

Hello Oaks Families & Friends!

We are excited to announce that The Oaks will be hosting a “Higher Education Symposium” for parents and students in grammar and upper schools. Saturday, October 1 we will gather to discuss and share a better and more Christian framework for thinking about the value and experience of college today. We will meet at The Oaks campus in the Sanctuary at 7 pm. This event is the first of its kind, not only in terms of its topic but also as a “regional” gathering, where parents from all the classical Christian schools in our area are encouraged to attend.

The central question we want parents to consider is, “Are We Thinking Rightly About College?” Over the years, The Oaks has developed an amazing support for students and parents in their decision to pursue college and university. Not only are students guided through the often dizzying college application process but they are also assisted in securing scholarship money from countless programs. This could not happen, of course, without our college advisor Lynn Gibson and without the willingness of students to go the extra mile.

Many graduates of The Oaks are encouraged to apply to colleges of all sorts, but going to college in the last five years has not gotten easier. If anything, it has become more challenging. Financial costs for universities have increased considerably and continue to rise. Cultural dynamics on college campuses have also changed dramatically. This has led parents and students to consider deeper questions in their cost benefit analysis. What is the purpose and value of college? What should we think of state universities? How should a student prepare best for college beyond their efforts in high school? What should the college experience really look like? To answer these questions, we are excited to have two amazing scholars join us and share their insights: David Horner (DPhil, Oxford) and [Ben Merkle](#) (DPhil, Oxford).

Dr. Horner has taught at the University of Oxford, Denver Seminary, and served as a Visiting Scholar and Research Associate at the University of Colorado. He has lectured in numerous classrooms and university forums nationally and in Europe, and he has written numerous articles and book chapters on ethics, apologetics and ancient and medieval philosophy. In addition to regularly lecturing at BIOLA University, he also serves as Executive Director of The Illuminatio Project, whose aim is to bring the light of a classical biblical vision of goodness, truth and beauty into the thinking of the church and culture through strategic research and communication. Dr. Merkle is president of New Saint Andrews College, a Christian college in Moscow, Idaho. Merkle studied at the University of Idaho and the University of Oxford, completing his doctorate Oriental Studies in 2012; he is the author of *The White Horse King: The Life of Alfred the Great* (2009).

Both gentlemen are scholars by training, have worked in higher education for many years, and have important insights about the current state of things in college. This will be a great evening; you’re not going to want to miss it! Please RSVP here by September 23. Parents and students from grades K-12 are encouraged to attend: Oct. 1 at 7 pm at The Oaks. We look forward to seeing you there!

Blessings,

Devin O’Donnell

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