Unit 2

The Historians

Livy, Tacitus, Sallust, Caesar, Plutarch and Cicero

A ROMAN ROADS MEDIA Video Course

Workbook and Answer Key

Please Note: This workbook may be periodically updated, expanded, or revised. Download the latest revision at www.RomanRoadsMedia.com/materials.
About Roman Roads Media

Roman Roads combines its technical expertise with the experience of established authorities in the field of classical education to create quality video resources tailored to the homeschooler. Just as the first century roads of the Roman Empire were the physical means by which the early church spread the gospel far and wide, so Roman Roads Media uses today’s technology to bring timeless truth, goodness, and beauty into your home. By combining clear instruction with visual aids and examples, we help inspire in your children a lifelong love of learning. As homeschool graduates themselves, our producers know the value of excellent educational tools, and strive to ensure that Roman Roads’ materials are of the highest caliber.

About Old Western Culture

Old Western Culture: A Christian Approach to the Great Books is an integrated humanities course designed to give students an overview of Western culture by studying the great books from a Christian perspective. The video series consists of four courses, designed to be completed over four years:

Year 1: The Greeks
Unit 1: The Epics—The Poems of Homer
Unit 2: Drama and Lyric—The Tragedies, Comedies, and Minor Poems
Unit 3: The Histories—Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon
Unit 4: The Philosophers—Aristotle and Plato

Year 2: The Romans
Unit 1: The Aeneid—Vergil and other Roman Epics
Unit 2: The Historians—Livy, Tacitus, Sallust, Caesar, Plutarch, and Cicero
Unit 3: Early Christianity—Clement, Ignatius, Irenaeus, Justin Martyr, and Eusebius
Unit 4: Nicene Christianity—Athenasius, Augustine, and Boethius

Year 3: Christendom
Unit 1: Early Medieval—St. Benedict, Bede, Charlemagne, and Alfred the Great
Unit 2: The Defense of the Faith—Anselm, Geoffrey of Monmouth, The Golden Legend
Unit 3: The Medieval Mind—Dante and Aquinas
Unit 4: The Reformation—Erasmus, Calvin, Cranmer, Spencer, and Chaucer

Year 4: The Moderns
Unit 1: Early British Poetry—Metaphysical Poets, Milton, Shakespeare, and Bunyan
Unit 2: The Rise of Enlightenment—Bacon, Descartes, Locke, Rousseau, Jefferson, Burke, and de Toqueville
Unit 3: Later British Poetry—Neo-Classical Poetry, Victorian Poetry, and Romantic Poetry
Unit 4: The Novels—Austen, Dickens, Dostoevsky, and Hugo

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Introduction and Overview

If you could take only ten books to a deserted island on which you were to be marooned for the rest of your life, what would they be? As Mortimer Adler says, this is no game—we are all in precisely that position. We are simply unable to read all the books there are; therefore, we had better choose well. Some books exercise our minds by their rigor and move our spirits by their beauty with every reading. Some books help us communicate with our culture because they have been a common element in education for centuries. Some books aid our understanding of the physical world by a clear exposition of careful observations by powerful minds. But only a very few books do any of these things well. And as C. S. Lewis says, old books give us a radically different perspective on life and our assumptions, and no modern books can do this at all, no matter how good they are.

As Christians, we understand that ours is a historical faith, one that originated, developed, and grew in certain times at certain places. To study and understand the long stream of history and thought and to comprehend our place in that stream is to increase our appreciation of our cultural inheritance, our ability to use wisely and build faithfully upon that inheritance, and our ability to understand and respond to God’s work in history.

The conclusion we may draw from all of this is that the old books are best, and the best of the old books are the best of all. That is why we read the great books. Join us in Old Western Culture as we explore the best of the old books from a Christian perspective!

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR

Wesley Callihan grew up on a farm in Idaho and earned a bachelor’s in history from the University of Idaho in 1983. He has taught at Logos School, the University of Idaho, and New St. Andrews College (all in Moscow, Idaho) and at Veritas Academy in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. He has written curriculum for a number of Christian Schools, including several members of the Association of Classical and Christian Schools. Veritas Press has published his great books study guides for homeschoolers. Mr. Callihan speaks regularly at conferences for classical Christian educators in home and private schools and teaches summer intensive Latin courses. He has written columns and short fiction for Credenda/Agenda and Antithesis, and contributed

Wes and his wife, Dani, have six children, four of them married, and six grandchildren. Wes and Dani and the two remaining kids live near Wes’s parents in an old farmhouse in northern Idaho, where they all use the cold winters as an excuse to read and the hot summers as another excuse to read.

How to Use This Course

*Old Western Culture: A Christian Approach to the Great Books* is a four-year course of study designed for grades 9–12. Each year of *Old Western Culture* is a double-credit literature and social studies course. The four units that make up each year may also be used individually as one-quarter electives.

Recommended Schedule

*Old Western Culture* is designed to accommodate a traditional nine-week term (for a thirty-six-week school year). A recommended schedule is provided below. We expect the average student to spend one to three hours per day on this course: first completing the assigned readings and answering the workbook questions under the “Reading” header, and then watching the lectures and answering the video questions under the “Lecture” header.

Special note about this unit’s reading load and questions: This term’s reading assignments and accompanying questions cover a small portion of very dense material (mostly Aristotle). Students should not get hung up on any particular reading passage or related study question if it does not make sense after one or two careful readings. Rather, they should move on to the lecture, which will likely shed some light on the difficult passage. If students still have questions after watching the lecture and rereading the passage, they can email Mr. Callihan at askmrc@romanroadsmedia.com.

Materials

- **DVD Lessons.** Instructor Wes Callihan’s deep knowledge of the classics and decades of teaching experience are a rich resource for homeschool families.

- **The Great Books.** *Old Western Culture* immerses students in reading the classics themselves rather
than just reading about them. Families have several options for acquiring the texts:

1. Purchase the recommended translations. Visit the Old Western Culture: The Greeks page at romanroadsmedia.com, and click on the “Books” tab for Amazon links.
2. Use copies you already own, even if they’re not the recommended translations. Mr. Callihan frequently emphasizes the benefit of referencing multiple translations.
3. Download ebook versions of the original source texts at romanroadsmedia.com/materials. These digital text versions are not the recommended translations, but they are satisfactory.

