

THE DISTINCTIVES OF CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

This document is intended to answer a question asked by Christopher Perrin in his book, *An Introduction to Classical Education*¹: “How does the classical approach differ from what is being offered in public schools?” More precisely, we are answering the question: “What are we striving to provide here at Legacy Academy?” The goal of this document is to briefly highlight these distinctives in accessible language.

Classical Education is not new. For centuries, men and women have been educated in the classical model. Classical Education is the authoritative, traditional and enduring form of education begun by the Greeks and Romans, refined by the Church, developed through Western history, and now being renewed and recovered in the twenty-first century. We are revolting against what is happening in our public schools by going home, back to the tried-and-true approach of a Classical Education.

Theology is not a subject. At Legacy, we are *Classical*, and we are *Christian*. We do not teach theology as a subject among other subjects, but we see theology as the “queen of the sciences” that transcends and influences all other subjects. In short, at Legacy, we are not merely transferring biblical knowledge; we are seeking to transfer a biblical worldview that endures throughout our students’ lifetime.

The Trivium. At Legacy we emphasize the “tools of learning” alongside the content of learning. This means that the methods by which students naturally learn are **Grammar, Logic and Rhetoric** (The Trivium). These methods are emphasized based on the stage of a student’s development. These three methods will be present throughout a student’s time at Legacy. Early in a student’s experience, **Grammar** will be emphasized, meaning that facts, timelines, and vocabulary are learned through repetition and sometimes through chants and song. The emphasis on **Logic** follows, as adolescents are taught to argue and defend their positions. During the High School years, students will be instructed in **Rhetoric** as they learn the art of persuasive speech and writing. This phase might be described as transitioning from winning an *argument* to winning *people*.

Academic Rigor. At Legacy, we believe that academic rigor does not exclude academic delight. The paradox of a classical education is that joy and labor can live together as students develop into adults that read and write well, think critically, and have the strong foundation of a Christian worldview.

The Great Conversation. At Legacy, we emphasize the importance of mastering the masters. Our students learn to read the classics of the Western canon: books that have been declared as great books by a consensus of informed critics over long periods of time and reveal Truth, Goodness and Beauty.

Truth, Goodness, and Beauty. Unlike the secular and increasingly relativist outlook of public education, Classical Education believes that Truth, Goodness, and Beauty are not merely subjective or cultural realities. Instead, we believe that God has genuinely revealed Himself in the world and has given his creatures the amazing ability to *know* and *study* Him through His creation.

Legacy is with and for Parents. We believe it is the parents’ responsibility to educate their children. Legacy’s authority over children is delegated from the parents, who have entrusted us to help them in their educational tasks.

¹ Christopher Perrin, *An Introduction to Classical Education: A Guide for Parents* (Camp Hill: Classical Academic Press, 2004) 6.