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The CLASSICAL LUTHERAN EDUCATION JOURNAL is dedicated to providing helpful resources for Lutheran educators and parents who labor in the noble endeavor of nurturing and educating God's children.

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In This Issue

In this 2017 issue of your *Classical Lutheran Education Journal*, we open with "Our Great Heritage," an archived essay perfectly suited for our 500th anniversary of the Reformation and written by the beloved **Rev. William C. Heine**, *Magister Magnus Award*. We follow with **Dr. James Tallmon's** summation of our three recent CCLE conference themes: truth, goodness, and beauty in his treatment of rhetoric. In response to the request for articles on practical matters, **Mrs. Erika Mildred** provides helpful suggestions on lesson planning. We then provide a **review** of a first novel introducing an imaginative intersection between the Apostle Paul, Quintilian, and a vision of rhetoric as intellectual love of God. We conclude with **Dr. Steven Hein's** sobering exhortation to all fathers.

Please join us next year for the CCLE XVIII conference July 17-19, 2018 at Faith Lutheran Church and School in Plano, Texas.

Classical Lutheran Education Journal

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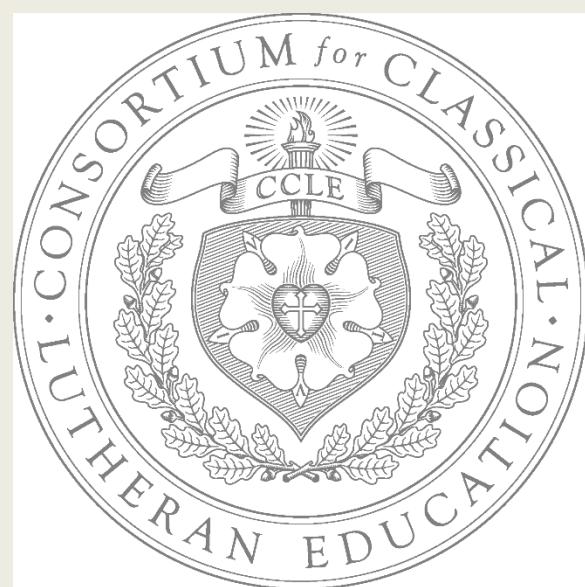
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Our Great Heritage

by Rev. William C. Heine +

Lutherans claim the Word of God as their great heritage. When Luther stood before Emperor Charles V in Worms, Germany, on April 21, 1521, he declared, "My conscience is held captive to the Word of God." That conviction became the springboard for the entire Protestant Reformation as all of Christendom heard the cry of "Sola Scriptura." Indeed the motto Reformation in 1517 became *verbum domini manet in aeternum*: the Word of the Lord endures forever.

Lutherans through the ages have been willing to fight and even die to maintain that cry. The people of God have struggled against the traditionalists who put papal decree on a par with the Word, against the enthusiasts who claimed the Word was unnecessary, against the rationalists who placed human reason over the Word, and against the humanists who considered God along with His Word to be irrelevant. At times through history that struggle has been fierce; at other times it has been less so, but never has the struggle subsided completely, nor will it until our Lord returns.

We must do our part in echoing the cry of the Reformation. We must sound forth the call of Sola Scriptura for our generation and the next. We must be constantly vigilant lest we be taken "captive through hollow and deceptive philosophies" (Colossians 2:8). This is a work commanded by God: "Preach the

Word; be prepared in season and out of season" (2 Timothy 4:2). This is a work demanded for our children: "Tell the next generation the praise worthy deeds of the Lord ... so [they] will know them... and they in turn will tell their children" (Psalm 78:4-7). This is a work of utmost importance today as we continue the struggle against the philosophies of this world and against the "principalities and powers" of Satan (Ephesians 6:5). We must do our part to maintain the Word of God as our sole source and norm for faith, life, and teaching.

Nowhere is this work more necessary and urgent than in the area of education. Every aspect of an education which calls itself Lutheran must be anchored in the Word of God, must draw its strength from the Word of God, and must find its purpose in the Word of God.

It is the centrality of the Word which makes a school truly Christian and Lutheran. This concept can be made clear through contrast; for example, a school is not Christian just because it has Christian people teaching in it. We have Christians teaching in the public schools, but we do not claim that they are Christian schools. An example from the business world may help. A Christian may operate a business, but that does not make it a Christian business. A Christian may even be involved in an unchristian business or activity such as the sale of pornography, but his involvement does not sanctify the activity. The fact remains, you can have a non-Christian education provided by Christian people. Neither is a school

Christian just because all its students are Christian. This is certainly a desired goal of a Christian school but it is not the definition of one.

Nor is a school Christian just because it provides a loving, caring, and safe environment. Sometimes this is a reason parents choose a Christian school - to keep their children from what they consider to be a bad moral environment - but even though this is a desired aspect of a Christian school, it is not the definition of one.

Nor is a school Christian just because it includes an hour of religion in the curriculum. A Christian school must be more than just a baptized public school. It must teach the Word as the source and norm for all faith and life and teaching.

So, what then is a Christian School? First, a Christian school must function in accord with the Word, in submission to the Word, and in obedience to the Word of God. It must be anchored in the Word for its contents, its methods, and its life. It must employ people who think, live, act, and teach in accord with that Word. It must be one which educates around the Word as the hub of its curriculum, indoctrinates in the truths of God's Word, and acculturates in the Communion of Saints gathered around that Word.

Secondly, a Christian school must be one that trains children to carry on the struggle for the centrality of the Word in their own faith and life. They must learn to "take every thought captive to the Word of God so that they might demolish every argument and every pretension

that sets itself up against the knowledge of God" (2 Corinthians 10:5). They must be prepared for the struggle, which "is not against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms," (Ephesians 6:12). Indeed they must be prepared to do battle with the relativism, feminism, humanism, naturalism, materialism, rationalism, and even irrationalism of this world so that they might stand firm in the faith and hold on to sound doctrine.