- **The Student Workbook.** Purchase a hard copy, or download a free PDF at romanroadsmedia.com/materials. The workbook questions allow students to test their understanding of the reading assignments and the lectures.

- **Section Numbers and References.** In order to maintain the flexibility to use multiple translation options, we have avoided referencing original works by edition-specific page numbers. Instead we provide the book/chapter or section or line number where applicable.

- **Guide to the Art.** This insert included with every DVD extends the curriculum into an exploration of ancient art and more recent artistic responses to the literature.

- **Additional Resources.** Visit romanroadsmedia.com/materials for an up-to-date list of additional resources.

**ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS**

In addition to the reading, lectures, and workbook questions, students will complete the following:

- **Term Paper.** Students may choose any topic of interest from the readings or lectures. We recommend a paper length of 750–1,200 words.

- **Final Exam.** Visit www.romanroadsmedia.com/materials to download the most recent final exams. Two options, Exam A and Exam B, are provided. The exams are similar in style and difficulty, but the content varies. Students who score lower than 90 percent on Exam A should take Exam B two days later to help reinforce subject mastery.

**AGE LEVEL**

In Old Western Culture students will encounter mature themes such as paganism, sexual immorality, detailed battle descriptions (mostly in actual reading), and nudity in classical painting and sculpture. We recommend the series for ages fourteen and above, but of course parents will want to consider the maturity levels of their children and decide whether Old Western Culture will be appropriate.
### Recommended Nine-Week Schedule

Key: 🎧 Watch Lectures ☐ Answer Workbook Questions ☑️ Read Texts ☞ Complete Additional Assignments

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Lesson 1A
Philosophy of History and Monarchy

READING

No reading for this lesson.

LECTURE

Watch Lecture 1A, and then answer the following questions.

1. Why is it important to link biblical history timelines to secular history timelines?

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2. What is the driving force in history?

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3. According to Livy, what is the root cause of Rome’s moral decline?

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4. How do material blessings such as wealth and power affect character traits?

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**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

What is honor? How is it linked to human dignity? Can one person rob others of their honor and dignity? How can a person, especially a Christian, preserve his honor and dignity even when others attempt to forcibly remove them from him?
Lesson 1B
Philosophy of History and Monarchy (Continued)

READING

Livy, Early History of Rome, Book 1. Remember: Complete all reading and study questions from reading before watching the lecture.

1. What is Livy’s attitude toward ancient tales that cannot be verified as historical records? Are they useful for a nation’s history? Why or why not? (preface)

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2. What does Livy want his readers to attend to in his work? (preface)

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3. What does Livy believe is the purpose of history? (preface)

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4. What was Numa renowned for in his reign? (1.19–1.21)

5. What was Servius’s most important service to the community of Rome, comparable to Numa’s establishment of religion? (1.42–1.44)

6. What was Tarquin the Proud’s reign like? (1.49)

7. How did the rape of Lucretia lead to the final overthrow of the kings? (1.58–1.60)
Lecture

Watch Lecture 1B, and then answer the following questions.

11. What twentieth century musical film was based on the story of the Sabine women?

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12. In a throwback to Herodotus, what covert message does Tarquinius Superbus send to his son by cutting off the heads of the tallest poppies?

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13. Why does Lucretia commit suicide? What Roman ideal does this reflect?

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Discussion Questions

What is honor? How is it linked to human dignity? Can one person rob others of their honor and dignity? How can a person, especially a Christian, preserve his honor and dignity even when others attempt to forcibly remove them from him?
Lesson 2
The Beginning and Heroes of the Republic

Reading
Livy, Early History of Rome, Books 2 and 3. Remember: Complete all reading and study questions from reading before watching the lecture.

1. In the first paragraph, what is the contrast Livy paints between the government of Rome before and after the fall of the Tarquin kings? (2.1)

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2. Why does Livy believe that premature liberty would have been a disaster? Upon what does he believe true patriotism is based? (2.1)

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3. Why was the death of Tarquin a mixed blessing to the Roman people? (2.21)

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4. What were the two great problems besetting Rome throughout Book 2? How are these problems related? (2.42, 2.60)

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5. What does the story on this first page of Book 3 tell us about human nature? (Note Livy’s comment—“Human nature does not change.”) (3.1)

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6. Why did Cincinnatus refuse a second term as consul? What did he say would happen to his reputation by so refusing? Was he right? (3.21)

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7. What was the purpose of the Board of Ten (the Decemvirs)? What were the good and bad results of the power given to them? (3.33–3.38)

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8. What parallels are there between the stories of Verginia and Lucretia in their results to the women and to the country’s politics?

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**LECTURE**

Watch Lecture 2, and then answer the following study questions,

9. What is the basis of security in the rule of law?

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10. Why do the upper class or aristocrats tend to be more patriotic?

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11. How do the Romans limit the power of the consuls?

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12. In what ways was George Washington an American Cincinnatus?

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**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

What is patriotism? How should our identity as Christians affect the way we view our country? our loyalty to our country? the way we interact with our country and government?
Lesson 3
Threats to the Republic

Reading

Livy, *Early History of Rome*, Books 4 and 5. Reread the preface before answering these questions. Remember: Complete all reading and study questions from reading before watching the lecture.

1. Book 4 opens with two bills proposed by the tribunes, which cause a tremendous uproar immediately. What are these two bills? (4.1)

2. What was the purpose of the position of censor? (4.8)

3. The need for dictators arose frequently during this time. When each had done his job, he returned to Rome, generally triumphant, and resigned. What kind of men are the dictators? What do we know about the Romans that they pick this kind of man as dictator? (4.24, 4.29, 4.34, 4.57)
4. What was the reaction of the men of Rome when the Senate decided to pay soldiers from public funds instead of requiring them to serve at their own private expense? What is Livy’s evaluation of this “favor”? (4.60)

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5. In what ways is Livy’s description of the destruction of Veii like the story of the Trojan War and its final sack? (5.21)

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6. What angered the Gauls and brought on the attack on Rome? (5.36)

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7. How did the sacred geese of Juno save the Citadel? (5.47)

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**LECTURE**

Watch Lecture 3, and then answer the following study questions,

8. Why were the augurs chosen from the patricians?

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9. According to Livy, what is the greatest threat to a state’s stability and longevity?

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10. What does Mr. Callihan say is the relationship between religion and state?

