

# CHRISTIAN LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION

*A Historian Looks at  
Liberal Arts Education*



# LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION IS ABSOLUTELY MEDIEVAL!

- ◉ *Trivium (Classical Antiquity)*
  - *Grammar*
  - *Rhetoric*
  - *Logic*
- ◉ *Quadrivium (Influence of the Medieval Church)*
  - *Mathematics*
  - *Geometry*
  - *Music*
  - *Astronomy (with Astrology)*

# TRANSITIONS

- ◉ Thomas Aquinas (13<sup>th</sup> century): “all learning is our province.”
- ◉ The Renaissance gave rise to the *studia humanitatis*.
- ◉ Logic gave way to the addition of history, philosophy/ethics, poetry, Greek.



# LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION TODAY



# NEIL POSTMAN

“What is important about narratives is that human beings cannot live without them. We are burdened with a kind of consciousness that insists on our having a purpose. Purposefulness requires a moral context, and moral context is what I mean by narrative.”

# LOUIS MARKOS

“The problem is that *because* we know and have more ‘stuff,’ we (illogically) reason that our own philosophical, theological, and aesthetic views; our own prioritizing of divine, human, and civic virtues; and our own social, economic, and educational initiatives must necessarily be superior to theirs.”

*Restoring Beauty: The Good, the True, and the Beautiful in the Writings of C.S. Lewis,*  
p. 152

# BILL GATES

“More than ever, an education that emphasizes general problem-solving skills will be important. In a changing world, education is the best preparation for being able to adapt. As the economy shifts, people and societies who are appropriately educated will tend to do best. The premium that society pays for skills is going to climb, so my advice is to get a good formal education and then keep on learning. Acquire new interests and skills throughout your life.”

*The Road Ahead, p. 254*



# JAMES MAROOSIS

## “THE PRACTICE OF THE LIBERAL ARTS”

“Surprisingly, it is the trivium that is the core curriculum managers must learn to do their jobs. What management programs teach, without realizing it and with no sense of their **historical mission as moral tools**, is the old liberal arts practice of rhetoric, grammar, and logic that along with the quadrivium made up liberal arts and sciences education.”

# CHRISTIAN LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION

- ◉ Sound, broad, complete!
- ◉ C.S. Lewis: Christianity is the myth that came true!
- ◉ The “animating center” must be more than a lively ideology or privileged knowledge base that grounds us and drives us back into the cultural fray - it must be the Living Word, Christ Himself.

# THE FUTURE OF LIBERAL ARTS

