

## 4ST620 THEOLOGY OF C. S. LEWIS

Summer 2011

Reformed Theological Seminary

Atlanta

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### COURSE OVERVIEW

Our purpose will be to examine selected writings of C.S. Lewis which illustrate his stature as a Christian apologist. We will begin with a biographical lecture to consider his early family life and schooling, his nominal faith and rejection thereof, and his conversion and subsequent career as scholar in Medieval literature and apologist for Christianity. Our purpose is to meet Lewis the man and especially his intellectual training and disposition to be an apologist for Christianity..

Next, we will examine the best summary of his faith, *Mere Christianity*. Therein we find Lewis' basic apologetic method and summation of Christian doctrine and ethics: the moral argument for God, his view of Christ and His work, the Trinity and the Christian virtues. Following this introduction we will read a widely ranging selection of essays from *God in the Dock* and *Christian Reflections* which introduce us on a deeper level to major ideas of his apologetic: his views of history, creativity in literature, rationality and imagination, and his provocative view of myth.

*Miracles*, our next study, is a closely reasoned defense of the supernatural in Christianity. In this brief yet profound book Lewis defends the miraculous against contemporary naturalism, pantheism, and forms of liberal Christianity which deny miracles as central to Christian belief. Lewis' ability to argue clearly and cogently against contemporary worldviews emerges in this work. *Miracles* illustrates Lewis' willingness to follow his own prescription that apologists defend ideas which are difficult and unpopular.

In our concluding unit we study Lewis' popular mythical writings, the Ransom Trilogy. Instead of Lewis the logician or rational defender of Christianity we find the imaginative Lewis who takes us traveling into space (actually the heavens!) and back to earth again. The stories range from *Out of the Silent Planet*, a thrilling science fiction (or is it?) account of a kidnapping into space, *Perelandra*, a retelling of Genesis on an unfallen planet, and *That Hideous Strength*, a suspenseful dystopian attack on contemporary academics. His accounts of Elwin Ransom's travels to Mars and Venus, his conversations with the Oyarsa and his battle with the Un-man, and finally his leadership of St. Anne's against the dark powers of the N.I.C.E. are compelling stories. In them Lewis challenges modern realistic writers with their naturalistic biases and demonstrates the power of Christian vision resulting from a renewed imagination.

As a result of our study we hope to gain a perspective on Lewis the Christian man and of the important impact his apologetics continues to exert on the contemporary religious scene.

### TEXTS

The following are required texts: C.S. Lewis, *Christian Reflections*; *God in the Dock*; *Mere Christianity*; *Miracles*; *Out of the Silent Planet*; *Perelandra*; *That Hideous Strength*; Clyde Kilby, *The Christian World of C. S. Lewis*.

Students are to read the above texts as assigned below. In the majority of the course, we will be working through the texts in class. Therefore, it is almost imperative that you have the reading completed before the day on which the reading is assigned. My **strong suggestion** is that you read *Mere Christianity*, *Miracles* and the Ransom trilogy (*Out of the Silent Planet*, *Perelandra* and *That Hideous Strength* **before** our class begins in August. Since the course is a week intensive study in which we move quickly through the material, you will benefit much more from the course if you are familiar with the books' contents before class begins.

Submit the attached reading report along with the final exam.

### WRITTEN WORK

Students will prepare a paper on an essay from either *God in the Dock* or *Christian Reflections*. The essays contained in these two books cover a wide variety of subjects and range in difficulty and content from the rather easy and popular to the complex and scholarly. Your assignment is to write a critique on one of Lewis' essays (preferably one which we do not discuss in class). Therefore, choose an essay which lends itself to critical treatment.

Address your essay to the same audience Lewis wrote originally (check preface of each book for original date and source of publication). Although you may use reference works on Lewis, the assignment is not intended to be a research project. Instead I want you to think analytically and independently to interpret and evaluate Lewis as an apologist. Your paper will of necessity contain summary material. But at least half of your essay should consist of critical evaluation based on our discussion of Lewis as an apologist.

Identify his thesis and state your interpretive thesis in response to Lewis. Is Lewis a good apologist in the essay? Do you agree with Lewis? Does he argue consistently . . . coherently? Is the essay consistent with Lewis' own criteria for apologetics? Does he develop the essay in a compelling way, or does he digress from the theme or become fuzzy in his argument? Is his insight of an intellectual problem, the human condition or some ethical or social issue valuable, or is it trivial? Some or all of these questions should help focus your remarks.

Papers should be 8-10 pages in length. Due date for papers will be discussed on the first day of class.

### EXAMS AND GRADES

A midterm and a final exam will be given. Exams will consist of objective and essay questions.

Grades will be computed as follows:

Midterm	= 30%
Paper	= 30%
Reading report	= 10%
Final exam	= 30%

### SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND DUE DATES

#### **MONDAY, JULY 25**

##### LEWIS' SEARCH FOR JOY

*Reading Assignment:* Clyde Kilby, *The Christian World of C.S. Lewis*, ch. 1, "Search for Joy"

##### LEWIS' VIEW OF APOLOGETICS

*Reading Assignment:* *God in the Dock*, "Christian Apologetics" 89-103; "Founding of the Oxford Socratic Club" 126-128; "On the Reading of Old Books" 200-207

##### MERE CHRISTIANITY: THE MORAL ARGUMENT

*Reading Assignment:* *Mere Christianity*, Book I

##### MERE CHRISTIANITY: WHAT CHRISTIANS BELIEVE

*Reading Assignment:* *Mere Christianity*, Book II

##### MERE CHRISTIANITY: WHAT CHRISTIANS DO

*Reading Assignment:* *Mere Christianity*, Book III

#### **TUESDAY, JULY 26**

##### MERE CHRISTIANITY: BEYOND THE BASICS

*Reading Assignment:* *Mere Christianity*, Book IV

##### LEWIS' EPISTEMOLOGY: DIALECTIC OF REASON AND IMAGINATION

*Reading Assignment:* *God in the Dock*, "Meditation in a Toolshed" 212-215; "Bulverism" 271-277.

##### MYTH AS A FORM OF GENERAL REVELATION

*Reading Assignment:* *God in the Dock*, "Myth Become Fact" 63-67; Kilby, *The Christian World of C.S. Lewis*, 150-156

##### CHRISTIAN CONFIDENCE IN REASON: MAKING A CASE FOR THEISM

*Reading Assignment:* *Christian Reflections*, "De Futilitate" 57-71; *God in the Dock*, "Is Theism Important?" 172-176

##### LEWIS' VIEW OF CREATIVITY

*Reading Assignment:* *Christian Reflections*, "Christianity and Literature" 1-11

#### **WEDNESDAY, JULY 27**

##### PRESUPPOSITIONS AND THE MIRACULOUS

*Reading Assignment:* *Miracles*, ch. 1 "The Scope of This Book"; ch. 2 "The Naturalist and the Supernaturalist"; ch. 3 "The Cardinal Difficulty of Naturalism"

##### INTELLECTUAL OBJECTIONS TO NATURALISM

*Reading Assignment:* *Miracles*, ch. 4 "Nature and Supernature"; ch. 5 "A Further Difficulty with Naturalism"; ch. 6 "Answers to Misgivings," ch. 7 "A Chapter of Red Herrings"

##### INTELLECTUAL OBJECTIONS TO SUPERNATURALISM; PROPRIETY OF MIRACLES

*Reading Assignment:* *Miracles*, ch. 8 "Miracles and the Laws of Nature"; ch. 10 "Horrid Red Things"; ch. 11 "Christianity and 'Religion'"; ch. 12 "The Propriety of Miracles"

##### ARE MIRACLES PROBABLE? DAVID HUME VS CHRISTIANITY

*Reading Assignment:* *Miracles*, ch.13 "On Probability"; ch. 14 "The Grand Miracle"

##### MIRACLES AS REMINDERS AND PROPHECIES

*Reading Assignment:* *Miracles*, ch. 15 "Miracles of the Old Creation"; ch.16 "Miracles of the New Creation"; Appendix B, "On Special Providences"; *Christian Reflections*, "Petitionary Prayer: A Problem without an Answer" 142-151

**THURSDAY, JULY 28**

SCIENCE FICTION AS APOLOGETICS: A NEW VIEW OF SPACE

*Reading Assignment: Out of the Silent Planet, 1-59*

RECIPROCITY; STRUCTURE OF MALACANDRA

*Reading Assignment: Out of the Silent Planet, 59-124*

SCIENTIFIC HUMANISM ON TRIAL

*Reading Assignment: Out of the Silent Planet, 125-160*

IMAGINATIVE VIEW OF "NEW NATURE"

*Reading Assignment: Perelandra, 1-59*

TEMPTATION OF THE QUEEN

*Reading Assignment: Perelandra, 60-125*

MYTHICAL BATTLE; THE GREAT DANCE

*Reading Assignment: Perelandra, 125-222***FRIDAY, JULY 29**

THAT HIDEOUS STRENGTH: THREE SETS OF OPPOSITION

*Reading Assignment: That Hideous Strength, 1-74*

DYSTOPIANISM AND THE MODERN UNIVERSITY

*Reading Assignment: That Hideous Strength, 75-159*

SCIENTISM AND THE ABOLITION OF MAN

*Reading Assignment: That Hideous Strength, 160-230*

EDUCATION IN BECOMING OBJECTIVE

*Reading Assignment: That Hideous Strength, 231-319*

THE VIEW FROM THE OTHER SIDE: ST. ANNE'S

*Reading Assignment: That Hideous Strength, 320-382*

CONCLUSION: RANSOM AND MERLIN

## SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

For other bibliographies of Lewis' works see: Gibb, *Light on C.S. Lewis* (121-60); Hooper, *C.S. Lewis: A Companion and Guide* (901-883), Lindskoog, *C.S. Lewis, Mere Christian* (238-43) and Glyer, "A Reader's Guide to Books about C.S. Lewis, and Other Resources," in Mills, ed., *The Pilgrim's Guide: C.S. Lewis and the Art of Witness* (257-273).

## I. WORKS BY C. S. LEWIS

*A Grief Observed* (1961).*A Mind Awake: An Anthology of C.S. Lewis* (1968), ed. Clyde Kilby.*A Preface to Paradise Lost* (1942).*All My Road before Me: The Diary of C.S. Lewis, 1922-1927* (1991), ed. Walter Hooper.*An Experiment in Criticism* (1961).*Boxen: The Imaginary World of the Young C.S. Lewis* (1985), ed. Walter Hooper.*Christian Reflections* (1967), ed. Walter Hooper.*Dymer* (1950).*First and Second Things: Essays on Theology and Ethics* (1985), ed. Walter Hooper.*God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics* (1970), ed. Walter Hooper.*Letters of C.S. Lewis* (1966), ed. Warren H. Lewis.*Letters to an American Lady* (1967), ed. Clyde Kilby.*Letters to Children* (1985), eds. Lyle W. Dorsett and M.J. Mead.*Letters to Malcolm, Chiefly on Prayer* (1964).*Mere Christianity* (1961).

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*Pilgrim's Regress*:  
*Poems* (1965), ed. Walter Hooper.  
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*Surprised by Joy* (1960).  
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**READING REPORT: 4ST620 THEOLOGY OF C.S. LEWIS**

Complete and sign this form and return to Dr. Hoffecker on or before final exam.

Assigned reading:	# of pages read
<i>Mere Christianity</i>	_____
<i>Christian Reflections</i>	_____
<i>God in the Dock</i>	_____
<i>Out of the Silent Planet</i>	_____
<i>Perelandra</i>	_____
<i>That Hideous Strength</i>	_____
<i>Miracles</i>	_____
<i>The Christian World of C. S. Lewis</i>	_____

The total number of pages I have read for this course is \_\_\_\_\_ [include works above and books listed below].