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11. How did the Romans decide to stay in Rome rather than relocate to Veii? What does this tell us about their view of the gods?

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Discussion Questions

How should the church and the state interact? Should they be completely separated or ought one to have influence or control over the other? Why? How should a Christian state treat other religions?
Lesson 4
The Republic in Decay

READING

Sallust, *The Jugurthise War and the Conspiracy of Catiline*. Remember: Complete all reading and study questions from reading before watching the lecture.

The Jugurthise War

1. What contrast does Sallust draw between the mind and the body, and how does it lead to his choice of occupation (writing history)? (Chapter 1, Sections 1–2 and 4)

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2. Why does Sallust think this war is such an important one to write about? (Chapter 1, Section 5)

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3. How did Jugurtha gain power over Hiempsal, and why were they opposed? (Chapter 3, Sections 11–12)

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The Conspiracy of Catiline

4. What parallels are there between the preface of this work and that of the Jugurtha one? Given both prefaces, what does Sallust think is most important for men to strive for? Why might he think this? (Chapter 1, Sections 1–4)

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5. Who was Catiline? How is his character described? (Chapter 1, Section 5)

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6. According to chapter one, what was the basic course of Roman history? How is this similar to Livy’s description in his preface? (Chapter 1, Sections 6–12)

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7. What was the final end of the conspiracy and how did Catiline die? (Chapter 7, Sections 55–61)

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LECTURE
Watch Lecture 4, and then answer the following questions.

8. Who were members of the equestrian class in Rome?

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9. What indications does Sallust give in the opening passages of *The Jugurthine War* about how he ordered his life, at least in his later years?

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10. How should Sallust’s prefaces affect the way we read these two histories?

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11. What is the common theme or focus of both Livy and Sallust?

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**Discussion Questions**

Do the morals and religious beliefs of a historian affect his writing? Why or why not? Even if Sallust was not always upright and honorable, does that mean we should value his writings less than Livy’s?
Lesson 5
The Gallic Wars

READING

Caesar, *The Gallic Wars*. Remember: Complete all reading and study questions from reading before watching the lecture.

1. What years did Caesar live?

Book 1:

2. What motivated the Helvetian invasion of Gaul? (1.2)

3. Why did Caesar deal so leniently with the Helvetii, providing food and sending them back to their homelands? (1.28)

Book 2:

4. What ancient defense tactic do the Nervii use against cavalry? (2.17)
Book 5
5. What are three of the customs of the Britons as described by Caesar? (5.14)

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Book 6
6. What was the leading tribe in Gaul before Caesar’s involvement, and what were the two leading tribes after his involvement? (6.12)

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Lecture
Watch Lecture 5, and then answer the following questions.

7. What was Julius Caesar’s personal motivation for conquering Gaul?

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8. Why can we be reasonably sure that The Gallic Wars is objective and not slanted to enhance Julius Caesar’s reputation?

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9. Why should we read *The Gallic Wars*?

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10. What other military leaders followed the example of the Helvetii in burning their belongings to motivate their men to victory?

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**DISCUSSION QUESTION**

Why do you think Caesar writes in the third person?
Lesson 6
Philosophy of History and Tiberius

Reading

Tacitus, The Annals of Imperial Rome, Books I–V. Remember: Complete all reading and study questions from reading before watching the lecture.

1. Why couldn’t historians who lived during or immediately after the reigns of Tiberius, Gaius, Claudius, and Nero write objectively about those emperors? Why does Tacitus believe that he can? (1.1)

2. How did Germanicus test the morale of his men before the battle? What did he discover? (2.12–2.13)

3. Why does Tacitus give the details of the beginnings, progress, and conclusion of the Libo case? What evil did this case initiate that corroded public life for many years? Note how Tiberius handles the case, the slave incident on pg. 91 being a particularly good example. (2.27–2.31)
4. What does Tacitus think is the historian’s foremost duty? How will this affect his writing of history? (3.65)

5. How would you describe the relationship between Tiberius and the Senate? (3.65)

**Lecture**

Watch Lecture 6, and then answer the following questions.

6. 1. What is one possible explanation for Tacitus’s knowledge of the Christians?
7. How did the Cotton library originate? Why is it significant for scholars?

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8. During which emperor’s reign were most of the New Testament books written?

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9. Why should we, as Christians, read Tacitus?

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10. Why will a historian’s bias always affect his writings?

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11. Why was Caligula so evil despite having so a good father as Germanicus?

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Can any field of study be free from bias? Why or why not? Is bias necessarily a bad thing? How should an understanding of human bias affect the way we study and learn about various subjects?
READING


1. What does Tacitus think about the relationship between fate and human responsibility? (4.20, 6.22)

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2. What does Tacitus say is the value of studying many of these apparently insignificant events? What expression here echoes Livy? (4.32–4.33)

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3. What progression do we see in the life of Tiberius? (6.51)

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4. What biblical story is reflected in the account of Messalina coveting parks? (11.1-11.2)

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5. What does Tacitus say is the origin of the Greek and Latin alphabets? (11.13)

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6. What was Agrippina’s agenda to achieve power? (12.3)

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7. Who was Pallas, and what was his relationship with Agrippina? What was his connection with the apostle Paul? (12.1, 12.54, 13.2, Acts 23–24)

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Lecture

Watch Lecture 7, and then answer the following questions.

8. How do astrology and magic differ in their views of man’s relation to nature?

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9. What can we conclude about Tacitus as a historian based on his account about the phoenix?

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10. What is the general principle about human nature Tacitus wants us to see in the summary of Tiberius’s life?

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11. In Tacitus’s *Annals*, what always results from wicked men committing acts of vengeance or retribution?

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Discussion Questions

Is vengeance always bad? Why does God say, “Vengeance is mine. I will repay?” What difference might there be between man’s vengeance and God’s? Is there a place or way for man to execute God’s vengeance?
Lesson 8
Nero

READING

1. Who were Burrus and Seneca and how does Tacitus describe their characters? (13.2)

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2. What was Agrippina’s reaction to Britannicus’s murder, and why? (13.6)

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4. How did Nero profit by the Great Fire of Rome? What regulations were implemented to prevent future fires when the city was rebuilt? (15.42–15.43)

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5. What is Tacitus's attitude toward the Christians? Why? (15.44)

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6. What attitudes does Tacitus reveal in this paragraph about the character of the men involved in Nero’s reign and about the cause of all its evils? (16.16)

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**Lecture**

Watch Lecture 8, and then answer the following questions.

