

Alethia Lines

a twice monthly newsletter for parents and friends of Alethia Academy

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Little Adults

by Phil Henry

The Greeks believed that children were "little adults." But in our enlightened times, we've gotten past all that. That is to our loss, and we see the damaging results of setting our expectations too low for our children.

However, some parents, and all of us from time to time, forget about what it means to be a kid. We slip and think we're the ones being tested and are intent on eliminating all the failures of our own now-expired childhood in our children.

To see this little adult approach to parenting, just go to ballet lessons or violin lessons or some home school or Christian school classrooms or a football field where some children are oppressed by the unreasonable expectations of their coaches, teachers, or parents.

This is like the comic I read some time ago where the dad speaks to Johnnie, who is dressed in a football uniform, holding his helmet at his side: "Johnnie, you go out there and show who's dad is the toughest!"

Such ones need to sit at the feet of the Prophet Bill Cosby, who has said, "We try so hard to give our children what we didn't have that we forget to give them what we did."

Forgetting to give our children what we had can mean we're being overprotective. It can also mean we're stifling them. Either way, we need to take the proverbial chill pill.

Does this mean we do away with our high standards of excellence in our work of educating our children? Not at all. We're talking about balance.

Remember: all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. Play is part of a godly life: if God didn't like play (refreshment that relieves the stress of our work) then why did he invent sleep? Play is called "recreation" because, like sleep, it is re-creative, it is restorative.

But it isn't just play that is restorative; it is the playfulness of learning—to cite our school's motto, *Dulce et Utile*. It is the dulce, the sweetness, of learning.

This ties into our work as a school: if we focus only on the usefulness of our students' education, then it becomes oppressive and burdensome. That's where the sweetness-usefulness motto of Alethia is so helpful.

This is like the good news of the Gospel. All usefulness is like Moses and Sinai. But, since God has won our hearts to Himself in the Gospel, usefulness is the byproduct of sweetness. But in this, He has won us over, he has persuaded us, he has wooed us, he has dazzled us with His beauty. Our teaching, and our parenting, when grounded in the Gospel, should take the same approach.

What was your best experience, the most dazzling memory, you have as a child? What made it so good? What was your best schooling moment—when you were a student and life seemed to be really alive? What was happening? How can we do that as parents and teachers for our kids?



Alethia students and teachers after school.

Funny Student Moment

On October 31, all the kindergarten students arrived at school in costume, except one. Mrs. Finch said that she had come to school dressed as a kindergarten teacher, and the student without a costume said that she had dressed as a "student." They debated about which "costume" was scarier, the "student" or the "teacher," with Mrs. Finch insisting that she was probably scarier. She could not convince the kids, however, since she is a well-loved teacher!

Announcements

- **Parent/Teacher conferences will begin on Monday, November 6.**
- **Family Potluck Picnic on Saturday, November 11**, at Lincoln Regional Park (south on Pantano and east on Escalante). Please bring a main dish and a side dish or dessert. Drinks will be provided.

NOVEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

HALF DAY November 22 (Thanksgiving Break)
NO SCHOOL November 23-24 (Thanksgiving Break)

Birthdays!

Colby Finch—November 2
 Hannah Hamilton—November 8

Teach the Children

The children, Lord, the children—
 Our thronging prayers find word
 In one deep heart petition:
 Do thou for them, O Lord;
 Do Thou for them and teach them
 To use their Shield and Sword;
 Thy gallant lovers, make them.
 Do Thou for them, O Lord.

That disciplined and fearless,
 They fight the fight and win,
 Do Thou for them, we pray Thee,
 O Spirit of discipline.
 With heavenly power endue them;
 With heavenly love fulfill.
 Perform in them thy pleasure;
 Teach them to do Thy will.

From *Mountain Breezes, The Collected Poems of Amy Carmichael (1867-1951)*



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Classical Education

Typically the schools in early American history were Classical Christian schools. The instructors were usually ministers whose training was a combination of classical languages and literature and Protestant theology. In other words, they studied the Bible in its original Hebrew and Greek, and they read Homer's Iliad in Greek, Tacitus' histories in Latin, as well as studying John Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion. For example, Moses Waddell, a Southern Presbyterian preacher and teacher (1770-1840), began studying Latin at age eight, and after six years of school, he had finished courses in Greek, Latin, and mathematics. After his conversion and entrance into the ministry, Waddell established, in a log building, a school with an enrollment of as many as 180 students a year. In his book *Southern Presbyterian Leaders*, Dr. Henry Alexander White made these comments about Waddell's school:

The food furnished to the students in Waddell's log college was plain, for it was usually nothing more than cornbread and bacon. A blast from a ram's horn called them all together from morning and evening prayers. When the weather was mild the students sat or lay beneath the trees to prepare their lessons. The sound of the horn told the class in Homer when to assemble, and all of the members rushed at once to the recitation hall in the main building. Then the horn called up, in regular order, the Cicero, the Horace, and the Virgil classes, as well as those engaged in the study of mathematics and English.

The success of this school obviously did not come from expensive facilities and modern technology or even a good cafeteria. (This shows the fallacy of those who promote higher school taxes to improve education.) Jack Maddex, Jr. said, "Waddell's students mastered the classical curriculum at an exacting pace, interspersing long study periods with recitations." Many of Waddell's students achieved prominence in academic and civil affairs.

Taken from "Classical Christian Education: A Look at Some History" by Ben House, www.reformed.org

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