

# **AN INTRODUCTION TO CLASSICAL EDUCATION**

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**THIS IS US!**

# LET'S START IN THE SCRIPTURES

## D&C 88

- 76 Also, I give unto you a commandment that ye shall continue in prayer and fasting from this time forth.
- 77 And I give unto you a commandment that you shall teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom.
- 78 Teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you, that you may be instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for you to understand;
- 79 Of things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms—
- 80 That ye may be prepared in all things when I shall send you again to magnify the calling whereunto I have called you, and the mission with which I have commissioned you.

## **2 NEPHI**

### **29:11**

- 11 For I command all men, both in the east and in the west, and in the north, and in the south, and in the islands of the sea, that they shall write the words which I speak unto them; for out of the books which shall be written I will judge the world, every man according to their works, according to that which is written.

## **D&C 88:118- 119**

- 118 And as all have not faith, seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith.
- 119 Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing; and establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God;

# WHAT CLASSICAL EDUCATION IS NOT

- Classical Education is not child-led
  - There is a certain body of knowledge that needs to be passed down from one generation to another in order to maintain western civilization
  - Children don't always know best what they need to know or how to learn what they need to know
  - Children will often shy away from difficult material or material they don't enjoy
  - Children have no idea what they don't know, so there may be interesting and important things they should learn that the child is not aware of.

# WHAT CLASSICAL EDUCATION IS NOT

- Classical education is not always fun
  - “Young Tom was five when his schooling began in Goochland. He later recalled sneaking impatiently out of a classroom that first year and kneeling behind the building to repeat the Lord’s Prayer, hoping thereby to hasten the hour of dismissal.” The Real Thomas Jefferson pp. 14-15
  - When the Jefferson family returned to Shadwell in 1752, Tom-now 9 years old-remained in Goochland under the care of the Reverend William Douglas, an Anglican minister from Scotland who served as his tutor. He learned quickly: within five years he could read Latin, Greek, and French (to which he soon added Spanish, Italian, and Anglo-Saxon.” The Real Thomas Jefferson pp. 14-15

# WHAT CLASSICAL EDUCATION IS NOT

- Classical education is not boring
  - Children begin from the earliest ages to learn about pyramids and pharaohs, Greek gods, Roman armies, nature, and poetry
  - They continue to move through history learning about the peoples of the Earth
  - They learn math and science and music and art
  - They learn Latin (and yes it is not always fun), but once they begin to master it and notice it everywhere, they do enjoy it
  - They learn about architecture and governments and they read really good stories
  - All of that is so much better than video games!!!

# WHAT CLASSICAL EDUCATION IS

Classical education is a structured methodical way to learn

- Structured to the child's natural mode of learning at any given time –
  - Facts in the grammar stage
  - Connections in the dialectic/logic stage
  - Communication in the rhetoric stage
  - Classical education does not ask a child to write creatively before giving their mind some things to think creatively about
- Structured content that creates an organized filing system in the brain and helps children see the connections that happen as history unfolds

# WHAT CLASSICAL EDUCATION IS

- A perpetuation of Western Civilization and knowledge of the greatest people and thinkers of all time
- A search for wisdom and virtue by seeking the good, the true, and the beautiful in history, literature, math, science, art, music, poetry, and sport
- An education to create people who are free from all kinds of tyranny – we teach children to think for themselves so they are not pawns for other people's agendas whatever that may be

# WHAT CLASSICAL EDUCATION IS

- “Classical education is the inculcation of wisdom and virtue through a facility with the liberal arts and a familiarity with the Great Books. St. Thomas Aquinas defines wisdom as ‘ordering things rightly.’” Martin Cothran

# **LET'S DEFINE SOME TERMS**

- Grammar
  - As pertains to language: parts of speech, punctuation, spelling, writing
  - As a stage of development: it describes children generally between 4-10 years old who enjoy learning facts, memorizing, narrating stories, rhymes, and any type of playing with language
  - Everything you learn has a grammar stage. A stage where you are learning the terms and tools of a given subject.
  - Imitation precedes art

# GRAMMAR STAGE

- Copywork, narration, dictation, memorization
- People, places, events
- Grammar level reads of the great works and good books
- Memorization: scripture and poetry
- Science – nature, labeling everything, scientists
- Art – color, shape, tools, technique
- Music – songs, music lessons

# **LET'S DEFINE SOME TERMS**

- Dialectic or Logic
  - As pertains to language: the art of investigating the truth of opinions; making connections between ideas
  - As a stage of development: it describes children who are generally 10-14 years old who are curious and starting to make connections between ideas, events in history, and works of literature. These children are beginning to be a bit argumentative
  - Everything you learn has a Dialectic stage. The point where you are beginning to see how things work together.

# DIALECTIC OR LOGIC STAGE

- Copywork, dictation, narration, beginning essay writing, diagramming sentences
- Logic: a formal study of logic
- Connections between people, places and events
- Dialectic level reads of the great works and good books
- Memorization: scripture and poetry
- Science: connections between eras and discoveries
- Art: history of movements, connections between artists and movements
- Music: composers, instruments, orchestras, compositions

# **LET'S DEFINE SOME TERMS**

- Rhetoric
  - As pertains to language: it is the ability of a child/person to write and speak their thoughts clearly and eloquently; and to make a persuasive argument
  - As a stage of development: it is a child that is generally 14-18 years of age, who is eagerly expressing their own thoughts and ideas about anything and everything
  - Everything you learn has a rhetoric stage. A point at which you understand all the terms and tools of a given subject, understand how all the parts fit together as a whole, and you are now expressing your idea of what that looks like