7. Even though Seneca attempted to teach Nero self-control, Nero was a monster. Must we necessarily conclude Seneca failed, or is there another way to consider the outcome?
8. Why does Poppea protect the Christians in the palace household?

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9. After Nero murders Agrippina, what indication does Tacitus give that Nero still has some degree of conscience remaining?

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10. Throughout history, whom has the church typically considered the first martyrs?

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**Discussion Questions**

If you had been Nero’s slave, would you have helped him commit suicide? Is it ever appropriate or right for a Christian to plot to assassinate an evil ruler? Why or why not? Think about David’s attitude toward Saul, Paul’s command to honor our governing authorities, and the scriptural commands to protect the innocent and defend the unprotected.
Lesson 9
Demosthenes and Cicero

READING


Plutarch’s Demosthenes

1. What early experience inspired Demosthenes to pursue oratory, and how did he refine his early roughness of speech? (5.1-5.4, 7.6–8.1, 11.1)

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2. What were Demosthenes’s two great weaknesses, and what episodes show them? (20.1–20.2, 25.1–15.6)

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Plutarch’s Cicero

4. How did Cicero refine his early roughness of speech? (4.3)

   
   
   
   
   

   

5. As quaester, as praetor, as consul, and as general, how did Cicero conduct himself? (6.1–6.2, 9.1–9.6, 12.1–22.2, 36.1–36.4)

   
   
   
   
   

   

6. What was Cicero’s downfall? How did he die, and why? (46.1–48.4)


LECTURE

Watch Lecture 9, and then answer the following questions.

7. What is different about our response to the biography of a skilled artisan versus that of a virtuous man?


8. Why did Plutarch write character sketches?


9. What does the term “philippic” mean? How did it originate?


10. How did the Romans view suicide?

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11. How did the speaker’s platform in the Forum come to be called the rostrum?

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Lesson 10
Alexander and Caesar

READING


Alexander

1. How does Plutarch’s design in writing affect how he chooses what things to write about from the lives of great men? In what way is Plutarch’s aim in writing like Livy’s? (1.1–1.3)

2. Alexander’s conduct after defeating Darius in battle launches Plutarch into a description of Alexander’s general way of life. What do we learn from this section about Alexander’s character? (21.1–23.6)
3. What is Plutarch’s assessment of the death of Clitus? (50.1) What does this episode reveal about Alexander’s character? (50.1–52.1)

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Caesar

4. Note Plutarch’s comment that Caesar’s power “now openly tended to the altering of the whole constitution.” What was Caesar’s ambition all of his life? Who first noted the danger in Caesar? Why did Cicero fear him? (4.1–4.4)

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5. How did Caesar conduct himself before his men, and what was the effect on them? (17.1–17.2)

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6. How did Rome’s moral condition lead to the civil wars between Caesar and Pompey? (28.1–28.5)

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7. What project of Caesar’s was brought to completion and proved of very great use? (59.1–59.3)

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Lecture

Watch Lecture 10, and then answer the following questions.

8. What do we learn about Alexander’s character from the episodes with Bucephalus, Diogenes, the Gordian knot, and his physician, Philip?

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9. What one goal did Alexander esteem greater than glory gained through military conquests?

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10. Why was Julius Caesar not as great or virtuous as Alexander?

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11. Why did the morals and integrity of the Roman people naturally result in a dictator?

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12. How did Alexander and Julius Caesar pave the way for Christ’s first coming and the spread of Christianity?

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Lesson 11

Cicero

READING

Cicero, “Against Verres,” “Against Antony,” and “On Duties.” Remember: Complete all reading and study questions from reading before watching the lecture.

Against Verres

1. How does Cicero turn the case into an important one for the judges and senators? (paragraphs 1–3)

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Second Philippic Against Antony

2. What does Cicero say at the end that he wants most of all from Antony? (Paragraph 118)

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“On Duties” III

3. Why is the study of moral obligations “the most luxuriantly fertile field of all” philosophical studies? (chapter I)

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4. Why, according to Cicero, is it unnatural to do wrong? (Chapter III)

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5. Is it wrong to seek your own interest or advantage? (Chapter V)

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6. What is the “only yardstick of advantage”? Why? (Chapter VIII)

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7. When, according to Cicero, do promises not have to be kept? (Chapter IX)

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LECTURE

Watch Lecture 10, and then answer the following questions.

8. What was the client-patron system?

9. What are the three types of appeals Cicero uses to persuade his audience?

10. How does Cicero answer the question, “Why is it better for me to live morally?”
11. How does Paul use the Roman understanding of community in his epistle to the Romans?

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12. Why is Cicero’s *On Duties* important for us, as Christians, to read?

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**Discussion Questions**

In a country where paying bribes to public officials is routine for navigating bureaucratic red tape and actually accomplishing business, is it appropriate for a Christian to pay bribes? Are there any situations in which it is appropriate for a Christian to pay bribes? Why or why not?
Lesson 12
Other Historians and Review of Roman Historians

READING

Suetonius, “Life of Augustus”; Correspondence of Pliny and Trajan; and Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, Book 1, chapters 1-3.” Remember: Complete all reading and study questions from reading before watching the lecture.

Life of Augustus

1. What was Augustus’s guiding principle in governing the country? (Chapter 42)

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2. What was Augustus’s attitude toward the laws of Rome? (Chapter 56)

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Correspondence of Pliny and Trajan

3. What is Pliny’s general approach to dealing with people accused of being Christians? (Letter 97)

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4. How does Trajan advise dealing with anonymous accusations? (Letter 98)

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Excerpt on Education

5. What is the relationship between man and reason? How, then, is education related to reason? (1.1–1.3)

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6. Why should students be given vacations? (3.8–3.9)

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Lecture

Watch Lecture 12, and then answer the following questions.

7. How did Suetonius impact later biographers?

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8. What was Trajan’s primary focus in how he advised Pliny to treat the Christians?

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9. According to Quintilian, what attitude should parents have toward learning if they want their children to be well educated?

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10. If the citizens of a country are corrupt, how will that affect the government?