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Name

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print: \_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Name

## Lecture #1: Lewis' Life

Dr. Hoffecker

## I. Introduction: Life of C.C. Lewis.

Supplemental texts: C.S. Lewis, *Surprised By Joy*; Gilbert and Kilby, *C.S. Lewis: Images of His World*; Green and Hooper, *C. S. Lewis: A Biography*; Hooper, *C. S. Lewis: Companion and Guide*; George Sayer, *Jack*; Humphrey Carpenter, *The Inklings*; C. S. Lewis, *Pilgrim's Regress*.

II. Early Years: *SBJ* reveals a precocious young life.

- A. Born Nov 29, 1898 in Belfast. First nine years of Lewis' life were spent in County Down of Northern Ireland.
- B. Childhood with brother, Warren ("Warnie"); he adopted the name "Jackie"; later renamed "Jack."
- C. The land of Boxen (illustrations and text).
- D. "Joy:" Experiences of wonder. Cf., Corbin S. Carnell, *Bright Shadow of Reality: C.S. Lewis and the Feeling Intellect*.

## III. Schooling.

- A. His mother's death (1908) had a momentous effect on Lewis. Relation with his father never very good. *SBJ*, 121
- B. Boarding school in England (Wynyard)
- C. Lewis' childhood religious experiences: "realizations"
- D. Malvern College: at age 13; remained for two years.
- D. Sept 1914 - March 1917: "Great Bookham" Tutored by "The Great Knock" to prepare Lewis for Oxford.
  1. William T. Kirkpatrick, an atheist; "logical discipline personified" (cf., McPhee in *That Hideous Strength*.)
  2. Kirkpatrick's tutoring powerfully shaped Lewis' intellect.
  3. Religious hypocrisy.

## IV. World War I

- A. Friendship with Paddy Moore. Promised to care for Paddy's mother if he were killed.
- B. Controversy over Lewis' relation with Janie Moore.

V. Lewis' conversion (1929): One of Christianity's most famous conversion stories.

A. Associates at Oxford challenged Lewis' atheism.

1. Lewis as Idealist.
2. Christianity as myth.
3. False substitutes. Comment on Joy: *SBJ* 220
4. Lewis searched his conscience; became aware of his own badness. *SBJ* 226, 7

B. Description of his conversion *SBJ*, 228, 229

C. New view of Joy

1. Lewis viewed Joy not as an end in itself, but a "pointer to something other and outer." Joy is something far more desirable than the sensations and images which accompany Joy. Experiences of Joy are merely "passing signposts."
2. Compare account of Lewis' life in his first work of prose, *Pilgrim's Regress*.

VI. Lewis the scholar: in 30 years until his death, Lewis published 34 other books and 300 shorter items from reviews to essays, poems. Sayer entitles one chapter "Writing, Writing, Writing: 1942-46" In that period he wrote *Preface to Paradise Lost*, *Perelandra*, *Abolition of Man*, *That Hideous Strength*, *The Great Divorce*, and *Miracles*.

A. Lewis' field was medieval and renaissance literature. *Preface to Paradise Lost*, *Allegory of Love* and *Discarded Images* are classics in his field.

B. Tedious work as Oxford Don

C. Lewis the lecturer

1. Use of words in confrontation, debate
2. Lewis' Christianity a source of great embarrassment to his fellow Oxonians.
  - a. Lewis passed over several times for a professor's chair at Oxford.

- b. 1954: accepted Magdelene Professorship of Medieval and Renaissance Literature at Cambridge, Oxford's major rival.

VII. Marriage with Helen Joy Davidman (Note: "Joy" in *SBJ* has nothing to do with his wife!) Sayer's chapter: "Surprised By Joy." Cf., Brian Sibley, *C.S. Lewis: Through the Shadowlands*, 1986

A. Joy's background. Davidman was American Jewess by birth; became a Christian through reading Lewis' works after forays into communism and the occult. Her first letter to CSL was in 1950.

1. Joy visited England in 1952
2. Divorced from her husband

B. Joy's illness: in 1957 she contracted bone cancer. Their civil marriage.

1. Remission permitted them three extremely happy years together, perhaps the happiest of Lewis' years.
2. Highlight of their marriage was a trip to Greece in 1960.
3. Cancer returned in 1959. Joy died in 1960 and Lewis published an account of his deeply felt grief, *A Grief Observed*.
4. Debate among Lewis scholars over the intensity of Lewis' grief.

VIII. Lewis' death. His own health poor during his last six years. He died Nov. 22, 1963 at home in his room after late afternoon tea.

## Lecture #2 Lewis' View of Apologetics

Dr. Hoffecker

- I. Apologetics: reasoned or intellectual defense of the truth of the Christian religion.
- A. I Peter 1:13; 3:15; II Cor 10:5; Acts 17:2, 3 Dependent on biblical view of mind and its valid use in knowing God and defending the faith. (Cf., Harry Blamires, *The Christian Mind* and *Recovering the Christian Mind*)
  - B. Apologetics schools. While apologetics is defined as systematic argumentation in defense of one's beliefs, no one, monolithic approach has been universally accepted historically.
    1. subjective models (Pascal, Schleiermacher and Kierkegaard)
    2. evidentialist systems (classical Thomism, Bishop Butler, Old Princeton, Geisler, and Ligonier – Sproul )
    3. presuppositional (Reformed Dutch school: Kuyper, VanTil, Schaeffer, Frame)
    4. Lewis does not easily fit into any of these categories. Various of his works cross over the above categories. His writings fall into various literary genres: apologetics proper (*Problem of Pain*, *Mere Christianity*, *Abolition of Man*, *Miracles*, *Pilgrim's Regress*); occasional pieces directed at general public (*God in the Dock*) and fantasy or myth (Narnia, *The Great Divorce*, Ransom Trilogy).
  - C. Usually apologetics is considered a branch of theology: Both positive and negative in its thrust.
- II. Lewis: Apologetics as intellectual evangelism.
- A. Lewis the evangelist.
    1. "Christianity and Literature" (*Christian Reflections*) "the salvation of a single soul is more important than the production or preservation of all the epics and tragedies in the world."
    2. "Cross Examination" (*God in the Dock*)
    3. Thousands of letters. Lewis could be called the "literary evangelist." (Dorsett, *The Essential Lewis*)
    4. Contrast with Dorothy Sayers (contemporary of Lewis and author of *Mind of the Maker*)
- III. Limitations of Apologetics for Lewis
- IV. Lewis as apologist
- A. Lewis' conversion as found in *Surprised by Joy*
  - B. Colleagues resented Lewis' popularity as lecturer on religion at Oxford
    1. Lack of theological training.
    2. Religion a private matter.
  - C. Lewis' capacity to be an apologist.

## V. Distinctives of Lewis: Educated England was Lewis' field.

## A. Socratic Club: Founded in 1942.

## B. "The Founding of the Oxford Socratic Club"

1. Defending Christianity in a public forum.
2. Main issue is debate.
3. Socratic ideal.
4. Oxford Socratic attempts the same goal in 1940s England.
  - a. No "paraphernalia of pietism...irrelevant sanscoulottism"
  - b. Socratic purpose = to force non-believers to correct "their almost bottomless ignorance of the faith they supposed themselves to be rejecting."
  - c. Socratic ideal is to "follow the idea wherever it leads."
  - d. Denies opponents the position of neglecting the faith.
5. Paul teaches in Romans 1:18: nonbelievers suppress truth, systematically distort what is clearly revealed in the cosmos.

VI. Christianity and objective truth: "Christian Apologetics" (*God in the Dock*)A. Explore "permanent Christianity" (cf. "*Mere Christianity*") is apologist's job.

1. Christianity as objective truth.
2. Lewis therefore appeals to integrity and honesty.
3. We are to defend "Christianity itself." What was "preached by Apostles, attested by the Martyrs, expounded by the Creeds."
4. Apologist must come to terms with issues.
5. Contemporary Christianity has relinquished, altered faith which looks perplexing or repulsive.
6. Issue of "climate of opinion" every apologist faces.

7. “We live in a “missionary situation.”

B. What elements in today's “climate of opinion” concern Lewis?

1. Apologetics and science.

2. Effect of “climate of opinion” is pervasive – digression.

3. Present what is timeless in particular language of our own age.

C. Lewis concludes with contemporary lay views: what he found from experience in R.A.F. camps.

1. Uneducated layperson is almost total skeptic about history.

2. Distrust of ancient texts.

3. Sense of sin almost totally lacking.

4. Learn language of audience. “The vernacular is the real test. If you can’t turn your faith into it, then either you don’t understand it or you don’t believe it.”

I. Introduction: *Mere Christianity*

- A. Includes several elements: apologetics (moral argument), evangelism (call for belief), ethics (Christian behavior), Christian theology (what Christians believe).
- B. Preface: contents originally delivered over BBC radio. Hooper, *C.S. Lewis: A Companion and Guide*
  - 1. Lewis intended the talks to have a popular or familiar tone.
  - 2. Author definitely in control.
  - 3. “Mere Christianity” is not accidental. Succinctly states what Lewis advocates: “to explain and defend the belief that has been common to nearly all Christians at all times. (Cf., Vincent of Lerins *Commonitory* [d. ca. 450]: “That faith is Catholic which has been believed always, everywhere and by all.”)
  - 4. Lewis believes it is possible to talk of “Christianity” without any accompanying qualifying adjectives. This is the goal of all of Lewis’ work. Does he succeed?
- C. Outline of book:
  - 1. “The Case for Christianity”
  - 2. “Christian behavior”
  - 3. “Beyond Personality”: Doctrine of Trinity

## II. “Clue to the Meaning of the Universe”

- A. “The Law of Nature”: the moral law.
  - 1. Uses simple illustrations of human behavior – what constitutes human decency?
  - 2. Concludes chapter: These are the facts: [1] human beings all over the earth believe that people ought to behave in a certain way; [2] people do not actually behave in this way. “They know the Law of Nature; they break it. These two facts are the foundation of all clear thinking about ourselves and the universe we live in.”
  - 3. Where did Lewis get these ideas? How satisfying do you find his argument?
- B. “Some objections”: What alternatives exist that “explain” our acceptance of moral standards?
  - 1. Moral law as an instinct: we behave out of natural instinct.

2. Moral law as a social convention.

3. Key to Lewis' success: impression that he has covered all options and excluded all but the one he proposes.

C. "The Reality of the Law": Lewis stresses the issue of truth: Moral law differs from natural law.

D. "What lies behind the law": here again Lewis poses alternatives. Is the list exhaustive; has he treated them in sufficient detail?

1. "Materialist answer"

2. "Religious" answer

3. *Via Media*: Life Force.

4. Lewis' disclaimer on p. 34: Don't think I am going faster than I really am. I'm not yet within a hundred miles of the God of Christian theology."

E. "We have cause to be uneasy."

1. Lewis' approach is simultaneously rational and existential.

2. We can see why Lewis stated that his books were primarily evangelistic.

### III. Evaluation of Lewis' apologetic

A. Lewis argued for objective moral value.

B. Lewis' approach very similar to classical apologetics in mold of Thomas Aquinas.

1. Does reason precede faith ("I understand in order that I might believe") or does faith precede reason ("I believe in order that I might understand.)?

2. Significant theological assumptions underlie both positions.

a. If reason precedes faith (rationalism), should we be able to coerce people into the kingdom through logical argument?

b. If faith precedes reason (fideism), is belief subjectivized and reason rendered largely irrelevant?

- C. Lewis appeals to intellectuals who want to give a reason for the hope that lies within them.
  
- D. Just as critiques confronted Aquinas: where are the distinctively Christian ideas? How is this any more than Aristotle's Unmoved Mover? Why go on to ask whether God is personal or not?