# RHETORIC STAGE

- Rhetoric: 5 canons – Invention, arrangement, elocution, memorization, disposition
- History: connections between people, eras, places
- Read the Great Books, poetry, drama, short stories
- Memorization: scripture, poetry, speeches
- Science: Scientists, formal study of branches of science
- Art: history, theory, practice
- Music: history, theory, practice

**LET'S  
DEFINE  
SOME  
TERMS**

- The Trivium – Latin word meaning the three paths
  - Grammar, Dialectic and Rhetoric make up the Trivium
  - We teach all three at all stages, but in different amounts at different stages

# **LET'S DEFINE SOME TERMS**

- Arithmetic
  - The wonder of numbers
- Geometry
  - The wonder of shapes
- Music
  - The wonder of sound
- Astronomy
  - The wonder of the universe

**LET'S  
DEFINE  
SOME  
TERMS**

- Quadrivium – Latin word meaning the four paths
  - Arithmetic, Geometry, Music, and Astronomy make up the Quadrivium

# THE LIBERAL ARTS

- The trivium and the quadrivium make up the seven liberal arts
- Liberal here has nothing to do with politics. It comes from the Latin *Liber* meaning free
- A person who is trained in the Liberal Arts is a person who is free from the enslavement of others. That person knows how to think for themselves and is not swayed by “every wind of doctrine”

# WHY STUDY LATIN OR GREEK?

- Latin does for the mind with language what math does for the mind with numbers. It requires the mind to think very strictly about what a word is doing. This doesn't happen if you use English because a child already knows how to speak English correctly or incorrectly so the brain will not do the mental gymnastics that is required when learning an inflected language.
- Joshua, "I didn't want to take Latin and still don't care if I know it or not, but the class taught me to study a language and how to study for a hard class. The vocabulary and grammar taught me how to study other languages plus provided a foundation for learning other Romance languages and helped me understand English better."

# WHY STUDY LATIN OR GREEK?

- An Example:
  - Vir vides veritatem.
  - Vir videbis veritatem
  - Vir videbamus veritatem.

# WHY STUDY LATIN OR GREEK?

## Latin

- Vir vides veritatem.
- Vir videbis veritatem
- Vir videbamus veritatem.

## English

- The man sees truth.
- The man will see the truth.
- The man used to see the truth.  
OR
- The man saw the truth. OR
- The man was seeing the truth.

# PRAISE FOR LATIN

- “To read Latin and Greek authors in their original, is a sublime luxury. I thank on my knees him who directed my early education for having put into my possession this rich source of delight; and I would not exchange it for anything which I could then have acquired, and have not since acquired.” – Thomas Jefferson
- “Hardly any lawful price would seem to me too high for what I have gained by being made to learn Latin and Greek.” – C.S. Lewis

# DO I HAVE TO TEACH FORMAL LOGIC?

- Dialectic is the art of investigating the truth of opinions. So we spend time requiring a child to make an argument for their opinions.
- Logic teaches a child how to create a valid argument and distinguish between fact and opinion.
  - Just because you think something doesn't matter...Prove it!
- Logic teaches systematic order in thinking
- Logic teaches an evaluation of the strength of an argument or source—
  - “A study has found...” Really what study? Is the study scientifically sound? Was it peer reviewed? Were their conclusions sound? Is the author biased? Does he have an agenda? Has the study be replicated?

# DOES MY CHILD NEED TO BE A SCHOLAR TO DO CLASSICAL EDUCATION?

- NO!!
- Cheryl Swope – classical education with special needs children
- All children benefit from studying this way
- Classical education helps children understand human nature as they study history, great literature, great thinkers, and the seven liberal arts they are learning how things work in the adult world. That benefit comes whether they read the Aeneid in Latin or not.

Classical education's fine for the college-bound. Homer and Plato might be fun for intellectuals. But what about the student who isn't interested in college? What about the student who doesn't really care about scholarship? What about the student who wants to finish high school, get out, and work?

A classical education is valuable even for people who hate Homer.

At a recent conference on education in Richmond, Virginia, a top executive from a car manufacturer let fly in frustration: Why are you asking me how to prepare students for the job market? Most of the high-school graduates who apply for jobs with us can't write, don't read well, can't think through a problem. We spend an unbelievable amount of money retraining these graduates in basic academic skills before we can teach them how to do their jobs. Don't bring more vocational training into the high school curriculum. Teach them how to read, to write, to do math, and to think. We'll train them in the specific job skills they need.

A well-trained mind is a necessity for any job—from car repair person to university teacher. The mechanic with a classical education will be more successful than her untrained counterparts; she'll know how to plan her business, how to relate to her customers, how to organize her responsibilities, how to think. A classical education is the best possible preparation for the job market. *Susan Wise Bauer, The Well-Trained Mind 4<sup>th</sup> edition pp. 693-4.*

# LIVE CLASSICALLY DON'T JUST EDUCATE CLASSICALLY

- What does that mean?
  - Don't teach Latin and logic during the day then watch 8 hours of TV at night
  - Limit screen time
  - Fill your child's and your life with good things – art, music, sports, reading
  - Parents need to lead by example – don't expect your child to read hard books while you watch Netflix endlessly. Read with them or read different books and talk about what you are reading

# WHAT DOES TYPICAL DAY LOOK LIKE?

- Early on with 3 and a baby?
- With 4 children homeschooling at once – grades K, 5<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>
- With only 1 left at home

**WHY DID WE CHOOSE TO  
USE CLASSICAL  
EDUCATION?**