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**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

How ought we, as Christians, to view the failures of our government to govern justly and wisely? What is the cause? How ought we to think about this and respond to it? Looking back at how God used Roman corruption to spread Christianity, what hope can we have in our current situation?
Answer Key
Lesson 1a
Philosophy of History and the Monarchy
1. The events of the Bible occur in the context of secular history and vice versa, thus it is important to know the connection between the two.
2. Personal choices by individuals, not impersonal forces, drive the course of history.
3. Livy recognizes that Rome’s morality declined because previous generations failed to instill in their children the virtues that made Rome great.
4. Wealth and power do not corrupt, but rather amplify the character that is already present, magnifying both good and bad traits.

Lesson 1b
Philosophy of History and the Monarchy
1. Livy views ancient tales as charming stories that add deserved dignity to Rome’s past, precisely because they blur the distinction between human and supernatural elements.
2. Livy requests his readers to focus on nature and character of Rome’s history, of the men and events who shaped it, so that they can follow the arc of Rome’s moral decline and see why Roman culture is in its current disarray.
3. The purpose of history is for the reader to find both depraved people and wicked events to take as warnings, and noble men and events to take as models.
4. Numa was famous for establishing religion in Rome, as a means to occupy the people now that Rome was no longer at war. This resulted in a peaceful community devoted to pursuing a noble way of life.
5. Servius established the census, which allowed Rome to easily organize each man’s contribution to the state based on his resources.
6. Tarquin ruled by fear, killing all those who opposed him and confiscating their property. He ruled by brute force as a dictator, without consulting the Senate.
7. Lucretia’s rape and subsequent suicide to preserve her honor inspired her husband’s friend, Brutus, to lead a rebellion against Tarquin to end the monarchy. Lucretia’s story, her dead body, her husband’s and father’s grief, and Brutus’s impassioned rhetoric stirred up the people en masse to finally take action, depose Tarquin, and end the monarchy.
8. The 1954 film Seven Brides for Seven Brothers is based on the story of the Sabine Women.
9. In an episode very similar to the story in Herodotus of Thrasybulus cutting off the tallest wheat stalks, Tarquinius Superbus sends his son a covert message by cutting off the heads of the tallest poppies, implying that he can take the city by having its most influential men assassinated.
10. Lucretia commits suicide so that future generations of young women cannot point to her as an excuse for their own immoral behavior. Lucretia exemplified the Roman commitment to honor, preserving honor even above her own life.

Lesson 2
Beginning and Heroes of the Republic
1. During the reign of the Tarquin kings, the nation was subject to the whims of individuals, whereas during the Republic, the supreme authority of law ruled the state.
2. True patriotism is based on community—relationships between people. Before such community had been established, freedom would have resulted in the nation disintegrating, the people constantly being at odds with one another, being fickle, and lacking any foundation.
3. All the citizens of Rome were relieved by Tarquin's death because he was no longer a looming threat. However, since goodwill between the classes was no longer necessary to resist a common threat, the patricians soon took advantage of this to oppress the common people.

4. The two major problems were military offensives from surrounding nations and internal unrest due to class conflict between the patricians and the plebeians. The civic discord negatively impacted the war effort, since the commanders and common soldiers distrusted and resented each other, while civic inefficiency wasted resources and made it difficult to support the army.

5. The story shows us that human nature is greedy. We often want something merely because other people have it, or we want to have more than someone else has.

6. Cincinnatus refused a second term as consul because the Senate had decreed that magistrates should not be reelected. Although the common people violated this decree by reelecting tribunes, he would not use that as an excuse for violating the law himself. Cincinnatus said his reputation would be enhanced by his refusal. He did, in fact, so win respect by this action that when it was necessary to choose a dictator, Cincinnatus was unanimously named for the position.

7. The purpose of the Decemvirs was to reduce the mass of Romans laws to a written code. The first set of Decemvirs ruled well, executing fair justice in the court of law and producing the ten Tables of Law, which became the foundation of all future Roman law. However, the second set of Decemvirs took advantage of their absolute power and the fact that their decisions could not be appealed, and they ruled as capricious and cruel tyrants.

8. Both Verginia and Lucretia die for the sake of their chastity. The death of each results in the overthrow of the ruling tyrants; Tarquin because of Lucretia and Appius because of Verginia.

9. When all the citizens of a country, rich and poor, rulers and commoners, are subject to that country’s laws, there is security. Both poor and rich people can appeal to the authority of the law for justice.

10. According to Livy, patriotism is based in love of the land and respect of family. Aristocrats tend to be more settled and stable then common people, staying on the same land for generations and taking the time to remember and retell their family histories. Because they have more to preserve, they tend to be more patriotic.

11. The Romans limited and divided consular power. They required two men to share the power of consul, splitting the domains of power and responsibility. The consuls could also only serve for one year and only for one term. Finally, the power of the consuls was subject to the will of the Senate.

12. Like Cincinnatus, Washington willingly curtailed his time in power. As soon as the War for Independence was won, he resigned his commission as general. He also only served two terms as president, setting an example for future presidents of limited power.

Lesson 3
Threats to the Republic

1. One bill proposed legalizing marriages between patricians and plebeians, while the other proposed allowing plebeians to be elected as consuls.

2. The position of censor was instituted to relieve the consuls of the organizational burden of counting the people. The duties of censor came to include determining members of the
different classes, controlling public revenue, and deciding the location of public and private buildings.

3. The dictators are courageous leaders and capable generals who successfully defeat the enemies of Rome. Upon victory, they immediately resign their dictatorship, demonstrating their humility and devotion to Rome’s good rather than their own advancement.

4. All the men of Rome were thrilled by this measure except for the plebeian tribunes, because it would involve a tax. But since the patricians led the way in paying the tax, the commoners gladly contributed. Livy saw the favor as a good thing, both because poor soldiers would not suffer financially due to their service and because the Senate acted on its own initiative for the good of the commoners.

5. Livy describes how Veii had been fated to fall and how the gods were actually fighting against Veii just as Troy was fated to be destroyed and Aeneas saw the gods themselves taking part in Troy’s destruction. The city is taken by surprise through an attack from a tunnel, casting the whole city into confusion as many are slaughtered, just as the men hidden within the city in the Trojan horse defeated Troy.

6. Roman envoys are sent to negotiate with Gauls in regard to the Roman colony Clusium, but the envoys become enraged and kill one of the Gallic chieftains. The Gauls are justly angered and plan an assault on Rome.