## I. Introduction

## II. The Rival Conceptions of God

### A. Pantheists, monists.

1. “Beyond good and evil”
2. Against pantheism, Lewis proposes the Christian view which takes good and evil seriously.

### B. The Problem of Evil: “The Invasion.”

1. Christians: Ours is a good world that has gone wrong; it is not inherently evil.
2. Dualists: there are two equal and independent powers at the back of everything.
  - a. But there’s a “catch” to dualism: If both are equally ultimate and independent, how do we distinguish which is good and evil?
  - b. Superiority of Christian answer.
  - c. Christianity and water.
  - d. Two incorrect views of Satan.

## III. Christianity as “The Shocking Alternative”

### A. The Fall Lewis describes his view of the Fall in more detail in *The Problem of Pain*.

### B. Human freedom: free will. Notice Lewis’ theological presuppositions creep into the discussion: pp. 52, 53

1. Man not “automata”; God “takes a risk.”
2. Lewis confuses man’s original free will and man’s present state of moral depravity.
3. Lewis claimed not to believe in “total depravity” (*Problem of Pain*)

4. He consistently favors free will position in his writings; yet he also mentions God's sovereignty and the limits of freedom.

5. Lewis' position most consistent with classical semi-Pelagianism.

C. What did God do after the Fall?

D. The Shocking Alternative. Lewis' view of Person and Work of Jesus Christ

1. The person of Christ. pp. 54-6

2. The claims of Christ: Note no texts cited.

3. Lewis states the case so as to exclude the option that many claim about Jesus

a. Claim to forgive sins is a prerogative of God.

b. Lunatic: deceived, a madman, i.e., he was deceived as to his identity

c. Liar: deceiver, deliberately misled people as to his identity

d. Lord: the Son of God who could actually forgive sin because he is God.

4. Another alternative which Lewis does not discuss.

E. "The Perfect Penitent" The work of Christ.

1. Lewis discusses his earlier distaste for Christianity's answer.

2. States atonement first in general terms: "Christ's death has somehow put us right with God and given us a fresh start." p. 57

3. Different theories to explain Christ's work.

4. Moderns have lost the sense of sin.

5. Atonement. Note Lewis does not use the word until the next to last sentence in the chapter.

a. Anselm's satisfaction theory in *Cur Deus Homo* (1098) p. 60

i. Follow-up from Lunatic, Liar, Lord

ii. Necessity of Christ's deity.

iii. Necessity of Christ's humanity.

iv. Thus the necessity of the incarnation.

b. Abelard's moral example theory: like Anselm, Abelard also medieval theologian.

i. "The teacher is able to form the letters for the child because the teacher is grown-up and knows how to write." p. 61

b. Ransom theory.

F. "The Practical Conclusion": Lewis, the evangelist, proposes the existential choice to his readers.

A. Deals with a few objections, especially Christianity's claim of exclusivity.

B. Lewis' challenge.

C. How is the new life communicated?

#### IV. Evaluation.

A. Lack of clear statement of justification by faith.

B. Issue of sin and its ramifications.

C. Lewis admitted that the Methodist minister who reviewed his MS stated that Lewis should have stated more about belief. If all three are equal, can one be saved merely by means of the sacraments. Trent sacramentalism: "All true righteousness begins and having been started is continued or having been lost is restored through sacraments."

## Lecture #5: Mere Christianity III: Christian Behavior

Dr. Hoffecker

## I. Introduction.

- A. Lewis wrote often on moral matters.
- B. A Christian apologist must defend absolute morality just as staunchly as the truths of Christian doctrine.

## II. Two views of Christian virtues: Thomist vs. Augustinian

- A. Thomas Aquinas (classical Catholic synthesis): four “natural” virtues: prudence, courage, temperance, justice. Lewis calls these the “Cardinal Virtues.”
  - 1. Arete: any kind of excellence.
  - 2. Civic harmony (justice) results when head rules the body through chest.
  - 3. Basic human decency = possible of all men. In *Mere Christianity*, Lewis sometimes expresses the Platonic view of virtue which rests on “being” (pp. 164, 165, 168).
  - 4. In other instances he favors Aristotelian “becoming” (pp. 86, 116, 161).
  - 5. Virtues are sufficient in respect to natural order; but in order to achieve higher virtues – faith, hope and charity – one needs supernatural grace which God gives by infusing grace through the sacraments.
- B. Augustinian view (sometimes called “evangelical” view): virtues which make no reference to God and sought for themselves without true religion, are not genuine virtues. Instead they are merely “splendid vices.” (*City of God*)
  - 1. Assume more radical view of original sin.
  - 2. Virtues are impossible without God’s grace which is given through regeneration by imputation.
  - 3. Augustinians cite fact that virtue mentioned in Greek NT only in Phil. 4:8, II Peter 1:3, 5 and I Peter 2:9.

## III. Christian morality: the virtues.

- A. Prudence
- B. Temperance
- C. Justice
- D. Courage
- E. Consistent with Lewis’ comment on virtues, habituation: “every choice you are turning the central part of you, the part of you that chooses, into something a little different from what it was before.” (Note assumptions about being and becoming.) p. 86

## IV. Sexual morality: Lewis is not afraid of Puritan ethics; called himself a “dinosaur.”

- A. Distinction between chastity: (Christian, absolute standard) which should be the same for all times, places, cultures.
- B. Modesty (propriety): (social convention, relative) which differs from culture to culture; he uses example of amount of clothes worn by women.
- C. Lewis defines chastity as “unpopular”; the option for the Christian, since chastity is an absolute, is “either marriage, with complete faithfulness to your partner, or else total abstinence.”
- D. Lewis would also oppose the views that any sexuality is permissible as long as some commitment exists between two people.
- E. Lewis claims that Christianity affirms positive view of sex.
- F. He concludes that the present state of cultural preoccupation with sex is a perversion.
- G. Three reasons why we find it difficult to achieve chastity:
  - 1. Some claim that whatever we desire is “natural” or “healthy.”
  - 2. People believe chastity is impossible.
  - 3. Psychology teaches “repressed sex is dangerous.”
- H. Finally, Lewis pointedly reminds us that sexual acts, while sinful, are not the most wicked acts that we can commit.

#### V. Marriage.

- A. Physical unity of marriage.
- B. Promise aspect of marriage.
- C. Divorce. Once the union is made, it is permanent.

#### VI. Pride, the great sin: a spiritual cancer; it eats up contentment; next to pride all other sins are mere “fleabites.”

- A. Pride is not mentioned in the 10 commandments.
- B. Pride’s essence = competitive; pride gets no pleasure out of having, only of having more than the next person.”
- C. Faith as a virtue: accepting as true the doctrines, beliefs of Christianity.
  - 1. Lewis asks how belief can be a matter of morality.
  - 2. Moral value of belief.
  - 3. Christian belief results from assent to good evidences.
  - 4. Critics frequently point out the absence of clear statement of central Pauline teaching of justification by faith.

## Lecture #6 Beyond the Basics: The Trinity

Dr. Hoffecker

- I. Introduction: Relating theology to experience. Lewis violates a basic rule in teaching: Don't give your class the opportunity not to pay attention to you as a teacher! He does this by saying he is about to disregard others' advice: avoid theology at any cost. Theology is too intellectual, divisive, confusing and sterile. If you want to keep your audience, focus on practical matters instead, especially experience.
  
- II. The Trinity: Beginning with the tough issues. Lewis begins where he demanded apologists must eventually go – into one of the most difficult of all Christian beliefs. And he demonstrates that he can make real progress as he takes on “resisting material.”
  - A. The “Father of Liberal Theology” Friedrich Schleiermacher set the tone for 19<sup>th</sup> c. thought by calling the Trinity a matter of theological speculation. Schl and Calvin shared a disdain for speculation – but the two defined speculation in totally different ways.
    - B. Theology not an inferior matter. Lewis admits that experience may be more attractive than the discipline of thinking carefully about God. He also concedes that experience matters. But when we turn from experiencing God to consider the creeds and confessions, are we taking up what is worthless?
      1. Metaphors and theology: theology is like a map.
  
      2. Thus the irony – begin with and focus on experience itself with no clear thoughts as a guide of experience and more likely than not a person falls into a perilous relativism; how can we know that our experience is valid and not simply a delusion or a by-product of something else? On the other hand, when one starts with clear-headed theology, the heart does not remain uninvolved. Rather it rises unbidden to follow the lead of the mind. Lewis does not mince words: vague religious feelings are “thrills and no work; like watching the waves from the beach. But you will not get to Newfoundland by studying the Atlantic that way, and you will not get eternal life by simply feeling the presence of God in flowers or music.” (4<sup>th</sup> par)
  - C. The Trinity and the Nicene Creed: Lewis' first subject in treating the Trinity arises from the “permanent Christianity”: taught by the apostles, embodied in the creeds, defended by the martyrs.
    1. Borrowing from an old text. Lewis proposes the first major creed in the early church and its use of two different terms rooted in Scripture: “begotten not created” and “begotten by his Father before all worlds.”
  
    2. He illustrates each concept clearly and concisely: birds beget other birds and man begets human babies but birds make nests and man makes a radio.
  
- D. The Three Personal God. What do we mean when we say that God is personal? Lewis distinguishes between an orthodox and unorthodox view of God as personal. Christians believe that God is beyond personality. But some theologians have

radically changed the meaning of this phrase to its exact opposite. Liberal thinkers interpret beyond personality from its orthodox sense to mean that God is really impersonal. Paul Tillich illustrates this principle. In his *Systematic Theology* Tillich insisted that God is beyond personality; however, in his explanation of that phrase he demanded that this does not mean that God is a Person. To say this, claims Tillich, reduces God to our finite categories. Therefore, he proposed that we speak of God as “the ground of personhood.”

1. Implication. Lewis immediately moves to the practical implication of God as personal yet beyond personality. Since the goal of human life is to be “taken into the life of God” we must have a correct idea of what this implies. He had already said in the previous chapter that zoe (spiritual life) is distinct from bios (natural or biological life). Man has the former but needs the latter.
  2. Paul Tillich’s view of God as the “ground of personhood” proposes an image that actually loses the meaning of “person” in the process.
    - a. If Tillich’s idea produces any image, it is an impersonal image of pantheism
    - b. Lewis’ description differs from Tillich’s. Lewis’ proposal of the three levels, however, protects both our personal quality and God’s unique tri-personal being.
    - c. Lewis admits that his image has weaknesses due to our limited capacity of living in, as it were, a two-dimensional world, and God is three-dimensional. But he concludes: “... we can get a sort of faint notion of it. And when we do, we are then, for the first time in our lives, getting some positive idea, however faint, of something super-personal – something more than a person.” (142, middle MC; 143, top S&S)
  3. Prayer illustrates the personal Trinity while maintaining the integrity of the person. For Lewis, the goal of this theologizing is not merely intellectual cognition. Theology has, after all, a practical goal. Thus rather than begin with experience, he ends with experience.
  4. A second implication. The Trinity provides what we most need for an objective morality – a basis for personal moral value. Here Lewis reiterates without attribution what Augustine said in his critique of ancient Greek Platonism. “... the words ‘God is love’ have no real meaning unless God contains at least two Persons.” (151, bottom MC; 152, top S&S)
- III. The value of theology. Lewis demonstrates in these chapters, that theology is not as abstract and difficult as our preconceptions might lead us to believe. Ever since liberal thinkers began to alter the content of orthodox theology, people have bought the line that theology is dull, unimportant and irrelevant. By his vivid illustrations and determination to stay within the bounds of “permanent Christianity,” Lewis shows the intrinsic value of Christian belief and its necessity/applicability for daily life.