To be a truly Christian school, a school and its teachers must be Word-centered. The school must take as its primary task the production of a literate laity who love the Word of God, know it well, and can defend it intelligently, "so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles" (Ephesians 4:14). As it was at the time of the Reformation and has been with each succeeding generation, this is the task before us. Through His Word, God will give us the strength to carry it out.

Rev. William C. Heine (1954-2016)
"Father of the Recovery of Classical
Lutheran Education"
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CLEJ

Truth, Beauty, and Goodness In, With, and Under Rhetoric

James M. Tallmon, Ph.D.

Statements like these indicate the importance Doctor Luther placed on education:

Now if(as we have assumed) there were no souls, and there were no need at all of schools and languages for the sake of the Scriptures and of God, this one consideration alone would be sufficient to justify the establishment everywhere of the very best schools for both boys and girls, namely, that in order to maintain its temporal estate outwardly the world must have good and capable men and women, men able to rule well over land and people, women able to manage the household and train children and servants aright. Now such men must come from our boys, and such women from our girls. Therefore, it is a matter of properly educating and training our boys and girls to that end (Martin Luther, *AE* 45: 367-8).

Reading further, the hypothetical (a universe where there were no souls) notwithstanding, it is clear Luther considers “the very best schools” those based on a classical liberal arts curriculum, to educate boys and girls for two ends: growth in the faith (“for the sake of the Scriptures and God”) and cultivation of capable and good leaders,

both for the maintenance of the “temporal estate” without, and for families, within. Those parts of the curriculum that equip especially for handling well God’s truth and for leadership, are first grammar, then dialectic and rhetoric, all of which should not just be mastered in a theoretical way only, but applied as well to cultivate wise judgment; solid Christian character. As they cultivate these arts of wisdom and eloquence students grow in mental dexterity, develop aesthetic sensibilities, and ultimately are equipped to be good Christian persons who have a solid command of Scripture and also habitually exercise practical wisdom.

Upon mastering grammar, we turn to dialectic and rhetoric. As Richard Weaver writes, “In the restored man dialectic and rhetoric will go along hand in hand as the regime of the human faculties intended that they should do” (*Language is Sermonic*, 184). Classical Lutheran Education is indeed a restorative effort, and its aim, ultimately, is to equip students for personal excellence, for service to neighbor, and for eloquence. But why rhetoric? Why dialectic? Robert Littlejohn and Charles Evans answer that this form of education

... provides the greatest opportunity for educating morally aware students and for using the classroom to propagate character. We established in an earlier chapter that liberal arts schooling always seeks to educate the conscience and that liberal arts thinking blended with Christian theology promises the

greatest opportunity for genuine character education. Of the three elements of the trivium, rhetoric is most helpful in the construction of a total curriculum with character formation and cultural leadership as its chief goals (*Wisdom and Eloquence*, 133).

Unlocking for your students the power of rhetoric will necessitate their understanding that rhetoric, working in tandem with dialectic, forms not only the mental habits that equip one to treat of truth, beauty, and goodness with eloquence, but also how God's truth, beauty, and goodness in the Word of Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, saves the soul and builds the character. To understand this dynamic entails understanding the relationship of dialectic to rhetoric, then of poetics to rhetoric, and, ultimately, of rhetoric to ethics. As one grasps these essential elements of rhetorical studies, it becomes clear why, in terms of human excellence, rhetoric has long held its status as "capstone of the liberal arts education." The essay culminates in some brief considerations regarding the bearing on classical education today of the sentence, well-known to Reformers such as Luther, Bugenhagen, Melanchthon, and Sturm who wrote that "The aim of education is a wise and eloquent piety."

How to Teach It "Old School"

Teaching toward excellence in the practical arts is different from teaching

for the mastery of subject matter. In short, pragmatic pedagogy features praxis and backgrounds theory, while mastery of content features contemplation and *foregrounds* theory (because "parts" of knowledge are easy to catalogue and memorize). The former features praxis and minimizes theory; the latter emphasizes contemplation and theory. Theory informs practice, to be sure, but the seminar-style discussion of readings, such as the "Great Books" approach with its concern for definitions, concepts, and theoretical notions, will not help students hone their rhetorical or dialectical skills as much as getting in front of an audience and making arguments or engaging in debate about contemporary controversies. To master the piano one does not simply immerse oneself in music theory and read the lives of great musicians. One learns to read notes, play, and practice, every day, until the skill becomes "second nature." Theory is then tackled as one matures in one's art. Theory follows practice. Again, theory is vital, but it is not age-appropriate to "lead" with volumes of theory. And, when it comes to rhetorical studies, there are volumes and volumes of theory! 2,500 years' worth, in fact!

In my Rhetoric I course, for example, I attempt to lay a foundation in rhetoric that guides students in the fundamentals of speech composition. What one considers "fundamental" is, of course, open to interpretation, I tell them, and then I

demonstrate why a rhetorical approach to the art of speech making in classical liberal arts teaches the true fundamentals and elevates the enterprise without overburdening them with all those years' worth of theory. They are glad of it!

Specifically, I begin by pointing out to my students that most of them already know about eye contact, gestures, volume, rate, pitch, and so forth, and that one could cover those topics in about a half-hour. So, what are we going to discuss for the rest of the semester? (It is, in fact, more appropriate to dwell on mechanics with young children. I make this move to generate enthusiasm on the part of older students; to assure them that they will not be force-fed minutiae of mechanics mastered long ago!) I propose studying the art of public speaking from a traditional rhetorical and liberal arts perspective. I then ask them what this means? What will you receive in this class, by means of this approach, that you would not get in another class? Eventually they realize I want them to appreciate the uniqueness and "peculiarities" of studying a practical art from a liberal arts, and not merely a "technical" perspective. In other words, they will learn some mechanics of composition, but they will acquire an art of composition because their praxis will be informed by theory, and they will have opportunities to apply, and "internalize," what they've learned. So we begin.