7. The Gauls had succeeded in quietly scaling the cliff up to the Citadel, but the geese were disturbed and their cackling and commotion woke the army before the Gauls could gain a foothold in the Citadel.

8. Since the augurs represented the people of Rome to the gods in religious ceremonies, they had to be fully Roman ethnically. Because the patricians were a settled and stable class, an augur chosen from among them would certainly be Roman, whereas an augur from the common people might be a recent immigrant or of mixed race.

9. Political rivalry or internal civil conflict tends to tear down and destroy a state more readily than external threats of invasion.

10. Since humans are made to worship, we will always worship something. Faithful practice of good religion, then, is necessary to the stability of the state. Fractured and irregular religious practice will lead to a fractured state.

11. The Senate heard a centurion in the Forum telling his men that they “might as well stop here.” The Senate and people took this as a sign from the gods to remain in Rome. Their ready acceptance of such a trivial sign demonstrates the Romans’ devotion to the gods and conviction that the gods were on their side, helping them by even insignificant things.

Lesson 4

The Republic in Decay

1. Sallust says that the soul is eternal and incorruptible, pursuing virtue and achieving glory, while the body is corruptible and desires base things. Whatever pertains to the body will perish and pass away, but whatever pertains to the soul endures. Sallust writes history because he believes that recording past events is one of the noblest engagements of the soul.

2. Sallust considers this war important because the final victory was so hotly contested and because this was the first time the patricians’ haughtiness was challenged.

3. Jugurtha and Hiempsal were opposed because they both wanted the highest power and honor in the kingdom. Hiempsal thought it was his by right, since he was a natural son and Jugurtha was adopted. Jugurtha thought the honor was due to him, since he was the
oldest son. Hiempsal was staying in the house of Jugurtha’s servant, who made duplicate keys for Jugurtha. Jugurtha then used the keys to break into the house at night with his soldiers and kill Hiempsal.

4. In this preface, Sallust also compares the body to the mind, noting again the superiority of the mind and soul. He also points out that desire for preeminence in physical things leads to wars. Sallust thinks men ought to strive after mental perfection and renown as the ultimate means of finding satisfaction and achieving lasting fame.

5. Catiline was a nobleman, highly intelligent and cunning, but he loved evil—war, discord, and bloodshed—and immensely ambitious, yearning for tyrannical power above all else.

6. Rome started as a constitutional monarchy governed by honorable men. However, the monarchs eventually became tyrants, which caused the Romans to establish a republic. At first, the Romans strove after honor and virtue, justice and righteousness. Eventually, as Rome’s power grew and peace prevailed, avarice and excessive ambition destroyed the morality of Rome. Livy likewise extols the good deeds of ancient Rome and blames wealth and greed for the moral degeneracy of his day.

7. Catiline’s coconspirators were condemned and executed. Catiline was trapped with his army against the mountains and forced to fight Antonius’s army. Catiline showed himself to be a good general, fighting on foot with his men and spurring them on to fight well and courageously. He died fighting, surrounded by the opposing army.

8. The members of the equestrian class were families with enough money to own horses and gather a military equipage for sending to the wars. So these were men who had distinguished themselves in military operations.

9. Sallust emphasizes the importance of pursuing wealth of the soul and fame by the work of the mind, rather than seeking purely physical pleasures.

10. Sallust wants us to read these histories looking for the men who were pursuing virtue and honor as contrasted with those only seeking the fleeting honors of money and political fame.

11. Both Livy and Sallust emphasize that Rome is decaying because the people have deserted the virtues to which their fathers clung. Ultimately, this is because parents failed to teach their children to love and pursue virtue.

Lesson 5
The Gallic Wars

1. Caesar lived from 100 BC to 44 BC.

2. Orgetorix, a power-hungry Helvetian nobleman, persuaded his countrymen to go to war because their natural geographic limits were too confining for a people of their size and warlike nature.

3. Caesar did not want to create a population vacuum in Helvetia that would draw Germans into these lands bordering Gaul.

4. They cut and bend over saplings and interweave them with brambles, creating a hedge to protect them from the enemies’ eyes and weapons.

5. They paint themselves blue, wear their hair and mustaches long, and share wives.

6. Initially, when Caesar arrived, the Sequani had become the biggest power over their rivals, the Aedui. After Caesar’s involvement, the Aedui regained their power and became the leading Gaulish tribe along with the Remi.

7. Julius Caesar saw the conquest of Gaul as an opportunity for increasing his own glory, wealth, and power.
8. Men who had served under Julius Caesar and were eyewitnesses to the events he recounted would have exposed him if his accounts were inaccurate. Such an exposure would have harmed his reputation, motivating him to write honestly.

9. We should read The Gallic Wars both because the story is interesting and because it allows us to comprehend levels of richness and meaning that fill books written by authors steeped in Julius Caesar from their school days.

10. Julius Caesar himself burned his ships after landing in Alexandria during the civil war with Pompeii the Great. Cortez also burned his ships after landing in Mexico before marching inland to conquer the Aztecs.

Lesson 6
The Philosophy of History and Tiberius

1. The historians writing during the time of these emperors recorded favorable accounts out of fear, while those writing immediately after the emperors’ reigns wrote overly harsh records out of hatred. Tacitus lives long enough after these emperors to write impartially, having no personal connection to the emperors.

2. Germanicus disguised his rank in anonymous attire and mingled with his men during mealtime so he could overhear their unguarded conversation. He found that the men universally admired Germanicus’s character and were determined to fight well out of gratitude and loyalty to him.

3. Tacitus describes the Libo case because it was the start of a corruption that eroded the foundation of the Roman state. Tiberius placed himself above the law, manipulating it to suit his purposes, such as when he sold Libo’s slaves in order to circumvent a law that forbade evidence against their master obtained from slaves under torture.

4. The historian must, above all, ensure that deeds worthy of praise are recorded and that evil deeds and words are made clearly portrayed and denounced to future generations.

5. The members of the Senate could not do enough to flatter and ingratiate themselves with Tacitus. They were anxious to please him, praise him, and preserve their lives and positions.

6. Tacitus studied under the famous orator Quintilian. Quintilian also tutored two young men in the household of Flavius Clemens. Flavius Clemens and his wife were accused of atheism, which possibly meant they were Christians, especially since one of their freedmen, Clement, was the first bishop of Rome.