## Lecture #7: Epistemology of C.S. Lewis

Dr. Hoffecker

- I. Introduction: Epistemology: the favorite topic of modern thinkers.
- A. Dominant feature of modern philosophy: skepticism regarding preceding eras.
  - B. Autonomy, the quest of moderns. What marks the modern period is demand that all knowledge result from human autonomy whether that autonomy expresses itself in human reason, scientific method, existential choice, logical analysis, or pragmatic expediency.
  - C. Richard B. Cunningham, *C. S. Lewis: Defender of the Faith*.
  - D. In *Mere Christianity* – an inductive moral argument for the existence of God; starting point is particular moral awareness. Existence of moral lawgiver outside of our consciousness; attributes absolute, personal, righteous approach. Inductive, rational, carefully reasoned.
    - 1. Lewis once summarized his epistemology succinctly: “I am an empirical Christian; I came to Christ through induction.”
    - 2. We noted the weaknesses of induction; while it provides us with a helpful scientific method, it can never give us absolute truth.
    - 3. Most of modern thought, however, has been taken with the superiority of induction, scientific evidence.
  - E. In mythical writings Lewis' approach is yet again very different; subjective elements come into play.
- II. Overview: Lewis “the reasoning Romantic.” How are we to reconcile these disparate elements in Lewis' writings? Cf., Lewis' first book published after his conversion: *Pilgrim's Regress: An Allegorical Apology for Christianity, Reason and Romanticism*
- A. Best description of his epistemology is “the Reasoning Romantic”
  - B. Both reason (rational faculty) and imagination (intuitive faculty) are “indispensable and mutually necessary human faculties for knowing.”
    - 1. In Lewis' own words “reason is the natural organ of truth; but imagination is the organ of meaning.”
    - 2. Note use of “faculty” (Cunningham) and “organ” (Lewis).
  - C. Lewis' life experience: The correlative nature of reason and imagination
    - 1. Imaginative life came naturally to Lewis; Sehnsucht
    - 2. Reason a result of Lewis' schooling.
    - 3. For a period these two faculties alternated in their control of his life.
    - 4. But then two worked together: reason's work - clarification of various “desires” led him through various philosophical “isms” to theism, consideration of religions. Therefore reason and imagination converged at point of revelation.
      - 3. Imagination – “Dialectic of desire”
      - 4. Proved substitutes to be wrong because he “lived” through them.
      - 5. None satisfied. All substitutes proved false.
- Lewis' imaginative life: a lived dialectic***
- 1. Three experiences of “joy,” in his childhood desire: fairyland.
  - 2. Lewis' attempt to substitute “false” objects to satisfy “joy.” Sex; occult, Norse mythology; Wagner's music.

***Lewis' rational life: a rational dialectic***

1. Early schooling dismal, routine. He took pride in intellectual priggishness.
2. Tutored by Kirkpatrick. Logical, rational examination of all ideas. Atheistic naturalism
3. Reason began to clarify "desire" so that desire "projected beyond feeling and transient objects of desire."
4. Dialectic of philosophic argument.
5. Various philosophical "isms" - examine evidences: Materialism, idealism, theism, Christianity.

D. Lewis' Anthropology: Man as Unified: Undergirding this epistemological method lies Lewis' anthropology – man is a complex unity as a knowing creature.

1. Lewis avoids simplistic reductionisms in his understanding of human nature. Human beings are not merely rational, cerebral beings.
2. Both reason and imagination are essential to understanding man and the process of knowing. Both involve individual in dialectical process of knowing - not a straight-line movement nor involving a single faculty.
  - a. Imagination in dialectic of desire; an ontological or lived dialectic. Followed his desires in life. First one, then another.
  - b. Reason in dialectic of logical, philosophical argument. Examine evidences; sift through conflicting "isms."
  - c. Both of these imagination and reason also involved in dialectical relation – they converge on one goal – God.

E. Lewis' View of Language: How did human beings experience reality before and after the fall?

1. Origin and history of language suggest a parallel structure in universe between rational /psychological and physical entities.
2. As created, man's experience of reality was unified. This original unity of experience has been fragmented in numerous ways: Subject/object, phenomenal (physical)/noumenal (mind) (mental), sensible/insensible, intellectual/imaginative, thought/ perception.
3. We today distinguish between:
  - a. The mind that sees
  - b. The thing seen
  - c. Language expressing this meaning of object
  - d. As created, man didn't fragment unity; he enjoyed what Cunningham calls "an immediate qualitative - quantitative apprehension of concrete reality" or "picture - thinking."
4. As for language and use of words in this knowing process, man did not first name physical things and then by extension invent metaphors for insensible, mental, emotional states.
5. Language was unified with this "picture-thinking" in such a way that equations (because of parallelism of physical and mental) resulted in:

**Sensibles**

height and light  
evil and pain  
breath

**Insensibles**

good and happy  
deep and dark  
soul

Of this process Lewis says: "It is the very nature of thought and language to represent what is immaterial in picturable terms."

6. "Kantian Wall": Metaphysical Dualism / Epistemological Dualism. The problem is that, especially in modern times, we have split these apart.

phenomenal  
 sensibles  
 literal truth  
 intellectual  
 scientific truth

noumenal  
 insensibles  
 metaphorical truth  
 imaginative  
 poetic truth

- a. Scientific truth (language) - concerned with "truth, fact." Scientific facts must reduce what it studies to an abstraction, that is to numbers, figures, charts and graphs which depict the reality in quantitative, measurable terms.
- i. Reduces qualitative experience to a quantitative one. Love between man and woman ---- hormones, blood pressure, physical response.
  - ii. Ideal = pure mathematics - charts, graphs, numerical quantities.
  - iii. All of this involves process of abstraction; the "graph" of one's pulse, breathing are mistaken as "real" instead of our actual experience of our heartbeat and breathing. Scientific equations used to describe what we experience as scent, taste, etc.
- b. On the other hand, poetic or imaginative truth (language) deals with concrete things we meet in everyday life. Unique things, experiences which are individual, lovely, hateful. Modern epistemological divorce: scientific language fails to reach concrete / poetic language cannot prove existence of anything.
7. "Meditation in a toolshed" from *God in the Dock*
- a. Note series of examples:

***Looking along: experience, inside***

young man in love  
 mathematician  
 savage dance to Nyonga  
 girl whose doll is broken

***Looking at: objective, outside***

scientist describes from "outside"  
 physiologist  
 anthropologist  
 psychologist

- c. Modern trend: a reductionism. Modern science tends to reduce all reality to its perspective, that is, to see everything through the eyes of the scientist. It favors “looking at” as the “real, true account.”
- d. p. 214 Key question: Since we may all have been deceived once / many times in past by “looking along” experiences, shouldn’t we in fact distrust all “inside experiences”?
- e. But we all have had true inside experiences, for example “pain.” Who can dispute the reality of pain?
- f. Can you ever do both (look at and look along) at the same time? cf. Lewis’ youthful experiences with his “realizations” in prayer.
- g. p. 215 What if all experiences were only true from outside? “Where is the rot to end?”

7. Thus we end today with a division.

Questions:

- a. Is there any way to unite again what we have divided?
- b. Is our culture to be torn asunder by war between scientific and aesthetic forces both of whom stand firm in their perspectives?
- c. Cf. arguments between “facts” of industrialists vs. the “values” of environmentalists. Rising technology parallels values of human life.

## Lecture #8: Imagination the organ of meaning: "Myth Become Fact"

Dr. Hoffecker

## I. Review:

1. Scientific truth: concerned with fact. Problem: we mistake our quantitative abstractions as "real"; don't probe meaning. Hopelessly (?) objective.
2. Imaginative truth: concerned with meaning. Problem: imagination cannot prove anything. Hopelessly (?) subjective.
3. To resolve this dichotomy, Lewis proposes his epistemological solution: reason = organ of truth; imagination = the organ of meaning.

II. Imagination, the organ of meaning. We must attempt to see the relation between sensible and insensible. Lewis believes that we can accomplish this through two ways: allegory and myth - allegory shades into myth.

## A. Allegory

1. In allegory images stand for concepts (*Pilgrim's Progress*: Giant Despair, Mr. Legality)
2. We create characters, visibilia, fictional personifications that express immaterial facts, emotions, passions.
3. Allegory is clear, unambiguous, rough one-to-one relation between verbal symbol and thing signified.
4. Example: Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. Christian confronts various personifications as he makes his way to heaven: attempt to probe meaning of Christian life, its struggles and trials.

C. Myth. Related to symbolism and nonconceptual thinking which is different from conceptual thinking of allegory. Note there is a difference between allegory and myth. We sometimes make the two synonymous. Lewis correctly distinguishes between the two.

1. In symbolism the material world is a copy of the real, invisible world.
2. Images stand for something the writer has experienced but cannot reduce to a concept, e.g., God. Meaning of symbolical work cannot be translated into conceptual language – too concrete.
3. Symbolism reaches for transcendent, cannot be contained in words, defined: God, universe, human nature.

III. Mythology is highest form of symbolism. an attempt to grasp transcendent – what is by definition irreducible to conceptual expression. Definition, Cunningham p. 74: "through mythology the imagination has an immediate nonconceptual apprehension of reality, grasps what baffles the intellect, sees what reality is like in a more central region."

## A. Validity of mythopoeic vision is not open to reason's examinations

1. A myth attempts to present a spiritual vision, it portrays universal truths of man and the universe.
2. Two sources of myth
  - a. Myths reflecting the primitive experience of mankind
  - b. Myths invented by moderns

B. Lewis is concerned with impact of myths on the imaginations of logical minds. “The quality of the real universe, the divine, magical, terrifying and ecstatic reality in which we all live.”

1. Plato’s rejection of myths of Homer.

2. Plato’s rejection of Homer does not mean that he rejected the category of the myth.

C. How do we authenticate the truth of myths? Only verification of the truth of mythology is “deep, self-authenticating conviction that in the imaginative experience one has encountered reality, reality that cannot be defined, put into words, or grasped by the intellect.” Cunningham p. 75. Only the mythopoeic imagination can grasp this solid, concrete reality.

IV. *God in the Dock*: “Myth Become Fact” Lewis provides a definition of myth: it is not something which is not true - rather it is something “too true for words.”

A. Lewis addresses a thoroughly modern audience. The essay is written to answer the challenge by modernists that rejects the relevance of myths in the modern era. “Mythical elements,” by definition are “vestigial” remnants from the primitive past that should be removed from Christianity as outmoded. I.e, myths are primitive stories from prescientific culture. Rationality requires that these outmoded thoughts be abandoned; myth is primitive, outmoded. Example: “dance to Nyonga” in “Meditation in a Toolshed.”

B. P. 64: Lewis counters “myth is the vital and nourishing element in the whole concern.” Myth by definition does not “move with the times.” He cites example after example of “rational” usurpers who boldly challenge the mythopoeic vision: Lucretius, Julian the apostate, Averroes, Voltaire.

1. Myth always remains, it abides.

C. Why does modern thought want to remove, drop myth? We are concerned in modern thought with empirical reality – “looking at.”

- a. Distinction between subjective/objective
- b. Distinction between Taste and what we taste
- c. The more we think about something, the more the something eludes us.
- d. p. 65 Can’t study love and love at the same time.

D. Inside experiences and outside experiences. Myth is the partial solution for this dichotomy. p. 66 In the enjoyment of a great myth we come nearest to experiencing as a concrete what can otherwise be understood only as an abstraction. Orpheus and Eurydice.

