

The Benedict Option

Chapter 7: Education as Christian Formation

I. The Project of Education

The Problem p. 145: Secular liberalism is achieving the same aims as communism: robbing us of our religious beliefs, moral values, and cultural memory, and making us pawns of forces beyond our control.

The solution p. 146: rightly ordered schools – based on the premise that there is a God-given, unified structure to reality and that it is discoverable.

p. 147 schooling that will build resilient mature faith imbues them with sense of order, meaning and continuity. Integrates knowledge into harmonious vision of the whole, that unites all things that are, were and ever will be in God.

p. 147 The ultimate goal of the soul – to love and serve God as fully human living in reality.

p.148 Education prepares a student to know what a human being is. Enabling children to become fully human has been the goal of education from the classic period to the modern era. But that is no longer the goal of education.

II. Methods

p.150 Teach Children Scripture

Not as a fundamentalist, literalist, “Islamist” type text, but as the “living dialogue between God and Man.”

p. 155 Its time to give up on public schools!

So sorry to be so controversial, but by law public education is neither rightly ordered, nor religiously informed, nor desirous to form the imagination in Western civilization.

p. 157 The Salt and Light myth... like a father throwing his child into a raging river in hopes his child will save the drowning friend...

p. 158. Don't kid yourself about “Christian” schools

In many Christian schools, Christianity is a veneer over a secular way of looking at the world.

p. 159 Many parents put their kids into “Christian schools” because “all they think about is getting their kids into a top university and launching them into a good career.” (BTW – This is not our project.)

p. 160 Start Classical Christian Schools

1. Cultivate personal devotion to Christ
2. Takes a Great Books approach – literature, art, music (Aside – Lindisfarne Bach'toberfest)
3. Cultivates abstract thinking, poetic knowledge, and clear self expression.

4. Integrates students into the life of the Church. (Aside: this is why Chapel, contemplation, and choir are so important to the Lindisfarne Hall project. Without integration into the life of the Church, the school project would be an abject failure.)

p. 164 A classical education can't be a gimmick,

p. 165 No Classical School, the Homeschool

62% increase in homeschoolers from 2003-2012

Resources:

CIRCE Institute (This is one of main inspirations and resources. Two of our teachers are enrolled in their certification program and four of us attended last year's CIRCE Conference. Please visit their website, listen to their podcasts, or connect with them in a meaningful way.)

Classical Conversations (This program is offered at Amelia Baptist. Many of our students have used this approach in the past.)

p. 166 The University

Fr. Brad's Comment – the University is perhaps the most obvious institution which has been radically changed in the past 70 years. The University is the child of the Church. Christianity created and formed the University. Yet now the University is the slave of the secular State and even once Christian Universities now vehemently deny any Christian connection.

Recovering the Christian University is not the immediate calling of Holy Trinity Church, however, our families need to be informed and to consider the implications of sending their children to a fully secular University.

p. 173 Wrap Up

174. The Sermarini School...

"We knew we couldn't live a regular life with a Christian coating, but had to change the roots."