Teaching it "Old School" Tip #1: Clue them in. Classical liberal arts education

focuses not only on the "how and what," but also on the "why and wherefore." Too often, I fear, teachers set high standards, but then forget that students are sometimes not clear about what they need to do to "clear the bar."

We are then poised to discuss the nature of liberal arts education, borrowing heavily from Dorothy Sayers (see my RhetoricRing.com for a brief description of the shape of this conversation). Next, I define rhetoric, pointing out how rhetoric was, in its golden age, considered the "most humane of the humanities" and then break it down into its constituent parts to elucidate how this theory will provide a framework for the entire course and will inform their practices. I also clue them in regarding the fact that, though this is a course in rhetoric, there is also a good bit of instruction in fundamentals of logic (syllogisms, dialectic and common material fallacies, to be precise) on the assumption that, if they are intellectually engaged, when they speak they'll have something of substance to say. In other words, *thought is fundamental to speech*. Teaching rhetoric begins by placing it within the context of liberal arts learning. I believe this is true of all learning within the Trivium: the art must be defined, situated with respect to related disciplines, broken down into its constituent parts which are then studied, and then practiced until there is mastery.

Teaching it "Old School" Tip #2: One of the most beautiful things about liberal

arts learning is that it teaches ideas in relation one to another. Much of modern education, by virtue of its emphasis on math and science, is presented in a fragmented or “compartmentalized” fashion to memorize terms from chapter one, regurgitate them on a quiz, push “core dump” to forget that information, proceed to chapter two, memorize unrelated terms, regurgitate, push “core dump,” and so on. Postmodernity raises more questions than it answers and, as disciplines beget sub-disciplines, Richard Weaver once quipped that the universe of knowledge expands by diffusion to the point of nullity. Celebrate how the classical approach buttresses unity of knowledge! Celebrate the coherence that yields a quiet confidence!

Scholars should be led through a series of “stair-stepped” exercises within cohesive discipline to help them master foundational, then more advanced, rhetorical dynamics. They learn by doing, and the doing is informed by theory, but only enough theory to enlighten, as opposed to over-burden. The line of demarcation between “over-burdening” and sufficient rigor will, of course, vary among children. Luther repeatedly characterizes learning as “child’s play” and suggests that teachers over-burden their students, in part, to build their own reputation.

Teaching it “Old School” Tip #3: Simple theory, nuts-and-bolts, practice; more advanced theory, nuts-and-bolts, practice. Highly-integrated; methodical; fun. It is

not fun to have a learned person aim a firehose at you day in and day out! So, “multum non multa” is an important principle of classical pedagogy: “Much not many” means the teacher needs to be cognizant of how much knowledge students are capable of assimilating at any given time. Hence the focus in this piece, on not overloading students with theory, giving them measured doses, then opportunities for application and practice. This accounts for why arts are also referred to as “disciplines.” (See Christopher Perrin’s YouTube video, “Eight Essential Principles of Classical Pedagogy.”)

What Next?

My Rhetoric II (Argumentation & Debate) course is an in-depth treatment of the relationship of dialectic and rhetoric. Rhetoric II aims to equip the student to engage in practical argumentation by examining and discussing patterns of reasoning, fields of argument, standards of evidence, and equips the student to apply classical rhetorical concepts to contemporary controversies. The course begins with a good bit of instruction in fundamentals of logic, because thought is fundamental to argument. This “Bootcamp of the Mind” constitutes a refresher course for my Public Speaking students, but it is all condensed into the first four weeks of class, whereas the concepts are distributed in Public Speaking on an as-needed basis at strategic points in the semester. It is important to observe this

sequence for optimal learning.
(Sensitivity to the rhythms of learning is vital in liberal arts education. See Teaching Tip #6!)

"Bootcamp of the Mind" concludes with a philosophical speech drawing upon the *Great Books of the Western World* and a graduation ceremony. The course is then divided along lines suggested in Aristotle's *Rhetorica* into three units, all designed to feature one aspect of arguing cases: in court of law, in a moral dilemma, and in a policy controversy (see RhetoricRing.com/courses for a fuller explanation).

My approach to Rhetoric III (Advanced Public Speaking) is also classical. Students enjoy it very much for its emphasis on analogical reasoning over logical. The core of the course is an exercise in "imitatio," a pedagogical schema developed in the Roman era and practiced widely in medieval times. The idea is to expose students to great oratory, have them study it, and then have them imitate it. As they develop a feel for stylistic excellence including the reading classical oratory in the original tongues, they are encouraged to compose original works. This "stair-stepped" approach is very effective, builds on the foundation in rhetoric built in Public Speaking, and emphasizes style and the masterful use of language to build vivid mental imagery which moves the soul of their auditors; their neighbor.

This advanced course includes real application of classical concepts beginning with a memorized speech. Students select a speech of interest from days of yore. They perform a 6 minute "cutting" of the piece. After the performance and experience of the cutting comes an "essentializing exercise." Cutting the oratory forces the student to consider what is most important. Now we take the learning one step further, by "distilling down" the entire speech to its essential message. If brevity is the soul of wit, it takes a great deal of wit and penetrating analysis to boil down a lengthy oration to one or two lines. They then give an *imitation* speech in which they apply the product of the essentializing exercise with that core theme to a contemporary situation. In the Imitatio Speech they are to emulate the style of the person whose speech they chose to memorize. The assignment is a concrete illustration of how "the permanent things" possess continued relevance. Finally, they are invited to do a "student's choice" speech, that demonstrates mastery of course content. They learn a great deal about how to move an audience (pathos) and, specifically, how to deploy figures of speech masterfully. (More detail is available on the "Courses" pulldown menu of RhetoricRing.com.)

