

What follows will seem almost facile to those who do not share this philosophy. Those who do will merely agree. I cannot hope to do more.

God reveals himself through his Word (John 1, 2 Tim. 3:16) and his works (Ps. 19, Rom 1: 18ff). Those who profess a love of this God would do well to attend to him through the means available to them. Education makes us more able to attend to those means. Through the rigors of scholarship, a man becomes more able to notice the things God has made, indeed to notice the things that God allows to be made, and respond to those things in like kind in order to help others see yet more of God's self. His glory is infinite and is disclosed in a vast variety of ways, but there are impediments to our seeing it.

The greatest of these is our own loathing of it. The Christian still lives in a body partly inhabited by an old man who is offended by God's character. When he encounters God in a constellation or a calculus problem, he is confronted with his own difference from that God and immediately tries to suppress the knowledge he sees there. One way he can do this is through sloth. If he does not exert himself, he will not be able to attend to the glory. Another way is through desensitization. He can fill his life with the least meaningful things and by that expedient eventually become unable to attend to glory very well. When the believer does this long enough and he ends up looking like a non-believer.

But the work of Christian education tries to overcome these problems. We bring our students into direct and painful confrontation both with the glory of God as revealed in our

disciplines and their own ineptitude for engaging this glory. We repent with them over our lack of enthusiasm about what is properly to be enthusiastic about. We force them to have a concrete sense for the great works of our disciplines so that they can enjoy those works, and ultimately the God of them, more perfectly.

To do this, we assume both a particular and formal objectivity. The first kind of objectivity is rather common among most Christians who accept that goodness, truth, and beauty are not things that we define but are things defined in the nature of God. But the second kind of objectivity is pretty uncommon among Christians, who assume that the truths of God could be mediated equally well through any kind of man-made forms. Paul's discussion of idols in Romans 1 would suggest this is not so. Mankind can let his loathing of Glory press him into ever less articulate forms of communication until finally he cannot speak about anything with his fellow man. He can then live in an intellectual world of his own creation. Music is not immune to this devolution and we do well to acknowledge it. Thus, we study in all our disciplines the most articulate forms, and the most articulate instances of those forms, so that we gain access to as much of God's glory as we can, given our limited amount of time. This means a multiplicity of forms, but it does not mean formal relativism.

We must also assume epistemological security. God speaks and, if the bookends of Babel and Pentecost are any explanation, he undergirds our own speaking as he pleases. Artists and musicians speak to us in the language of design about the nature of design and, ultimately about the God of design

himself. We can confidently show our students how this is the case because we trust that God himself is allowing us to understand the music and art we study together. He has incentive to do so, since he is revealed through those things.

In my classroom, this philosophy finds practice through initial and regularly repeated reinforcement of these concepts. Along with this, my students are made really to learn the most articulate music from the most articulate forms of music that our culture has produced. They are also prepared therefore to be sensitive to the best forms that other cultures

have produced because their aesthetic objectivity makes them humble. They know that they can learn about beauty because it is a thing outside themselves. They are also discerning and able to guard against spending their time with unworthy things.

I am open to teaching just about anything I am competent to teach, and open to becoming competent in things I am not yet competent in. I am so open because I know that in all disciplines—indeed in all licit knowledge—I encounter the glory of the God who saved me and is saving me to himself.