- E. Experiencing the myth. Significant feature of myth: myth turns out to be a kind of picture-making which helps us to understand great reality at core of things and on the other hand the result of a deep call from that reality.
- F. Myth is a form of general revelation. Mythology is replete with dying god, with death and rebirth. Myth fleshes out the idea that man must undergo death if he would truly live. Resemblance between myths and Christian truth resembles the analogy of an object and its reflection in a pond; the reflection resembles the object but differs from the object.
1. Example of dying and rising god.
  2. Myths multiply because myths can't satisfy longing for joy
  3. Therefore, myth arises from "gleams of celestial strength and beauty falling on a jungle of filth and imbecility."
- G. Myth and the incarnation. Just as myth transcends thought so does Incarnation (special revelation) transcend myth (general revelation).
1. Christianity at its center is a myth become fact. Old myth of "Dying God" while not ceasing to be myth "comes down from heaven" of the imagination to the earth of history.
  2. What previously incorporated in mythical consciousness of man (because the pattern is written in the structure of the cosmos by God) actually happens. We move from mythical conception "dying God" to "Jesus under Pontius Pilot."
  3. cf. Green and Hooper, *Biography of C. S. Lewis* p. 117, 118.
  4. p. 67 Modern man, therefore must do two things epistemologically: Empirical reason must assent to historical fact of the gospel, yet also receive the myth with the imaginative embrace.
- H. Ultimately myth puts all men into contact with God and meaning. A kind of "natural revelation" as opposed to "special revelation."
1. Imagination and general revelation.
  2. It's better to be a good pagan (be capable of apprehending myth), than a modern materialistic atheist (debunks myth as primitive). "God is more than a god, not less; Christ is more than Balder."
- I. We must not be nervous about "parallels" and "pagan Christs." Mythical creations among the pagans ought to be there.

## V. Metaphor

- A. If mythology enables the imagination to grasp the nonconceptual, metaphor is the imagination's contribution to reason, a preparatory stage to reason's pronouncing something true or false.
  - 1. The imagination creates verbal symbols that are indispensable to human reasoning.
  - 2. Reason is dependent on language to think or communicate thought. In using language we make a qualitative leap from sensible objects to such rational categories as cause, relation.
  - 3. Metaphor: an implicit comparison is made between two unlike entities, representing the immaterial in picturable terms. Our language abounds with metaphors.
  
- B. Therefore, imagination also supplies the linguistic tools for reason to use. The metaphorical function of imagination essential to reason if it is to judge meaning provided by the imagination is valid.

VI. H.O.J. Brown, *Christianity Today*, September 27, 1974: Christianity and mythology.

- A. Many people refuse to take Bible seriously because "myth" is often used of Biblical accounts.
  - 1. When people hear "myth" they immediately think "untrue" or worse "fairy story."
  - 2. II Peter 1:16 distinguishes gospel from "cleverly devised myths."
  
- B. Bible on other hand clearly affirms its accounts are tied to real historical events.
  - 1. The Fall. Traditional view of Gen 1-3 is that this is fully historical. Adam and Eve are genuine, historical figures, tied by genealogical references to ordinary chronological time [not "once upon a time" nor mere symbols outside of time].
  - 2. The Fall: Liberal view. Adam and Eve as mythical figures – not actual people inhabiting a garden. Rather they are "everyman" and "everywoman." The story presents what is true about all people at all times and all places instead of specific people. While not literally true, the story is an attempt of the Jewish imagination to portray the meaning of our fallen nature and how we relate to God.
  
- C. New Testament especially divorces itself from Greek thinking.
  - 1. Myth is pagan category.
  - 2. Paul's contrast of Gospel [Cross] and Greek wisdom in I Corinthians 1,
  
- D. In light of New Testament disparagement of myth, what are we to make of Lewis' use of myth?
  - 1. Mythical material in non-Christian religions is a memory of man's unfallen state or an anticipation of our salvation in Christ.
    - a. All people know something about God through myth just as through creative.
    - b. Makes them accountable.

c. Perversion - distorted through sin.

2. Myth is a form of general revelation involving man's imaginative powers. But, as in Romans 1, the Gentile mind refuses to live under truth. The result is always a perversion, an idol.
3. But clearly, in this case the Bible is the standard, the myths are at best imperfect and sometimes even perverted imperfections.
4. Therefore we can appreciate Lewis' positive approach to pagan myths. (He would rather be a good pagan than a materialistic atheist, but still more he would rather be neither, but a Christian) and still maintain that Scripture uniquely affirms "Myth Become Fact."

## Lecture #9: Reason, the Organ of Truth.

Dr. Hoffecker

- I. Introduction: Modern apologists' rejection of reason. Lewis by staunchly espousing a central role to reason in epistemology and consequently to the defense of Christianity, articulates an unpopular position among modern and contemporary apologists. The dominant influence in apologetics has not included dependence on rational inductive arguments. To cite just two examples of the jettisoning of reason we might mention Christian liberalism and Christian existentialism. Liberal apologists have stressed human intuition as the fundamental religious faculty [Schleiermacher] Ultimate experience (i.e., religion) is not fundamentally rational but intuitive. Another (post)modern contender, Kierkegaard's existentialism, perhaps even more radically opposed reason in religious experience. Kierkegaard introduced the category of "absurd" to typify the radical nature of Christian truth. Religion involves an irrational act, a "leap of faith"; religion is an act of existential choice an irrational transition from empirical/ rational to irrational. Lewis would have none of either of these two views. We have already seen that he characterized liberalism as "Christianity and water"; he viewed Kierkegaard's ideas as "fuzzy thinking."
- II. Reason: Defended in "De Futilitate"
- A. Reason's role in apologetics. For Lewis, reason plays a crucial role in defending Christianity. Not only is reason valid, in fact it is indispensable for Lewis. He was convinced not only in the validity of reason but of the indisputable reasonableness of Christianity. Lewis' position is very strong; not only is he willing to subject Christianity to reason, he insists it be done. But apologists must avoid the pitfalls of rationalism. Reason can be overdone, however. In the field of apologetics, Lewis calls "rationalism" any use of reason to "rationalize," "debunk" one's opponents' arguments while refusing to apply reason to one's own arguments.
  - B. Validity of reason. All knowledge, both theoretical and practical, depends on the validity of reason. In his famous work *Abolition of Man* (p 36) he stated categorically: "An open mind about the ultimate foundations either of theoretical or of Practical Reason is idiocy." Unfortunately, as we have already mentioned, Lewis doesn't probe the epistemological ramifications of the Fall. In *Problem of Pain* Lewis proposes some very interesting observations about pre-Fall and post-Fall man. Man before the Fall exercised significant powers which he has lost. Lewis claims that man as originally created (evolved) was "all consciousness." Bodily processes functioned under the control of the human will rather than the law of nature. After the Fall, man lost control of himself and like the rest of animal creation became subject to the biochemical, physical and psychological laws that now manifests itself in sinful and fallen behavior.
  - C. Reason is independent of nature: but not autonomous. Reason is independent of and not produced by nature, but does not exist absolutely on its own. Therefore reason not autonomous. Chain of rational causation must rest ultimately in a Self-existent Reason on which all reason depends. Universe is ultimately mental. Our logic is a "participation in the cosmic Logos." Only the a priori validity of reason can permit man to talk about truth or falsity.
  - D. Human reason [r] participates in Cosmic Reason [R]. If reason participates in logos then the weight of logical argument is on the side of Christian apologist. Unfortunately Lewis usually merely assumes this rather than making what VanTil would call a "transcendental argument." That is, Lewis depends on what Francis Schaeffer in his apologetic works of the 1960s and 70s called a "residual Christian world view" existing among most people even though both he and Lewis knew that we live in a primarily post-Christian world. Lewis believes that any true thinking about the universe must be possible because the rules of thought and the rules of the physical universe rest in a transcendent Cosmic Creator. Christianity's opponents. Most opponents of Christian faith resist logic. They are dabblers who pick up evidence here and there (which suit their case) and ignore evidence which is not favorable: Lewis has already denied this option for Christian apologists.
  - E. Dialectic of reason: Therefore reason, faithfully followed leads to God. It helps clarify one's position. Can lead to a theistic position, then to revelation and door of faith. Having arrived at its own proper boundaries, it points to church and Christian experience.
  - F. "*De Futilitate*": Confronting the post-Christian world. This essay was originally an address given to Magdalen College. Thus Lewis is directly confronting contemporary skepticism and challenging its major premise. Here we have an example of VanTil's transcendental argument. Lewis rather than arguing inductively from the particularities of our experience to what must be supposed as necessary to explain our experience, directly takes on the major premise of skepticism itself – the assumption that futility reigns supreme.
    1. Contemporary malaise. Lewis' opening remarks gives expression to the dominant mindset of the post-Christian world – a growing malaise during World War II. [a] Optimism in western culture has died out. Eschatological hope of earlier Christians. Secular hopes of liberals. [b] Question remains: Is there

- any good in the world: Question of meaning/truth. Thus in modern form we confront the ancient problem probed by Solomon in Ecclesiastes.
2. Cosmic futility is shielded from common folk by “popular evolutionism,” i.e., belief that “general improvement” is a cosmic law. If you want to follow this idea out in more detail, read “The Funeral of a Great Myth” in *Christian Reflections*.
    - a. p. 60 Popular view of human thought: thinking is the last stage to emerge from evolution.
    - b. Raises question of truths: are our thoughts true?
    - c. p. 61 Total skepticism is impossible: “All thoughts are false.” If true that statement means that that thought is also false, which is a contradiction.
  3. Popularity of Scientism. Another popular view: scientific truth is objective while moral / metaphysical thinking is purely subjective. But Lewis points out an acute problem frequently overlooked by popular appeals to scientific knowledge. Scientific thought itself is not strictly speaking “objective.” Science as a discipline rests on what Lewis calls “the validity of inference.” We infer that our thoughts correspond to the reality of which we are thinking. Here, Lewis points out that our ontology and epistemology are clearly related.
  4. p. 62 Therefore, the distinction between objective and subjective knowledge is not the primary issue. The real problem is between logical and nonlogical.
  5. p. 63 Rules out materialism.
- G. Immanuel Kant’s subjective view of reason. Next Lewis takes on the watershed philosophy of Immanuel Kant. Remember what woke Kant from his philosophic slumbers – David Hume’s empirical attack on reason. Hume said that we cannot know such a simple thing as causality. We do not know the uniformity of nature. We only know our sense impressions. Hume destroyed the very basis for modern science – he is the prototypical modern skeptic taking on the major premise of modernity. Kant was shocked. He envisioned Newtonian science going down the tubes.
1. Kant’s subjective account of reason. How did Kant answer Hume? By conceding Hume’s major point – what we think is not primarily the result of our minds accommodating themselves to what is external to them as the usual empirical model assumes. Rather, objects conform to the operation of our minds. Paradoxically on this subjective base, the objectivity of modern science rests. The external world is not inherently rational. Instead whatever rationality exists, resides within the human mind. External to the human mind is physical reality which must be filtered through the categories of reason. Human reason does not exist “out there” in the external world. Rather, it exists as it were, “shut up inside our heads.”
  2. Lewis responds to Kant. Reason is not “shut up” inside our heads but exists independently of human reason; it is already “out there.” Unique to human minds, i.e., mind produced by nature. Reason [R] exists in the universe or behind the universe “either as objective as material Nature or more objective still.”
- H. Lewis poses a choice: [1] If human reason is merely subjective [i.e., “shut up inside our heads”] then our knowledge is merely illusion. We read rationality into an otherwise irrational universe. [2] If on the other hand, a transcendent cosmic reason exists, then human knowledge is a response to or apprehension of a rationality with which the universe is saturated. Human reason is subject to an external, objective reason.
1. At first glance #1 [which entails cosmic futility] is only choice. Universe does not appear good as a whole although these are good elements. Cf. Lewis’ view before he was a Christian as found in the preface to *The Problem of Pain*.
  2. Futility leaves us with only one option – the total absence of any meaning, good or value. But futility is one of the options not available to us as an ultimate pronouncement. How would we have idea of good at all?
  3. p. 67 and 70. Problem with futility as ultimate option. Our sense that universe is futile and our sense of duty to make it less futile in so far as our power permits, implies a belief that it is not futile at all.
  4. Like the problems that meet us in science. Irregularities in physics, etc. History of science is history of showing that irregularities are really not “irregular” at all.
  5. Since we assume that reality is logical we continue our scientific pursuits to show that the apparent irregularities are really not irregular at all. i.e., we are always seeking the “law” or pattern which we can’t now see that the irregularity is following. cf. Heisenberg’s uncertainty principle.
  6. p. 69 Treatment of goodness: must be “real,” “external.”
  7. Concludes: use reason to examine claims of various religions.