Teaching it "Old School" Tip #4: The reader will note how, in the process of researching, speaking about, and listening to others expound upon, all the various practical matters, moral questions,

biblical principles, and so on, over a span of two years, the student is regularly confronted with the need to know why he believes what he believes. The student that is liberally educated will cultivate mental dexterity: the ability, given the nature of the various questions posed in the act of living life, to gauge appropriately the nature of the question at hand, and then, to utilize that mental operation most likely to produce an appropriate response. Mathematical reasoning, speculative reasoning, deductive reasoning, rhetorical reasoning, scientific reasoning, analogical, and so on. This is, in part, what it means to have a "well ordered mind." Ordering the mind is precisely the aim of the trivium! Beyond a "well-ordered mind," consider how the soul of the scholar is "aligned," that he "learns both to love, and to be pained by what he ought." This, Aristotle says, is the "right education." It is a given, I am compelled to note, that our Christian sensibilities are formed by God's Word, and all is His work, alone, in us. However, since this is an essay about education, the focus is on the role in character development of the study of rhetoric and dialectic, in tandem. It is the author's wish that this relationship be viewed, not as an either/or, but as a "both/and:" both pursuit of wisdom and pursuit of God.

Summary of Coursework

Taken together these three courses constitute an integrated approach to the study and practice of rhetoric. In the

process of learning to practice rhetoric artfully, the student will also learn to reason with precision, to spot faulty logic, to exercise insight and forethought, to deliberate with insight, and to use language masterfully. She will learn to think both logically, and analogically--in short, to instruct, persuade, and delight audiences, habitually employing both wisdom and eloquence.

The key to this approach is that, in each case, both in terms of the logical and stylistic elements of instruction the theory is taught to prepare the student to excel in an upcoming assignment. So each unit of the course entails laying a theoretical foundation, some nuts and bolts, then an opportunity to practice. They do a good bit of research, they are exposed to great speeches, they focus intently on style and *pathos*, and, are ultimately invited to do a speech in which their voice emerges. Again, the pedagogical principle of "multum non multa" is key here. Put away the firehose. Circle concepts, learn in stages, and introduce the theory, in measured doses, *over time* and *in time*, to prepare them for new skills acquisition in an upcoming assignment (self-consciously linked to the prior learning opportunity and also the learning that follows). Design units of instruction with this in mind. When teaching 7th and 8th graders, this learning cycle takes two years. Again, we are cultivating *mental habits*, not test-taking skills.

II

Pedagogical Implications

While this cycle of learning imparts both practical wisdom and eloquence, it also has ethical, moral, and theological dimensions. Rhetoric and dialectic, united “as the regime of the human faculties intended,” are involved in a complex and nuanced interplay. As Aristotle notes in the beginning of his treatise on rhetoric, dialectic and rhetoric are “antistrophes” (counterparts) of one another (*Rhetoric*, Bk I Chpt. 1). They appear as two plants growing up side by side but share a common root below the surface. Phenomenologically, rhetoric is the art of argumentation; dialectic, the art that tests the truth of debatable propositions. But that aspect of rhetoric that precedes argumentation, namely, “rhetorical reasoning” (the faculty of discovering the crux of the matter in difficult cases,) exposes their common root. Dialectical inference operates in rhetorical reasoning in a manner that accentuates just how deeply intertwined are the two.

Think, for instance, about the manner in which an elder makes an argument to raise his pastor’s salary by \$2,000 for the coming fiscal year. The confluence of considerations that must be brought to bear, the counter-arguments that must be anticipated, the distinctions established prior to making a single argument, all bespeak the subtle interplay between dialectical inference (drawing fine

distinctions, defining terms, and establishing parameters) and rhetorical reasoning (determining, out of the potentially limitless parade of considerations, which hold most weight, and also, which of these are most relevant, given the question at hand). Learning to operate comfortably in this arena cultivates, in the natural course of things, insight, discernment, prudence, foresight, mental discipline AND mental dexterity! In short, it equips one to handle truth. (For further study, please see "4 Classical Educators" pages of RhetoricRing.com.)

Beauty: The Canon of Style

We are not body-less machines moved only by logic, but rather incarnated minds and souls moved by vivid images and inspired by beauty. Rhetoric appeals to humans in their whole being. Crafting fine speeches and papers that are designed to move one to dream big dreams, or think big thoughts, require finely honed aesthetic sensibilities. Learning to use language artfully to appeal not only to the mind, but also to the imagination and the heart, is a humanizing activity (for both speaker and audience). Albert Einstein's assertion, "Imagination is more important than knowledge," bespeaks the importance of style in rhetoric. You can muster all the logic at your disposal, but if you fail to move your audience, you will never persuade them. The end of persuasion is action, and in order to move persons to action, you must move the soul. This view

elevates the enterprise of speech composition. I “elevate the enterprise” by recapping the lecture on human excellence, and asserting that excellence is, in keeping with Einstein's sentiment, more a matter of creativity than of logic alone. The cultivation of imagination and reason is best accomplished concurrently.

Teaching it “Old School” Tip #5: Do you see what I did there? I just repeated a concept introduced early in the discussion. When one cultivates mental habits, one must “circle” concepts, review what was learned last “go ‘round,” bring to bear the previous learning on the present object of study, then discuss application. Viewing the same knowledge from a variety of vantage points reinforces learning, in a variety of ways: deepening one’s theoretical grasp and affording further opportunities to “internalize” the mental habits informed by the theory being studied. I call this “layered learning”; Perrin refers to it, more elegantly, by its Latin cognate: “*Festina Lente*” (“make haste, slowly”) Don’t be afraid to “circle back.” All who wander are not lost.