7. Sir Robert Cotton collected many of the books from Roman Catholic monasteries in England during the period when Henry VIII was disbanding the monasteries. Several of the manuscripts in the Cotton library are the only extant copies of certain key books.

8. Most of the New Testament epistles were written during the emperor Nero’s reign.

9. Even though Tacitus is often sordid and revolting, it is useful for us to understand the events the early Christians lived through and the circumstances in which Paul and Peter commanded them to submit to the governing authorities.

10. Humans are limited and cannot know everything. Further, in order to write a good story, a historian must choose which events to include or exclude from his history, and he can only base those decisions on his own presuppositions and biases.

11. Tiberius assassinated Germanicus early in Caligula’s life, before Caligula had time to mature under Germanicus’s influence. It is also likely that Caligula was genuinely insane due to the lead in the Roman water system.
Lesson 7

Claudius

1. Tacitus is unconvinced that men’s futures are determined solely by fate, but believes that a man’s personality, decisions, and way of life will affect his future.

2. Insignificant events can often lead to key historical developments, and also give greater understanding about the nature of a country’s government. Like Livy, Tacitus points out that studying these events teaches us to discern right and wrong.

3. Tiberius’s fortunes and character followed opposite trends. He started from a position of obscurity and gradually rose to favor in Augustus’s family, finally becoming emperor. His character originally appeared upright, but apart from the restraining influence of his sons and mother, and under the influence of Sejanus, he became cruel. Once his cruelty removed his fear, Tiberius descended into the depths of immoral behavior.

4. This story is similar to the story of Ahab coveting Naboth’s vineyard in I Kings 21. Jezebel has Naboth killed on false charges, just as Messalina has Asiaticus falsely accused of various crimes.

5. Tacitus says that the origins of written alphabets were the Egyptian hieroglyphs. The Phoenicians learned the alphabet from the Egyptians, and then in their sea voyages introduced it to the Greeks, who eventually taught it to the inhabitants of Italy.

6. Agrippina seduced Claudius in order to become his new wife, and then instigated the adoption of her son, Nero, by Claudius. She ruthlessly caused the death of any possible rivals and all who offended or opposed her.

7. Pallas, Agrippina’s lover, was the ex-slave who proposed Agrippina as Claudius’ new wife after Messalina died. Pallas was the brother of Felix, governor of Judea, before whom Paul defended himself against the Jews.

8. Astrology views nature as being in control of man, while magic views man as able to control nature.

9. Tacitus refuses to draw any unwarranted conclusions from the rumors about the phoenix, thus showing that he is a cautious and honest historian.

10. People will often act virtuously out of fear, rather than out of true love of virtue or of God. Thus, when the fear is removed, they display their evil nature without inhibition.


Lesson 8

Nero

1. Burrus and Seneca were Nero’s tutors. Burrus was serious and orderly, Seneca principled and an adept rhetorician. They were both virtuous, working together to restrain the evils of Nero and Agrippina.

2. Agrippina was terrified, seeing that Nero was willing to murder even a relation. She also realized that her last means of leverage to control Nero, threatening him with Britannicus’s right to the throne, was gone.

3. Seneca says he is old, unworthy of the many honors and wealth bestowed on him, and that Nero is now capable of guiding the empire with Seneca’s advice. Nero refuses to let Seneca retire, claiming that he still needs Seneca’s advice and that the rewards he has given to Seneca are only as Seneca deserves.

4. Nero took advantage of a devastated Rome to build a vast new palace. The city was protected against future fires with broader streets,
freestanding houses made with fireproof stones, firefighting equipment in every house, and better water supply throughout the city.

5. Tacitus despises Christians, describing them as depraved and their practices as shameful.

6. Tacitus believes that most of the men did not die for glorious or honorable reasons, but that all the tragic deaths caused by Nero’s brutality were because heaven was angry at Rome and was punishing her.

7. We could consider, instead, how bad Nero might have been if Seneca had not attempted to teach him self-restraint.

8. To ease her guilty conscience Poppea liked to talk with religious people, including Christians, about religious things. Thus, she protected the various religious groups in the palace from Nero.

9. Tacitus describes Nero as stricken with fear the night after Agrippina’s death and haunted by the bay and seashore where his mother had been murdered.

10. The church considers the children slain by Herod’s soldiers in Bethlehem as the first Christian martyrs.

Lesson 9
Demosthenes and Cicero

1. Demosthenes went to hear a famous orator, Callistratus, give a speech in court for an infamous case. He was impressed both by the fame and admiration Callistratus received after winning the case and by the power and art of his oratory. Demosthenes perfected the art of speaking through months of practice in seclusion, carefully analyzing and refining speeches. He overcame his physical weaknesses through practicing speaking while carrying pebbles in his mouth, or while exercising, or in front of a mirror.

2. Demosthenes, through brave in speech, was a coward in actual battle, throwing down his weapons and running away in the battle between the Greeks and the Macedonians under Philip. Demosthenes was also susceptible to bribes. Although he originally spoke against accepting Harpalus as a refugee from Alexander, for fear of involving Greece in an unnecessary war, he then accepted gold from Harpalus and desisted from his arguments against Harpalus.

3. Demosthenes had again encouraged the Greeks to resist the Macedonians; however, the Macedonians again defeated the Greeks, and Demosthenes was sentenced to death. He fled to the temple of Poseidon on an island, but when he was found there, he took poison rather than be killed by his enemies.

4. Like Demosthenes, Cicero improved his general health and stamina, and thus his vocal tone, through exercise, and he improved his ability to craft speeches by practicing diligently and seeking advice from renowned rhetoricians.

5. Cicero acted with justice and mercy, arguing for and serving the most appropriate verdicts and judgments, neither too lax nor too severe for the offences. As general, he even succeeded in accomplishing his mission without bloodshed.

6. Cicero made the mistake of advocating for Caesar to be elected as a consul. After securing the position, Caesar betrayed Cicero, allowing him to be killed to satisfy Anthony, whom Cicero had previously steadfastly and violently opposed, and Lepidus. He fled from his assassins, but they eventually found him and murdered him.

7. A skilled craftsman rouses our admiration but not necessarily a desire to imitate him. A virtuous man stirs some innate longing in us to emulate him, to be virtuous like him.