III. Conclusion: What is the upshot of this essay?

- A. Has Lewis proved the validity of reason?
- B. Has he merely demonstrated that practically we all depend on validity of reasons?

## Lecture #10 Lewis' View of Creativity and History

Dr. Hoffecker

- I. Introduction. Today we examine two essays of Lewis which demonstrate his application of Christian apologetics across intellectual disciplines: "Christianity and Literature" and "Historicism."
- II. Brief diversion: Lewis' view of communication. Lewis' mastery of the art of communication is among the principal reasons for his popularity.

- A. Key principles related to communicating the Christian faith. Lewis believed that any writing is an art to be developed and enjoyed.
1. A good book facilitates self-transcendence. "In reading great literature I become a thousand men and yet remain myself... Here as in worship, in love, in moral action, and in knowing, I transcend myself, and am never more myself than when I do."
  2. Many apologists neglect this view in their writings.
    - a. Example of *Pilgrim's Regress*.
    - b. Literary art both "means" and "is."
      - i. Means, logos. We have already seen that the imaginative faculty apprehends meaning. Every story, every defense of the faith presents a logos – it is something said.
      - ii. Is. Work of literature is also poiema, a thing made. All created objects are in this sense an object of art, something shaped, made.
    - c. The Personal Heresy. Lewis establishes two criteria for literature of value:
      - i. Writing must be interesting.
      - ii. Writing must have a permanent positive effect upon the reader.
      - iii. Thus a good apologetic writing must possess the qualities of any "good" piece of literature. It should be interesting, have a positive effect upon the reader.
- B. This leads us to the first topic of today, creativity / originality. We are surprised to find that Lewis' view differs from what we might have expected.

III. Christianity and Literature.

- A. Can we speak of "Christian literature"? Lewis surprises us by saying that the term does not mean that a distinctive type of literature called "Christian" can be identified by certain criteria unique to it.
- B. In literary theory, however, Christianity has a distinctive contribution to make. In contrast to modern literary theory which exalts the idea of "originality" the New Testament proposes a totally different perspective.

1. Modern literary criticism. Key words = “originality,” “spontaneity” and “freedom.”
  2. New Testament. While the NT never expounds on literary theory *per se*, nevertheless it speaks unequivocally on matters relating to creativity and innovation.
    - a. I Cor 11:3. Paul speaks of the headship of man over woman as an expression of what he calls a proportion: God is to Christ as Christ is to man and man is to woman. (God : Christ; Christ : man; man : woman)
    - b. Galatians 4:9 supplements the Corinthian passage. Paul expounds the idea of imitating, reflecting, assimilating.
    - c. John 5:19: The Son copies the works of the Father. The Son does only what he sees the Father doing.
    - d. Lewis could also have mentioned the OT use of Heb *bara*.
- C. Art in the New Testament, therefore, is best understood as imitation.
1. Derivative / imitative / reflective good. The primary virtue of Christian in life in general and in art in particular, consists in fulfilling one’s destiny as a creature – that is derivatively, reflectively.
  2. Key sentence: the maxim of the Christian artist: “author should never conceive himself as bringing into existence beauty or wisdom which did not exist before, but simply and solely as trying to embody in terms of his own art some reflection of eternal Beauty and Wisdom.” (CR, 7)
  3. Lewis cites various examples of kinship with ancient thinkers.
- D. Implication. Lewis applies the distinction between the NT view of originality and the modern view.
1. Distinguishes between Christian and nonchristian poet.
  2. Contrast between Augustine’s *Confessions* and Rousseau’s.
  3. Unbeliever vs. believer on the significance of culture.
- E. Thus Lewis makes a significant apology for Christianity and culture. In art as imitative, derivative, Christians consider their work as service to God, a means by which they render the labor as a means to a higher end.

- IV. Historicism: In this essay Lewis describes the opposite danger that he fought in “On the Reading of Old Books.” Christianity is a historical religion. What does this mean?
- A. Christian teaching is tied to events in history.
  - B. Christianity holds to a linear view of history.
  - C. What is historicism? Historicism is an example of a post-Christian view of history.
    - 1. In historicism the Christian apologist confronts the view of history as an autonomous academic discipline.
    - 2. Historicism bears a significant similarity with scientism.
    - 3. Examples: Marxism, Hegelianism, Evolutionism, Christians (?)
  - D. What is history? Note six definitions on p. 105.
    - i. Each definition provides an obstacle to historicist’s claims.
    - ii. Key paragraph: p. 109. The problem of *a priori*: “How does he know beforehand ...?”
  - E. As Christian apologists how do we avoid the historicist mistake? The Christian faith provides us with the primary interpretive principle, not history itself.
  - F. The task of historians: p 110: note how carefully Lewis proscribes the limits of genuine historical research.
  - G. The Christian faith provides the interpretive key, not history itself.
  - H. The historian differs from the scientist by studying what is unique and unrepeatable.
  - I. We all have access to the “real” or primary history, the “now.”

## Lecture #11 Miracles I: Naturalism and Supernaturalism

Dr. Hoffecker

- I. Introduction. In the preface, Lewis calls his book “a preliminary to historical study.” He notes that he is not a trained historian and that he will not examine the historical evidence for miracles in the Bible. Then he continues, “My effort is to put my readers in a position to do so. It is no use going to the texts until we have some idea about the possibility or probability of the miraculous. Those who assume that miracles cannot happen are merely wasting their time by looking into the texts: we know in advance what results they will find for they have begun by begging the questions. (4)
- A. Defending another “difficult doctrine.”
  - B. How the book got written. Walter Hooper in *Companion* narrates how a letter from Dorothy Sayers in 1943 precipitated the writing of *Miracles*..
- II. Lewis’ apologetic method in *Miracles*. It is quite unlike what we witnessed in *Mere Christianity*.
- A. Direct method in *Mere Christianity*. In *MC* Lewis used the traditional evidentialist apologetic in his moral argument – what VanTil calls a direct method of argumentation.
    1. The believer argues evidentially appealing directly to the best evidence – “facts” – geared to convince an unbiased person to the truth of Christian faith under consideration.
    2. The argument is inductive in form rather than deductive.
    3. Thomas Aquinas’ famous “Five Ways” in *Summa Theologica*.
  - B. Method in *Miracles*.
    1. The indirect method. Although Lewis does not use the following terms, his method of arguing is what Cornelius VanTil called “the transcendental argument” or “arguing by presupposition.” VanTil in *Defense of the Faith* states: “The method of reasoning by presupposition may be said to be indirect rather than direct. The issue between believers and non-believers in Christian theism cannot be settled by a direct appeal to ‘facts’ or ‘laws’ whose nature and significance is already agreed upon by both parties to the debate. The question is rather as to what is the final reference-point required to make the ‘fact’ and ‘laws’ intelligible. The question is as to what the ‘facts’ and ‘laws’ really are. Are they what the non-Christian methodology assumes that they are? Are they what the Christian theistic methodology presupposes they are?” (*DF*, 100)
    2. Rather than a direct appeal to “facts” the apologist appeals indirectly. VanTil continues: “The Christian apologist must place himself upon the position of his opponent, assuming the correctness of his method merely for argument’s sake, in order to show him that on such a position the ‘facts are not facts and the ‘laws’ are not laws. He must also ask the non-Christian to place himself upon the Christian position for argument’s sake in order that he may be shown that only upon such a basis do ‘facts’ and ‘laws’ appear intelligible.” (*DF* 100-101)
    3. Note the argument proceeds deductively rather than inductively.
    4. Goal of the apologetic process. The Christian apologist’s goal is to reduce one’s opponent’s position to an absurdity – to show that his position on its own terms is self-refuting and that only the Christian position makes sense out of the phenomenon in question.
- III. “The Naturalist and the Supernaturalist.” Lewis begins with what he calls a “crude and popular” definition of miracle. “I use the word miracle to mean an interference with Nature by supernatural power.”
- A. Two diametrically opposed perspectives regarding Nature and Supernature.
  - B. The Naturalist. This is the position that he will ultimately refute. He defines a Naturalist as one who believes in Nature as “everything” or “the whole show.”
    1. Autonomous Nature. Lewis constructs the view so that Nature is conceived as an autonomous totality:
      - a. As to its being, Nature is self-existent

- b. As to its operation, Nature is self-sufficient
    - c. As to its destiny or goal, Nature is self-determining.
  - 2. No human free will.
  - 3. Naturalism as a philosophy has a historical background.
    - a. Medieval: division of reality into two spheres, the natural/supernatural. Occasionally supernatural may break in; supernatural completes the natural.
 

<u>grace</u>	<u>sacraments</u>	<u>supernatural order</u>
nature	work	natural order
    - b. Renaissance: Renaissance thinkers simply made the break between the two, a complete rupture. nature “swallowed up” grace by denying anything but nature had science on its side to prove that we don’t need Supernatural.
    - c. “Naturalism” as philosophy spawned other worldviews. contemporary result = various “isms” crass materialism, secularism, pragmatism, scientism.
- C. The Supernaturalist. By contrast, a Supernaturalist also believes there is something which has all attributes which Naturalists assign to nature: Self-existence, self-sufficient, self-determining. The Supernaturalist fully accepts the reality and existence of Nature, but he assigns the properties of autonomy to something else that transcends Nature.
  - 1. Note Lewis’ “picture-thinking.”
  - 2. Thus the primary distinction between the Naturalist and Supernaturalist is how one conceives of Nature.
  - 3. What is the relation between the two realms for the Supernaturalist?

D. Possibility of miracle?

E. First decision.

IV. The Cardinal Difficulty with Naturalism. Note there are two versions of this chapter – previously called “The Self-Contradiction of the Naturalist.” G.E.M. Anscombe’s paper before the Socratic on 2 Feb 1948 challenging the chapter. Lewis published a reply and then revised the chapter under the title “The Cardinal Difficulty of Naturalism” which appeared in 1960 (Collins-Fontana) and 1978 (MacMillan).