In *De augmentis*, Sir Francis Bacon defines rhetoric as, “The application of reason to imagination for the better moving of the will,” an apt introduction to the canon of style, because it gets one thinking about the relation of style to pathos. Style is about crafting strong mental imagery and building to a verbal crescendo by artfully, strategically, utilizing figures of speech. The canon of

style is about introducing to one’s argumentation both poetry and aesthetics. It’s about communicating truth with beauty and grace which adds impulse to the Truth. Rhetoric, in the final analysis, moves the soul toward the Good. So, we teach our students to “preside over their art with secure mastery.” We teach them, not dry, sterile communication of ideas, but to combine good reasons with passion and vivid imagery to pique the imagination, which stirs the emotions, which moves the will. Vivacity is a key concept in classical rhetoric. The lively idea is what is “striking” to the audience. The opposite of a lively idea is a dead one. So, vivid imagery is key to giving one’s argument rhetorical potency. If one’s argument is potent enough, and the audience will supply a little imagination, one can be transported through the use of metaphor. It must not escape notice, however, that the act of appealing to the audience’s imagination is, in itself, complimentary to their humanity; it cultivates in them moral imagination and aesthetic sensibilities. This is why beauty matters; the above explicates why beauty is in, with, and under rhetoric. But this power must be wielded with grace, decorum, propriety, proportion and measure, so, even when it comes to the fanciful dimensions of rhetoric, the scholar is constrained by the dictates of good judgment and good taste.

Goodness: Ethics in Rhetoric

Mastering oratory requires one to both be good (to establish trust) and to aim at the Good by speaking Truth. The former entails the goodness cultivated within the rhetor (virtue); the latter, that from which, and to which, our rhetoric points. Trust is a precondition of persuasion. Why would one allow oneself to be persuaded by one whose word cannot be trusted? Similarly, creating a “nagging feeling” in the minds of one’s audience that one’s aim is not true, that the proposed course of action may lead to ruination, tends to militate against one’s rhetorical success! In Book 12 of his *Institutes of Oratory*, Quintilian argues that an orator must be a good man because he is educated for leadership, and a leader cannot create civic virtue, through good laws, and by praising virtue, if he has not cultivated virtue himself, or if his judgment is warped. To speak credibly on affairs of state, the speaker must be credible. He must love both the state and its citizens.

One is reminded that Plato’s prescription for “redeeming” rhetoric, elucidated in his *Phaedrus*, entails a methodology grounded in the study of the soul. Aristotle took seriously Plato’s suggestion, so, in his treatise on rhetoric, he makes *ethos* (personal character) one of the three “modes of artistic proof.” Aristotle asserts, of *ethos*, that a trustworthy character is one of the requisites of persuading because “We believe good men more fully and more

readily than others: this is true generally whatever the question is, and absolutely true where exact certainty is impossible and opinions are divided”. In fact, he writes, “character may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion [the rhetor] possesses”. Later, in Book II, Aristotle identifies with *ethos phronesis*, or practical wisdom, prudence. This is a key extension because *phronesis* is exercised *with respect to the other*. Plato’s negative view of the Sophists was motivated by his conviction that their distortions would warp the soul of Athenians. We have now, of course, come full circle, via the pagans, back to Doctor Luther.

III

Implications for the Lutheran Educator

Our students DO HAVE SOULS, and *this* is the ultimate justification for teaching them “old school.” In this postmodern age, they need to be educated in this fashion, simply to hold onto the sort of faith we believe, teach, and confess. What sort of faith is that? It is Christological, Sacramental, Creedal, and Liturgical. A particular sort of faith requires a particular sort of education. Luther and company understood this; we are engaged in re-discovering it.

The Lutheran faith is based resolutely on the words and works of Christ. Other “faith worldviews” within Christendom are much less focused on Christ and more focused on moralism, mysticism, or

rationalism. (Please see Gene Edward Veith's *Spirituality of the Cross*.) Our creedal faith is based on absolute truth. "Unless one believe this, one shall surely perish." Truth is unequivocal; it is "most certainly true." Our doctrine is based on the Holy Scripture, confessed in the creeds and codified in the documents within our *Book of Concord* forged by great theological minds, in the crucible of conflict, through the ages. It is most certainly true that, to be brought fully into communion with those minds, one benefits from a well-ordered mind with mental dexterity and imagination sufficient to the task.

Perhaps the simplest of these confessions and documents, Luther's *Small Catechism*, employs rhetorical devices to facilitate learning and memorization. In his section on the Apostle's Creed, Luther includes the ubiquitous rhetorical question, "What does this mean?" The repetition of "This is most certainly true" acts as a hammer of God, driving the lesson deeper and deeper, fortifying the student's soul. Observe the deliberate use of couplets in the explanation of the First Article: "He also gives me *clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children*, land, animals, and all I have. . . . For all this it is my duty to *thank and praise, serve and obey* Him." The couplets aid memorization, to be sure, but it is also noteworthy that the rhythm established thereby helps the various lessons penetrate.

Teaching It "Old School" Tip #6: Attend to rhythm! Classically educated children should be the happiest children on earth because they daily engage in word play, first in the garden of verse, then in the vast, fertile fields of imagination. Chants for memory work, literature, and good children's poetry assist delight. (See Tip #3 re: "Child's Play")

The Rhetoric of Our Faith

The Word and Sacraments are central to our doctrine and, especially in a rationalistic and empiricist culture, sacramental Christianity is an "acquired taste." One must *learn* to participate in it, so to speak. Why? Because it requires imagination and figuration to bridge the seen and unseen in this world and the world to come. Our rites and worship practices are fruits of a heritage that goes back, literally, to an age that predates Christianity. They are "classical" (see Art Just's *Heaven on Earth*.)

