

C.S. Lewis Primer

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“Imagine yourself as a living house. God comes in to rebuild that house. At first, perhaps, you can understand what He is doing. He is getting the drains right and stopping the leaks in the roof and so on: you knew those jobs needed doing and so you are not surprised. But presently he starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and does not seem to make sense. What on earth is He up to? The explanation is that He is building quite a different house from the one you thought of—throwing out a new wing here, putting on an extra floor there, running up towers, making courtyards. You thought you were going to be made into a decent little cottage: but He is building a palace” (*Mere Christianity*, New York: MacMillan Co., 1960, p. 160).”

“Christ says, ‘Give me All. I don’t want so much of your time and so much of your money and so much of your work: I want You. I have not come to torment your natural self, but to kill it. No half-measures are any good. I don’t want to cut off a branch here and a branch there, I want to have the whole tree down. ... Hand over the whole natural self, all the desires which you think innocent as well as the ones you think wicked—the whole outfit. I will give you a new self instead. In fact, I will give you Myself: my own will shall become yours.’” (*Mere Christianity*, New York: Collier Books, 1960, p. 167.)”

“The more often [a person] feels without acting, the less he will be able ever to act, and, in the long run, the less he will be able to feel.” (*The Screwtape Letters*, New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1982, p. 61.)

“Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next man. We say that people are proud of being rich, or clever, or good-looking, but they are not. They are proud of being richer, cleverer, or better-looking than others. If everyone else became equally rich, or clever, or good-looking there would be nothing to be proud about. It is the comparison that makes you proud: the pleasure of being above the rest. Once the element of competition has gone, pride has gone.” (*Mere Christianity* [1960], 95)

“[God] has infinite attention to spare for each one of us. He does not have to deal with us in the mass. You are as much alone with Him as if you were the only being He had ever created. When Christ died, He died for you individually just as much as if you had been the only man [or woman] in the world” (*Mere Christianity* [1943], 131).”

“It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you can talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship. ... There are no ordinary people. ... Your neighbor is the holiest object presented to your senses” (“The Weight of Glory,” in *Screwtape Proposes a Toast and Other Pieces* [1974], 109–10).”

“Some say of some temporal suffering, ‘No future bliss can make up for it,’ not knowing that Heaven, once attained, will work backwards and turn even that agony into a glory. ... The Blessed will say, ‘We have never lived anywhere except in Heaven.’” (*The Great Divorce: A Dream* [2001], 69.)