A. Continuation of transcendental argument.

- B. What does Naturalism as a system entail for rational thought? We have already noted in *De Futilitate* Lewis’ attack on the view that we read order into a disorderly universe. He concluded that reality is not futile. Here, Lewis builds upon his previous thinking about rationality and the universe. He states: “All possible knowledge depends on the validity of reasoning.” What do we do when we reason? We draw logical conclusions about certain conditions in reality.
- 1. Professor Haldane’s refutation of materialism. Then Lewis quotes J.B.S. Haldane: [Clause #1] “If my mental processes are determined wholly by the motions of atoms in my brain [this is a version of materialism – epiphenomenalism], [Clause #2] I have no reason to suppose that my beliefs are true ... and [Clause #3] hence I have no reason for supposing my brain to be composed of atoms.”
    - a. Alvin Plantinga’s “Darwin’s Doubt”: “With me the horrid doubt always arises whether the convictions of man’s mind, which has been developed from the mind of the lower animals, are of any value or at all trustworthy. Would any one trust in the convictions of a monkey’s mind, if there are any convictions in such a mind?”
  - 2. Lewis buttresses Haldane’s argument by elaborating two different uses of “because” in constructing arguments. (15) “Grandfather is ill because he ate lobster.” “Because” used to describe a cause/effect relationship. “Grandfather must be ill because he hasn’t gotten up yet (and we know that he is an

invariably early riser).” “Because” describes a logical entailment – what Lewis calls a ground – consequent relationship. Lewis further elaborates the use of reason as justification for belief in his famous essay “Bulverism” (*God in the Dock* 271-7) He states: “All beliefs have causes but a distinction must be drawn between (1) ordinary causes and (2) a special kind of cause called ‘a reason.’ Ordinary causes are mindless events which can produce other results than belief. Reasons arise from axioms inferences and affect only beliefs.” (*God in the Dock*, 275)

3. Thus the cardinal difficulty of Naturalism.
    - C. The act of thinking: reductionism or genuine reason. Now Lewis asks us to consider what are we doing when we think? Obviously it is an event. But what kind of an event is it? The Naturalist and Supernaturalists give us two separate answers. The Naturalist says only that it is a caused event. But all genuine acts of thinking must be rooted in the Ground-consequent *because*. Our thinking is an event, but not simply a cause/effect event. Naturalism entails a philosophic reductionism.
    - D. How did reason originate?
      1. Naturalist: Reason originated through natural selection.
      2. Reason must be our starting point. Lewis asks when in the evolutionary process, on the Naturalist premises, did reason begin to be “real insights” and not mere stimulus response phenomena? Lewis concludes: “Reason is our starting point. There can be no question either of attacking or defending it. If by treating it as a mere phenomenon you put yourself outside it, there is then no way, except by begging the question, of getting inside again.” (21)
- V. Supernaturalist view of reason. Supernaturalism does not entail a cardinal difficulty in explaining reason.
- A. Supernaturalist (which Lewis now describes as a Theist) view of reason. The theist denies that reason is a late comer in the evolutionary process.
  - B. Lewis affirms John 1:4, 9. Reason is older than Nature and is the basis for the orderliness of Nature. (22) The human mind in its act of knowing is illuminated by the Divine Reason. Thus reason is not tied to causal nexus; reason is tied to the truth known.
  - C. Supernaturalist gives basis for genuine insights. Whenever we reason and say things like, “therefore” and “hence” we are “seeing” truths.
- VI. We must choose between the Naturalist and the Supernaturalist view of reason. The Naturalist provides an unsatisfactory view of the origin of reason and the nature of thinking. It is reductionistic. Supernaturalism, on the other hand provides a compelling case for rational thought and the origin of reason.

## Lecture #12 Miracles II: Intellectual Objections to Naturalism

Dr. Hoffecker

- I. Introduction. Recall Lewis' intention as we begin each chapter. His approach is indirect – to expose the underlying assumptions of two disparate worldviews and probe the implications of both.
- II. Chapter 4: Nature and Supernature. Note opening sentence: “If our argument has been sound, acts of reasoning are not interlocked with the total interlocking system of Nature as all its other items are interlocked with one another. They are connected with it in a different way...” (25)
  - A. Reason can alter Nature and vice versa. Lewis frames the argument using several metaphors. He notes that we use reason to alter nature. Nature can also have an effect on reason.
  - B. The “I think” phenomena: denies both pantheism and dualism. Just as in *MC* Lewis distinguished between various conceptions of God, so here he separates how orthodox Christianity differs from pantheism and dualism and their respective views.
  - C. How do the two relate? The invasion of reason is not like a weapon but like a beam of light which illuminates. It organizes, unifies; it is like a rightful sovereign whose task is to rule. He proposes three options:
    1. Nature produced Reason (God) – a form of emergent evolution proven wrong in the last chapter.
    2. God and Nature are independent (dualism is impossible)
    3. God produced Nature. The only remaining option.
  - D. Creative powers of human imagination. But this option is something we can appreciate because we experience something like it in our own life through imagination.
  - E. Lewis closes with an allusion to the Genesis creation story.
- III. Chapter 5: A Further Difficulty in Naturalism. Lewis continues in this chapter with further difficulties with Naturalism's premises or presuppositions.
  - A. Naturalism and ethics. He states the Naturalist scenario for the origin and development of moral consciousness from the “Big Bang” to highly civilized behavior:
    1. Chemical reactions produced life.
    2. Life, under the influence of natural selection, produced consciousness
    3. Conscious organisms developed patterns of behavior in which some lived longer than others
    4. Behavior is reinforced producing “moral expectations.”
  - B. This view results in an unacknowledged reductionism. While people believe that they are making genuinely true moral statements (“I/you/they ought to \_\_\_\_”) on their naturalistic premises, their moral statements are no more morally significant than “I/you/they itch.”

- C. Fortunately most Naturalists are better than their philosophy. According to their own premises, they have all the reason in the world *not* to be moral, yet they are!
  - D. Another choice required.
  - E. Thus Lewis is finished with Naturalism.
- IV. Chapter 6 Answers to Misgivings. Whereas in preceding chapters Lewis posed arguments against Naturalism, here he proposes arguments for the Supernaturalist to answer.
- A. Thinking as a result of chemical action in the brain. This argument builds on the Naturalist view that all events are related to natural causes.
  - B. Why should we have to make a case for Supernaturalism at all?
- V. Chapter 7 A Chapter of Red Herrings. Continues objections raised against Supernaturalism.
- A. Miracles cannot happen because the ‘laws of nature’ will not allow them.
  - B. Primitive people had a false view of the universe.
    - 1. Universe’s true size is not a recent discovery.
    - 2. Argument is a red herring – it is misleading.
      - a. What is significant is that at various times different phenomena have been used to appeal to the human imagination and profoundly affected us with the necessity of considering our meaning in the cosmos.
      - b. Different types of “picture-thinking.”

## Lecture #13 Miracles III: Objections to Supernaturalism; Propriety

Dr. Hoffecker

- I. Introduction. In this chapter Lewis takes on common attacks upon miracles as dependent upon the premises of Supernaturalism. He takes on three concepts of the “Laws of Nature.” [1] He distinguishes between two entirely different definitions of miracle; [2] He probes a common misconception of the purpose of the laws of nature; and [3] He builds upon cause/effect to show how miracles are caused and then “interlocked” with nature.
- II. Laws of Nature. What are the laws of Nature? How have people considered them? Three options: [1] They are brute facts – nature simply behaves the way it does; and nature is inscrutable. [2] They are simply the law of averages. [3] They are necessary truths, like mathematics. But in each instance, these definitions ‘laws’ do not cause events at all. Lewis builds upon his original definition of miracle as an “intervention.” Intervention is not the same as “breaking” laws of nature.
- A. Miracle, therefore is best understood as a tampering, cheating.
  - B. Key statement: “If the laws of nature are necessary truths, no miracle can break them; but then no miracle needs to break them.” (58)
  - C. What do the laws of nature actually *do*?
    1. People commonly understand laws of nature as prescriptive / causative – they actually cause things to happen. Such an understanding became common with the acceptance of deism as a worldview as a replacement for theism.
    2. Laws as descriptive. But Lewis reminds us that laws do not cause, they describe.
      - a. Laws of nature = a frame. The laws are an interpretive framework.
      - b. The frame = a cause / effect framework by which we understand every event.
      - c. Normal events in Nature:
 

A	B	C	D
---	---	---	---
      - d. Miraculous events:
 

A	B	C	D
---	---	---	---
      - e. The pattern of cause / effect is upheld, not “broken.”
- III. The law of cause / effect, therefore, covers miracles as well as normal events.
- A. Every event has a cause. But when miracle happens, the cause is God.
  - B. Every event, even a miraculous event, has an effect.

- C. Miracles are interlocked with all Nature, only their interlocking differs from other events. Its peculiarity consists in its not being interlocked “backwards.” Its interlocking is “upwards.”
- D. Lewis cites illustrations from biblical miracles. What is the cause of the wine at Cana? What are the effects of the wine?
- E. Thus miracles are not just “tacked onto” reality. There is a harmony to the system of Nature even when miracles occur.
  - 1. “Everything is connected with everything else.” But not in exactly the way we might think.
  - 2. Conclusion: theism affirms a uniformity of nature. “[Miracles] if they are real ... must, in the very act of so doing, assert all the more the unity and self-consistency of total reality at some deeper level.” (61)

IV. Chapter 10 “Horrid Red Things.” This chapter might be retitled “The Cardinal Difficulty with Supernaturalism.”

- A. Illustration of the Incarnation. How is it believable today?
- B. Lewis’ thesis: We must distinguish between “explaining” our doctrine (the “core” or “real meaning” of the faith that looks unbelievable to moderns) and “explaining it away” (discarding it as outmoded).
  - 1. Thought is distinct from the imagination which accompanies it.
  - 2. Thought may be on the whole correct even though the idea is associated with false images mistaken as true ones.
  - 3. When we talk about things that cannot be apprehended by sensory experience, we must use language that talks as if we could sense them.
- C. Apply these principles to the “heart” of Christian faith which looks to modern eyes as primitive, savage, outmoded: the incarnation (includes birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ).
  - 1. What usually replaces the primitive imagery is worse. What happens when an “enlightened” modern proposes to put away the primitive imagery?
  - 2. As soon as the question of literalness of the images arises among Christians, they interpret the images.
- D. Does explaining metaphor mean emptying/negating its content? Metaphor is to be taken seriously even though not literally.
- E. We must use metaphorical language if we are to speak about God.

- F. Christianity and Water wants to explain both of them away.
- V. Chapter 11 “Christianity and Religion” Lewis next deals with a common conception of moderns which renders them incapable of believing in Miracles.
- VI. Chapter 12 “The Propriety of Miracles.”
- A. Lewis first gives us a glimpse of the “providential view” of miracles in this brief chapter.
1. Note Lewis is giving his definition of "interference" - usually has negative connotations.
  2. The main illustration he uses in the chapter is that Rules pertain to various disciplines.
- B. What makes anything “right,” “proper,” “correct”?
1. Thus there are “rules behind the rules.”
  2. An artist will willy-nilly break all kinds of incidental “rules” which critics may have mistaken for the true law.
  3. For the Naturalist, the Rule behind all rules is still limited to the spheres called nature.
- C. With regard to miracles: If we grasp the law of the work of God as a whole we will be in position to see whether miracles are botches (interferences, negative) which disturb the “inward law” of the work or rather than “expressions of the truest and deepest unity in His total work.” (96)
1. Note this demands revelation, insight, true perspective.
  2. We are used to the regularity of the laws of Nature - are they ultimate?
  3. If we grasp the Rule behind the rules [which allows miracles] then not to have miracle would constitute the real inconsistency (97).
  4. Therefore miracle appears not as an inconsistency but the “highest consistency.”
  5. Lewis appeals to Dorothy Sayers’ *The Mind of the Maker* comparing God’s relation to world to author’s relation to his book.
    - a. “Miracles” are allowed if that is what the book is all about.
    - b. Main illustration is *deus ex machina* from ancient Greek drama.
- D. Then Lewis lets the cat’s whiskers out of the bag. Some people think Resurrection was “miracle,” desperate (expedient) to save hero.
1. Miracles are “the very thing this universal story is about.” Not irrelevancies, contrivances, expediencies. They are the whole plot.
  2. Death and Resurrection is the whole story.