The catechesis our students receive helps them have "eyes to see and ears to hear" the particular kind of truth they encounter in the sermons of our church. All other things being equal, they grasp more readily than the child educated differently that Christ is at the center, that we are His workmanship, and that we walk in the works He prepared for us to do. This essay elucidates precisely why cultivating imagination is a natural outcome of the approach to language arts we teach and why this helps our children fully hear and inwardly

digest God's Word. (I am aware that the unsanctified imagination is corrupt. Please recall the "both/and.") Our creeds and confessions are written in a certain style, and we Classical educators teach that "style" of thinking. (Actually, some of us teach students to be rationalists, but that is another essay.)

Witness, also, The Athanasian Creed: "Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the catholic faith. Which faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastinglly." Or this: "He, therefore, that will be saved must thus think of the Trinity." Finally: except a man believe faithfully and firmly, he cannot be saved." This dialectical verbiage (because it presupposes the law of contradiction and mutual exclusivity along with definitions which imply essences) is inherently distasteful to the postmodern mind. The Athanasian Creed is replete with amplification, a key rhetorical device. Its treatment of the basic pillars "of the catholic faith" attests to its standing as a grammar.

And Paul's epistles, such as Romans 2 & 3, the "movement," as it were, throughout Paul's extended argument regarding the gospel are supremely dialectical, in that they explicated Jew versus Gentile under the Law, the purpose of the Law, Law versus Gospel, and justification by faith versus by keeping the law. St. Paul begins with a proposition. "For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned

under the law will be judged by the law" 2:12). He raises a series of rhetorical questions (vv. 17-24); in order to draw out implications (vv. 25-27). He identifies a contradiction, and then he resolves it (vv. 28-29). Chapter three begins with more rhetorical questions! The point has been made. It is left, for now, to the reader to study Romans 2 & 3. Similarly, hear the refrain of the writer, "Let us," in *Hebrews!*

If we educate our children in grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric, which is to say, if we educate them classically along the lines explicated above, their faith will be enriched. Luther and Melanchthon spearheaded a revival of classical liberal arts learning in Europe. In a sense, classical education is our gift to the civilized world. Our Saxon forebears came to America, sacrificed much, and established the Missouri Synod, in part, to teach their children in accordance with that heritage. How tragic if our own children did not learn to think like Lutherans because we neglected our heritage!

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Lesson Planning for the Classical Educator

Erika E. Mildred

Whether we home school, teach at a brick-and-mortar school, or have a virtual classroom online, we all know the importance of lesson plans. We may be required to submit them to a principal or headmaster. We know these plans serve us well as we direct and manage our children's time and activities. When we are ill, lesson plans serve as our substitute's lifeboat and give our students a sense of normalcy amid change. Yet while we as educators acknowledge all of this as true, it is our daily and weekly lesson plans that tend to get shortchanged with the myriad of tasks and responsibilities that fill our school year. Some of us, perhaps, enjoy a more "see where the studies of the day lead us" approach. Others enjoy the organization and structure lesson plans afford, but with the grading, photocopying, parent meetings, carpool lines, trips to our own children's extra-curricular activities, and the like, the time to give lesson planning our full attention just isn't there. And, let's face it; as classical Lutheran educators, we now have wonderful classical curricula from several Christian publishing companies at our fingertips, complete with...(wait for it...) lesson plans! No need to "reinvent the wheel," we muse.

Several of my mentors drilled a simple sentence into me as a classical educator: "The teacher IS the curriculum."

This succinct statement of educational philosophy applies directly to the topic of lesson planning. The point is this: teaching is an art, a craft that we strive to master. We do not simply impart knowledge to our children; we read, interpret, synthesize, and creatively express that knowledge in a meaningful way and in so doing, shape the minds of the next generation. This is why as classical educators we do not merely read from the margins of the teacher's edition. We write our own lesson plans because the planning itself is a part of the preparation that is necessary to BE the curriculum.

Moreover, unless you were blessed to receive a classical education during the entire course of your own formal education, progressive education tendencies will naturally find their way back into our teaching methods and classrooms. Intentionally written lesson plans using the tools of the *Trivium* and *Quadrivium*, with purposeful horizontal and vertical integration, in a consistent and focused manner produces the classical educational environment we seek for the children we teach. How can we do this?

Trivium Tools

We established "the why"; let us move to "the how." Classical education is not only an educational philosophy but also a methodology, and the *Trivium* provides us with tools for classical lesson planning. Take Grammar, for example. We use the tools of Grammar regularly for

students in grades 4 and below, but we also use these tools for all students at the beginning of new subjects, concepts, units, lessons, etc. Grammar tools help us as teachers to drill and repeat material. Unit and lesson plan foci when using grammar tools should be on facts, rules/exceptions, definitions, and vocabulary. When students have new facts to learn and memorize, classical educators should incorporate one or several Grammar tools into the lesson plans. An example of a Grammar tool is “chant.” Chants are effective for the primary grades who are learning the differences between adjectives and adverbs or the rules for capitalization. Chants are equally helpful for the middle school and high school students who are declining and conjugating nouns and verbs in Latin.

Logic tools in contrast are used regularly for students in grades 5 – 10 and for all students when they ask why/how. Logic tools help us as teachers to organize materials and teach process; unit and lesson plan foci when using logic tools should be on cause & effect, connections between concepts, and the “why’s” and “how’s” of subjects. Socratic Method is a powerful Logic tool (which can also be used in a more direct method at the Grammar level, as with the Catechism) to be incorporated regularly into classical educators’ lesson plans.

Finally, Rhetoric tools should be used regularly for students in high school and all students as they express new

thoughts, original interpretation, or creative expression. Rhetoric tools help us as teachers to help students express themselves eloquently, persuasively, and effectively. Thus, unit and lesson plan foci when using rhetoric tools should be on interpretation, refutation, argumentation, and the creation of new material. Minimally, all teachers should be familiar with the five divisions of Rhetoric (invention, arrangement, style, memoria, delivery), the three Aristotelian appeals (*logos, ethos, pathos*), and the exercises found in the Progymnasmata*. Not only will study of these things develop your own written and oral prowess, but this also will provide you with tools that you may incorporate into your regular lesson planning.

