every effort to keep it with him. Read unto practice. John Chrysostom²² once exhorted his people regarding fasting along the following lines; he said, "Don't tell me that you fasted. Rather, show me you fasted by walking in love." I think this is a good model for how we should approach reading, whether we're reading the Bible, whether we're reading the Christian Classics, or whether we're reading even the ancients or unbelievers of other eras. Don't tell people that you've read. Show people by your life changed unto greater attainments to wisdom.

Well, third, in addition to living out your discipleship in reading, you must regularly reflect and pursue those truths held forth to you. This is true when you read, and when you meditate on the Bible, as well as when you read the classics. You're not reading to read, you're not reading to say that you've read. You're reading to grow personally. Keep this in mind. To do so, ask, "What does this teach me about truth and wisdom?" "What does this teach me about God and the world?" "What does this teach me about what I should be or do?" And as you discover these things, let those answers drive you to Christ, both for pardon, and for help, so that you'll grow. But in order for that to happen, you need to reflect. That can take the following form. As you are reading a book, you can take notes in the margin, and raise points that you want to come back to. Or you can keep some sort of journal in which you're writing your leading thoughts. A good practice is, with every chapter that you've read, whether from the Bible or from other books, write both a brief one or two-sentence summary, and then write a point that stands out to you, that would challenge you, or direct you, or instruct you. If that simple habit would be developed, the reading the Bible would be more blessed, and our benefit from other books would likewise increase—reflect.

But fourth, and finally, there can be no real virtue without service in community. Thus,

22 John Chrysostom (c. AD 347–407) was an important church father who served as Archbishop of Constantinople; known for his preaching and public speaking, and his denouncing the abuse of authority.

commit to serving. No man is to live to himself. Indeed, none of the virtues can truly be practiced in isolation from others. You do not grow from yourself, you grow to serve others. This is true wisdom. Ultimately, you grow to serve the Lord, to worship and adore him. This demands active, regular, and even sacrificial participation in Christ's church. If you're going to grow, and mature, and continue this quest, something that ought to be fundamental is your engagement with the means of grace. So the church is open for worship, you are there. Bible studies are being held, you are there. When prayer is being offered, you are joining in. Why is that? Well, both because you're growing by those means, but also, you're serving others by your presence there, and sometimes by your counsel there, or through your encouragement. You're being part of the body of Christ. You're worshipping God. If you are to continue growing, you must be in, and actively in, Christ's church. But it also demands that you actively seek out ways to serve others. That will be true with reference to the church body, but it will also be true with reference to your family particularly, or your neighbors, or even your enemies. How is it that you can serve?

Well, you can start to see how it is that the virtues tend towards service. We trust in the Lord in faith; we hope in the Lord, anticipating and expecting the glorious day of Christ's return; we love the Lord and love others. Of course, all of these provide us the very starting point that we can then actively go forth to serve others. We think of those virtues that even the pagans acknowledge. We think of courage or prudence, and these tell us of how we can overcome serving ourselves, or not drawing attention to ourselves, in order then to do the right thing; being taught what justice is, and how to do it; wisdom; how these function together. So that we can look at the particular case before us of a neighbor in need, and by God's grace, go and serve. And as we do that, it's as if we're exercising spiritual muscles. Through exercising these things, we grow as well.

So we can think of one who wants to run distance, and they want to improve. They can read books; they can know what food they should eat, what their sleep cycle should be. They can, perhaps, on the internet gain instruction through videos, and learn from the experts of long-distance running. But eventually, if they're going to grow, they have get out and run. Similarly, if you and I are going to grow, we don't just read; we don't just take in. We have to exercise ourselves, by God's grace, to the praise of his name, in the service of others.

Well, we could continue this lesson and touch on either Latin or Greek. And it might be worth just noting that though those demand that you commit time to learning, such time as will be long and difficult, it's also worth learning such languages. With the many resources available online today, there are few reasons that you cannot begin making progress in learning a language and beginning to read classical works within one to three years. If you were to devote an hour a day, or even shorter than that, thirty minutes, of focused, protected time, every day, five days a week, to learning Greek; if you were diligent and did that every day, and were aided by the resources online, you'd be able to sit down and work through some of the New Testament within six months to a year. If you did that for two or three years, you should be able to read through most of the New Testament. With continued practice, you could read the whole New Testament. You'd be able to read Plato and others in Greek. Similarly, in Latin, if you devoted time each day, five days per week, protected that time, and kept the appointment with yourself, and gleaned from the great resources that are available, you'd be able to read basic works fairly soon. As many have noted, we overestimate what we can do in a day, while we underestimate what we can do in a year. Or, perhaps, to keep it in perspective, in three years, or five years. In our culture, we want it now. But there's a far richer beauty and joy if we commit and continue to the long-term

discipline that will bring forth a far more enjoyable delight.

Well, there's much more that could be said, but if you take these recommendations, and you put them into practice, may it be that you experience the great enjoyment of God helping you to continue your quest to honor the Lord, as you grow in maturity, to his glory and enjoyment, and to the good of those around you.