8. Plutarch writes character sketches, rather than merely recounting a man’s great deeds, in order to stir up our souls to become more virtuous.
9. A “philippic” is a powerful, invective speech or piece of writing condemning someone. The term is based in Demosthenes’ fearless tirades against Philip of Macedon.

10. The Romans thought suicide was an honorable means of escaping shame. Thus, Plutarch praises Demosthenes death because he committed suicide to avoid being captured and killed by the enemy.

11. When the Romans captured a ship, they would cut off the carved beak, or rostrum, of the ship and display it in the Forum on a platform as spoils of war. Eventually the term was applied to the speaker’s platform itself.

Lesson 10
Alexander and Caesar

1. Since Plutarch is aiming to paint the character of the men he writes about, rather than simply to record all their great deeds, he chooses events that best display the souls of these men. Like Livy, Plutarch seeks the clearest way to portray the vices and virtues in men.

2. Alexander exercised a great deal of self-control in his efforts to be kingly, behaving with restraint and respect toward captive women, governing his appetite and drinking, and spending every moment of his time in improving mental and bodily skills or governing the kingdom. He was, however, fond of flattery, loving for others to admire his greatness.

3. Plutarch finds Clitus’s death deplorable, but blames it on an unfortunate coinciding of Alexander’s anger heightened to imprudence by wine and Clitus’s sharp and spiteful wit. This event shows that Alexander was not always completely in control of himself, acting in this case with thoughtless haste.

4. From the beginning, Caesar aimed at complete control of the Roman government. Cicero first suspected Caesar’s designs and feared him because his ambitions were so well disguised beneath his friendliness and good humor.

5. Caesar richly and freely rewarded his soldiers for their bravery and service, and displayed great courage himself, not shying away from any danger and enduring great hardship despite much physical illness. His soldiers responded by always seeking honor and distinction themselves in their fighting.

6. The political candidates won support by bribery and force, killing men to win office. Such practices eventually left Rome with no functioning government at all, creating the need for a strong ruler to restore order. Pompey and Caesar both contended for this position of sole governor.

7. Caesar endeavored to reform the calendar, which was not in sync with the solar year. The best philosophers and mathematicians did succeed in inventing a far more accurate calendar.

8. Alexander is patient and observant, searching for understanding in order to gain wisdom and find solutions to problems.

9. Alexander sought above all to govern himself, counting it a greater glory to conquer himself than to conquer other people.

10. Julius Caesar’s driving ambition and quest for power were not tempered by a love of virtue and desire for self-control.

11. The Roman people no longer had the integrity, virtue, or self-control necessary to govern themselves, so had to be governed by somebody else.

12. Alexander spread the Greek language across the Mediterranean, making it the common language of the known world. Because of this, the Christians were able to easily communicate throughout that region. Julius Caesar preserved the Roman Empire intact, ensuring stability and ease of travel for Christians as they spread the gospel.
Lesson 11
Cicero

1. Cicero links the verdict rendered against Verres to the honor and reputation of the Senate and judges. He points out that the people generally believe the court to be corrupt and that this case is the court’s chance to make a just decision and win back the respect of the people.

2. Cicero entreats Anthony to remember his country and his origins, to act in a way consistent with his lineage, and to do so for Rome’s good rather than his own.

3. An understanding of moral obligations is the basis for living uprightly and consistently.

4. Wrong violates the basic law of human community, demolishing the innate, natural connection that exists between every human being.

5. It is not wrong so seek your own advantage, provided that doing so does not harm or disadvantage another person. Preserving friendship and aiding your friends, however, must always precede seeking your own interest.

6. The standards of moral right are the only way to measure true advantage, because moral right and advantage are one and the same. Apparent advantage gained at the expense of morality ultimately results in harm to yourself.

7. Promises should not be honored if doing so would actually be immoral, if the promise would result in harm to another person or to your country.

8. The patron was a wealthy, aristocratic man with power to smooth the way for his clients when they were facing bureaucratic or legal difficulties. The clients, in return, were loyal to the patron, supporting his interests and voting for him in public elections. The patron and clients were, in a sense, family.

9. Cicero appealed to ethos, the ethical side of a particular matter, identifying himself with the audience; logos, the logical arguments, pointing out the logical effects of a particular action; and pathos, the emotional aspects of a situation, appealing to the sympathies.

10. In Roman culture, members of a city were all members of one community, one body. Thus, doing something that was harmful to another citizen was like harming a member of your own body, which is generally counterproductive.

11. Paul uses the Roman understanding that all citizens were member of one city—Rome—to help Roman Christians understand that we are all members of one church in Christ.

12. On Duties was very influential in the medieval understanding of ethics and virtues and in the development of the seven virtues and seven deadly vices. These have been foundational to Christian discussions of ethics ever since then.

Lesson 12
Other Historians and Review of Roman Historians

1. Augustus was primarily concerned with seeking the good of Rome rather than his own popularity.

2. Augustus respected the laws of Rome, preserving freedom of speech, not appointing his friends to political office but following the normal election procedures, and submitting both himself and his friends to due process of law in the courts.

3. Pliny views Christianity as a superstition to be eliminated, and so asks those brought before him if they are Christians. If they persist in affirming Christ, he has them executed. If they renounce or deny Christ and worship the emperor and the pagan gods, Pliny releases them.

4. Trajan advises against accepting anonymous accusations in court since it sets a dangerous precedent and is against Roman ideals of honor.
5. Man is naturally able to reason. The goal of education, therefore, is not to impart the ability to reason but to encourage the ability to reason well.

6. Students need breaks both to allow them rest from labor and also to secure their continued interest and vigor in learning by not demanding too much from them.

7. Later biographers, especially medieval writers, followed the same general pattern as Suetonius in describing their subjects. This is particularly noticeable in Einhard's biography of Charlemagne, where Einhard wants us to see Charlemagne as the new Augustus.

8. Trajan aimed to restore public respect for and faith in Roman law as the transcendent rule over all Roman citizens. Thus, he cared less about eliminating Christianity and more about following the rule of law.

9. Parents should model what they want their children to become, displaying the same interest and eagerness in learning that they want to cultivate in their children.

10. Corrupt people result in a corrupt government. Corrupt leaders signal moral degeneracy among the general populace, but are not the cause of it.