Quadrivium Tools

The same intentionality should be given to numbers. Within our lesson plans, we should carefully note the places where the world of numbers is present and active. Whether it is teaching students the correct use of ordinal and cardinal numbers in written and spoken communication (e.g., “Your birthday is July 25, not July 25th**), showing proportion and ratio to produce harmonic intervals in music, or having a theological discussion about the concept of infinity or the formula of a circle, our lesson plans should incorporate *Quadrivium* tools in all subject areas, not just when we open our math and science books.

Intentionality becomes key. For each classroom and each subject and, at

times, each student, we would do well to analyze the content of the material, the students' previous encounters with that content, and the goals for mastery. For those of us who teach other parents' children, we should have a definitive and ready answer for why we selected the *Trivium* and *Quadrivium* tools we did to instruct, review, or direct. Our lesson plans are our advanced playbook and our check-and-balance system and our first resource to fine-tune our classical teaching methods as we grow each year.

Horizontal and Vertical Integration

Within our lesson plans, classical educators also purposefully make connections so that we may help our students do the same. God's world is integrated. The compartmentalized world in which we teach (math at 8, spelling at 9, science at 10) is, of course, necessary to provide our students with an environment to focus intently and learn and practice the many new concepts presented. Nevertheless, we must be all the more intentional within our lesson plans in helping our students piece the components back together. How many times have we heard, "I have to use correct grammar? But this isn't English class!" This is, in part, due to the student's sinful nature's desire to work minimally in his vocation, but it is exacerbated by a lack of intentional horizontal integration on the part of the teacher or teachers in his life. Just as we should plan for connecting the worlds of math, history, art, grammar, science, and

music within our daily lessons, so also we should plan to connect what students have learned to what they are learning to what they will one day learn (vertical integration).

Horizontal and vertical integration are even more necessary when children have multiple teachers throughout their day. Here then provides another reason for purposefully incorporating this intentional integration into written lesson plans. This can also point to the benefits to a school of adopting a carefully crafted classical curriculum readily integrated with both horizontal and vertical cohesion.

Unlike a homeschool educator who works with his or her children on all subjects and from year to year, brick-and-mortar-school and online educators must communicate with one another on a regular basis to impart horizontal and vertical integration effectively to students. While I would contend that discussions about integration can and should take place in the teacher break room, the teacher lunch table, and the playground bench, having the essence of such discussions written into weekly lesson plans provides an easy way for teachers to share with one another and assist students in making those connections as they go from class to class and teacher to teacher.

Conclusion

Classical education is rich in its tools for lesson planning, but it is our

responsibility as teachers to make use of these tools and intentionally incorporate them into our daily lessons. Even when we utilize lesson plans found within purchased classical curricula, it is our duty as classical educators to make sure *Trivium* and *Quadrivium* tools and both horizontal and vertical integration are included regularly in our own teaching. Intentionality and continued analysis on the best methods to communicate the knowledge we impart keeps us from growing complacent and moves us to develop ourselves in our chosen profession for the sake of our students. Written lesson plans are beneficial for all teachers and also serve to strengthen schools by creating more cohesiveness among its faculty. Not only does this regular and purposeful activity of writing classical lesson plans provide professional growth and development but it also (and more importantly) makes us more effective in our vocation of teacher, thereby making a more meaningful difference in the lives of children with whom God and parents have entrusted into our care.

* Several classical websites carry curriculum that uses the Progymnasmata:
<https://classicalacademicpress.com/writing-rhetoric-the-method-philosophy-and-the-progymnasmata/>,
<https://www.memoriapress.com/curriculum/writing-and-english-grammar/>,

www.classicalcottageschool.org/progymnasmata-course-description.html,
<http://classicalwriting.com/>

** Cardinal numbers are “counting numbers.” We see them as numbers that “stand on their own accord” for something, rather than as a position relative to other numbers. Days on a calendar, numbers in mathematical computations, gallons of gasoline, and numbered sections in a ballpark or stadium are all examples of cardinal numbers.

Ordinal numbers express order or positioning. When we are 3rd in line, when we received 2nd place in a contest, or when we have heard a lecture for the 5th time, we use ordinal numbers. While it is true in English that we can express a calendar day as an ordinal number, we must do so as we express the order of that day compared to those around it.

It is correct to say the 25th day of July (and no one would say, “The 25 day of July,” as we understand we are talking about this day’s position compared to others in that month). But we do not say July 25th when the day stands alone apart from its relation to order or position compared to the other days in that month. Our duty as teachers is to provide explanation and meaning to the rules of grammar and, whenever possible, to use *Quadrivium* tools with a solid understanding of numbers and their functions in context to help students understand the world around them.

CLEJ

Book Review of Dr. James Tallmon's *Rhetoric and Redemption at La Rioja* by Rev. Paul J Cain

What happened after the events of the Book of Acts? There was one more missionary journey. And then Paul returned to Rome for what would be his martyrdom.

What was that missionary journey to Spain like? Who was converted to Christ? *Of Rhetoric and Redemption at La Rioja* suggests answers to questions like this in reverent and plausible historical fiction.

Unlike many fictional "Bible" narratives I've read that tell their stories on the wings of the main stage of historical Biblical truth, Tallmon has done his research. His characterization of St. Paul builds on known facts to introduce intriguing possibilities, even probabilities. Paul meets Quintillian. In summary:

Paul obtains a thirty-day leave from house arrest in Rome to "attend to business in Spain," but must promise to return for sentencing. He plans a "mission blitz" of Hispania. But the plan changes when, in the provincial capital, Paul meets Quintilian, a young pleader who invites him to his family's estate up the Rio Iberus, in La Rioja, outside Calagurris (Calahorra). Paul accompanies Quintilian to Calagurris, along with Luke. Zenas, the other member of "Mission Team Beta," remains in Caesaraugusta to establish in the faith three new converts, one of whom is Quintilian's clerk. Their talk, rendered as Platonic dialogue, ranges across rhetorical theory, ethics, pedagogy,

Christianity, and Paul's latest manuscript, which he hopes will be received as his magnum opus. The novel explores fictional competition between Paul and Apollos, Quintilian's personal crisis, a result of actual, devastating personal losses, resolved when, years after Paul has died by Nero's decree, a much older Quintilian finds comfort in the words of Paul's letter to his kinsmen, the Hebrews, words which Quintilian had discussed with Paul during that memorable occasion at the family's estate in La Rioja. (Publisher's Website)

Unfamiliar with Platonic dialogue or rhetoric in general? Let Tallmon's St. Paul and Quintillian teach you (in conjunction with the footnote on page 53). Finish this novel. And then continue your instruction in rhetoric by reading Aristotle, Cicero, Erasmus, Melanchthon, and modern authors.

Lutherans, classical educators, pastors, Bible scholars, and Christian readers will benefit from reading this unique, brief, substantive, and thought-provoking novel.

**Tallmon, Jim. *Of Rhetoric and Redemption in La Rioja*. Eugene:
RESOURCE Publications, 2017. 145 Pages.
PDF copy received. Paper and Cloth
available. <http://wipfandstock.com/of-rhetoric-and-redemption-in-la-rioja.html> <http://www.rhetoricring.com/>**

CLEJ

Suffer the little children to come unto me . . . but fathers, don't let them die

by Dr. Steven Hein

While the disciples thought them a distraction, Jesus set the disciples straight about how little children centrally focus what is required to enter the Kingdom of God (Matthew 19:14). Then also, from the Lord's perspective, newborn babes are not innately cute; they are enemies of God, slaves to sin, and citizens of Hell. Reborn children, however, are another story. Jesus explained that all enter the Kingdom as little children (Matthew 18:3), that is, children who get crucified with Him -- dying to sin but raised up as a New Creation (Romans 6:3ff). It all happens when they are splashed with grace by a deluge of water and the Word in their Baptism.

Parents often have an attitude of got-that-base-covered when their children are baptized. The baptismal garment, the sponsors, attending relatives, and the ham dinner afterwards can become trappings that signal and celebrate a sense of *a done deal*. The kid's *Happy Forever* has now been assured. Well . . . maybe.

Often not taught or explained to parents, especially to fathers, is that their child's Baptism has landed her in a spiritual war zone where the Devil relentlessly prowls *to get her back*. The often-unspoken truth is that the Baptism of our kids has landed them in a life-long spiritual war with the Devil. Jesus taught, *he who endures to the end, will be saved* (Matthew 24:13). Satan and his close allies - the fallen world (say, youth culture) and the Sinful Self work to see that your child is not one of those who endure. They are out to make your child collateral damage in the Kingdom of God. Let me say it plainly:

Fathers, the Devil is out to kill your child! You have suffered your daughter to come unto Jesus; but fathers, don't let her die! You have suffered your son to come unto Jesus; but fathers, don't let him die!

Luther understood that the chief vocation of fathers is the spiritual nurture of their household – to care for their children by teaching them the faith into which they are baptized. As Scott Keith explains in *Being Dad: Father as a Picture of God's Grace*, “The mother supplies the physical nurture to the child, whereas the father supplies the spiritual nurturance.” (77) His observation follows Luther’s understanding of the father’s primary spiritual vocation. It was to assist fathers in this work that Luther wrote his *Shorter Catechism*. Luther began each *Chief Part* with the words: *as the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household*. It was Luther’s conviction that fathers had the primary responsibility to provide the basic nurture of the grace of Christ to their children. Unfortunately, his efforts to instill this sense of fatherly responsibility failed. Indeed, from Luther’s day until now among Lutherans, fathers have largely demurred and ceded this primary responsibility to pastors, schoolmasters, and their wives. And about this misplacement of primary spiritual responsibility, all three have been more than complicit.

Today when our children look at their fathers exercising leadership in Christ’s Church, they mostly observe them making sure the congregation’s parking lot is in good repair; the receipts from the Sunday offering are rightly recorded and deposited; everyone is seated with a worship folder; and they

receive a timely cue of when to come forward for Communion. The one they usually observe engaging their spiritual nurture (when not the pastor) is either Mom, or assorted volunteer mom-like adults. Moreover, often missing by Christian parents is any awareness that their children are living in the midst of intense spiritual warfare where life and death are in the balance.

When the physical lives of their children *are* understood to be in jeopardy, what father does not remove all other priorities and sacrifice whatever to see that what their children need is provided - by blood, sweat, and tears if necessary. What father tells the oncologist of their cancer-stricken child that they will not make their next appointment because it conflicts with her soccer game? And yet, recent statistics suggest that many of our children baptized as infants joined many a soccer league, but never made it to their confirmation as adolescents.

When it comes to wars that must be fought, real men have always understood that their place is not hiding behind their wives. They are to be adequately equipped and moved to the front lines for battle. Real fathers understand that when the lives of their children are at stake from deadly spiritual warfare, they need to be there to protect and equip them to survive the onslaughts of the forces of evil out to destroy them. Real flowing testosterone needs to move our fathers to rule their children with grace, fit them with the breast plate of righteousness; defend them with the shield of faith, and teach them how to take it to the Devil with the sword of the Word of Christ; so that in the end . . . they stand (Ephesians 6:13-17). *Suffer the little children to come unto me . . . but fathers, don't let them die.*

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