3. Lewis poses question. What is the main plot of this universal story? (99)

## Lecture #14 Miracles IV: Humean Probability; Biblical Probability

Dr. Hoffecker

## I. Ch 13: Probability of miracles. How do we establish a criteria for the probability of miracles?

- A. David Hume's *Essay on Miracles* (published posthumously in 1777) widely regarded as the final nail in the coffin of belief in miracles. Lewis undertakes to refute Hume.
1. *A priori* argument: No evidence is adequate to demonstrate the occurrence of miracles.
    - a. Faith in miracles must rest on historical testimony.
    - b. Historical testimony is liable to be deceived.
    - c. All confidence in historical testimony is founded in experience.
    - d. Experience teaches that human testimony is not always reliable.
    - e. However, our experience that the course of nature is uniform is without exception.
    - f. Therefore, it will always be more probable that the witnesses were mistaken than that the course of nature has been violated.
  2. *A posteriori* argument: There never has been a miraculous event established on the basis of human testimony (witnesses always unreliable).
    - a. Lack of sufficient evidence [sufficient number of "men of good sense"]
    - b. Religious fanatics: enthusiastic people imagine they see what has no reality
    - c. Ignorant people: miracles seem to abound chiefly where unlearned people are found (Do you smell a "red herring" here?!)
      - d. All religions have reports of miracles.
- B. Hume's answer to probability question: our experience of the uniformity of nature casts a unanimous vote against the probability of miracles.
- C. Lewis' refutation. Hume in refuting miracles actually refutes himself. He builds his entire argument on the premise of the absolute uniformity of nature.
1. Hume's slight of hand. Hume asks two questions; but they are really two forms of the same question: the uniformity of nature.
    - a. Do miracles occur?
    - b. Is the course of nature absolutely uniform?
    - c. He uses "yes" to the second question to answer the first question.
  2. Thus Hume never actually gets to the real issue on the table – probability.
- D. A more reliable framework for probability – Lewis' "fitness principle."
1. Fitness principle. Sir Arthur Eddington (d. 1944)
  2. Metaphysic. Alfred North Whitehead in his famous book, *Science and the Modern World* (1926)
  3. Criteria of fitness. This is the premise which made modern science possible – fitness of an orderly universe undergirded by sovereign God which grants the uniformity of nature.

## II. Ch 14: The Grand Miracle: Christianity's Answer to Probability

- A. Lewis undertakes in this chapter as the 1<sup>st</sup> of 3 to tackle problem of fitness as an answer to probability since Hume does not give us sufficient answer.
  - B. The “Grand Miracle” is the Incarnation: God became man - special revelation.
    - 1. Every other miracle either prepares for this, manifests this or results from this.
    - 2. Example
  - B. Lewis makes essentially same point by calling the Incarnation “The Ground Miracle.”
  - C. Question of probability of Incarnation analogous to finding the Rosetta Stone.
- III. A new basis for probability. Three principles found throughout Nature, i.e. General Revelation, which all people can see and observe.
- A. Descent/ Re-ascent is a familiar pattern, a “thing written all over the world.”
    - 1. Patterns manifest in all of nature:
      - a. vegetable life
      - b. animal generation
      - c. moral life
    - 2. Lewis’ point is that we mistake these 3 as originals
      - a. Transposition
      - b. In many areas of life we see a “higher” state embodied in or “transposed to” a lower one.
        - i. Translating language from one with large vocabulary to smaller vocabulary.
        - ii. Piano version of symphonic music score.
        - iii. Art - 3 dimensions “reduced” to two.
      - c. “Major Key” is Incarnation. Vegetable life / animal life / human life are the “minor keys.”
    - 3. Lewis proceeds to a detailed discussion of this pattern in polytheistic nature religions = “dying and rising God.”
      - a. Jesus at Last Supper.
      - b. Jesus is like Corn-King because Corn-King is “a portrait of Him.”
      - c. Judaism was constantly tempted to succumb to Baal.
  - B. Second principle in Nature is “chosen-ness”; God’s process of selectiveness in Nature.
    - 1. Lewis begins with widest possible panorama
    - 2. Selectivity in human life.
      - a. In human life God also begins selective process - chosen people.
      - b. Chosen appears to be mixed with enormous waste; but the real principle is - the chosen are “for the sake of the unchosen.”
  - C. Principle of Vicariousness - usually thought of in negative terms.
- IV. How do various religions react to these 3 traits/principles found in Nature and in human life?
- A. Nature Religions deify them.

- B. Anti-Natural Religions deny them.
  - C. Christianity makes neither mistake.
- V. Previous discussion necessitates an explanation of evil - disease/death environment.
- A. Lewis then launches into a discussion of evil that we find in Nature which he traces to human fall into sin which brought about death.
  - B. Therefore “Fitness” of Incarnation is evident because it explains not only Nature and its processes but also man's great enemy.
    - 1. Lewis uses Anselm’s view of incarnation and atonement: *Cur Deus Homo*.
    - 2. Three principles - woven into this understanding of the Incarnation and redemptive activity of Christ.
  - C. Indirect method again. Lewis closes by stating how this view of Grand Miracle “works on us.”
- VII. Lewis is beginning to draw his argument to a close: He began with the challenge to the reader. The problem of miracles does not begin with the New Testament evidence or any other evidence. It begins with philosophical stance of individual: our worldview predisposes us to accept / reject miraculous.
- A. He begins with definition of miracle which he will eventually reject, modify. Largest part of book deals with discussion of Naturalist vs. Supernaturalist. Interference with nature by supernatural power.
  - B. What is Nature? Weaknesses of Naturalist regarding human thought and morality.
  - C. What are the laws of Nature and their function?
  - D. What smoke screens are strewn across the path?
  - E. What is Christian answer to pantheism, which is Naturalism in religious disguise?
  - F. How can the great skeptic, Hume, be refuted? Hume surreptitiously uses uniformity in two different ways to suit his purpose.
  - G. Introduces what looks like a totally subjective criteria – “fitness.”
  - H. Discusses the central miracle of Christian faith and shows that it illumines not only the whole Christian faith but Nature as well.

## Lecture #15 Miracles V: Reminders; Prophecies

Dr. Hoffecker

- I. Introduction: Miracles of the Old Creation. Lewis' fitness thesis: The Christian miracles show that the invasion is by a Power which is not alien. Miracles are performed by the God who is sovereign over Nature by right. God does not usurp power as an alien; his intervention is not that of a coup d'etat or foreign enemy.
- II. Greater intrinsic probability
  - A. Lewis claims that the "fitness" of the Christian miracles is demonstrated in their relatedness to one another and with the pattern of religion that they exhibit.
  - B. The more we understand what Christianity is as a whole the less incredulous we will be when miraculous claims are made.
  - C. People who deny the traditional Christian responses that are given to these questions will usually be those who refute miracles in Christianity.
  - D. Lewis has two systems of classification:
    1. Divide miracles into following categories:
      - a. Fertility
      - b. Healing
      - c. Destruction
      - d. Dominion over inorganic
      - e. Reversal
      - f. Perfecting or glorification
    2. Two additional classifications cut across the first
      - a. Old Creation: reminders
      - b. New Creation: prophecies
  - E. Providential definition of miracle modifies the original "interference" definition.
    1. Whether a miracle is of the old or new creation, the point is that none of them are isolated or anomalous.
    2. Then Lewis probes the implication of the definition used at outset to show his alternative to "interference principle" - close, small, in focus.
- III. Following are Miracles of Old Creation. They are "reminders"; what God has already done on larger scale.
  - A. Fertility: Lewis pays specific attention to virgin birth: it is one of the miracles that "Christianity and water" seems most willing to relinquish.
    1. Can one be a Christian and deny virgin birth?
    2. Lewis is again consistent. What God does in close-up fashion with Mary, the fiancée of Joseph is what He does throughout the whole creation.
    3. God is the cause of conception, only here without the means of male sperm.
  - B. Healing: God is the effective force behind every natural healing.
  - C. Destruction. All the miracles of Jesus in New Testament are positive with exception of one - withering of fig tree; an enacted parable for man's benefit.
  - D. Some miracles are old and some new creations: Related to person's view of Kingdom of God: Is Kingdom present, future?
    1. Dominion over inorganic: Stilling storm is miracle of old creation.
    2. Walking on water is a miracle of the new creation.

IV. Miracles of New Creation: prophecies; what God will do in the New Creation. Good apologetic material in this chapter on resurrection. He centers attention on Transfiguration, Resurrection, Ascension.

A. Reversal: Resurrection of Christ is touchstone of Christian faith.

1. Jesus' resurrection occurred in time and space, i.e., it is historical.
2. Stress on historical fact.
3. Contrast with Socrates' death. Jesus' resurrection is the beginning of a whole new reality.
4. Reversal teaches that risen life is not just spiritual but is corporeal as well.
5. Reversal does not mean undoing the Incarnation as if Jesus puts off his humanity like a cloak.
6. What strikes fear into disciples is just the fact Jesus still has body.
7. Contrast with other treatments of resurrection as merely the subjective experience of disciples.
  - a. It asserts the objectivity of the risen body.
  - b. Why were all the appearances so bent on proving the "corporeality" of Christ?
  - c. Most of liberalism ("Christianity and Water") explains resurrection in these terms.

B. Glorification: Goes beyond reversal. Lazarus' resurrection is merely a reversal. Glorification is the Christian answer to "entropy."

1. Entropy increases during an irreversible process.
2. The orderly array of elements decreases - an increase in disorder.
3. Entropy of the universe is said to be increasing.
4. Christian claim is that entropy not only is not ultimate but that a great transformation will take place.
5. We know very little about "New Nature" of Christ.

C. Ascension. No matter how those who witnessed the ascension described it, they did so using metaphor.

1. Just because earlier Christians may have believed heaven to be a place does not mean that they had no idea of heaven as a state.
  2. Remarks on Spirit and nature.
  3. Heaven is not merely a state of the Spirit but of the body as well.
  4. Nature is not that from which we seek release.
2. In the meantime we ought to:
- a. Renounce asceticism.

- b. Affirm our physical existence.
- c. The sacraments remind us periodically that we ought not be Platonists.
- d. Lewis' analogy: God gives us bodies as ponies are given to schoolboys.

V. Epilogue

- A. The main problem in retrospect is “we all have Naturalism in our bones and even conversion does not at once work the infection out of our system.”
- B. Will we witness miracles? Reformed perspectives: Miracles in first century to authenticate Gospel validate Christ's deity and mission.
- C. Viewing miracles as essentially testamentary in nature does not necessarily mean they no longer occur.
- D. We have “naturalism in our bones.” At end of Epilogue: we should not expect to witness a miracle.

## Lecture #16 Out of the Silent Planet I: Myth as apology

Dr. Hoffecker

## I. Introduction: Lewis the rational romantic.

- A. Direct method of apologetics: Lewis' primary apologetic method: "Is Theism Important?"; *Mere Christianity*; *The Problem of Pain*.
- B. Indirect method of apologetics: Lewis occasionally argues for Christianity indirectly as in *Miracles*.

## II. Lewis the storyteller. Why should Christianity be mere argument?

- A. Lewis' challenge in "Christian Apologetics"
- B. Lewis' mythical writings are "against the stream." (Cunningham)
  - 1. Contemporary realistic literature: a form of reductionism.
  - 2. Realism of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries = a "sham realism."
  - 3. Lewis' irony: "myth" is more realistic than realism

## III. The Ransom Trilogy: A form of science fiction, but more properly a Christian myth.

- A. Lewis' interest in science fiction.
- B. Types of science fiction.
- C. Science fiction, especially space travel, facilitates self-transcendence
- D. Weston the scientist.
  - 1. J.B.S. Haldane, *Of Possible Worlds: A Scientist Looks at Science* (1940)
  - 2. Contemporary example: Francis Crick: *Of Molecules and Men* (1966).

## IV. Scientism: The abuse of science and the scientific method.

- A. Genuine scientists do not usually espouse scientism.
- B. Scientism = the transformation of science from *scio* (to know) to an amoral pragmatism emphasizing technique.

## V. Myth as substitute for realism.

- A. Myth is not allegorical but “sacramental.”
  
- B. Myth as “picture-thinking.”
  - 1. Opening paragraph of *OSP*: “Pedestrian”: presented in terms that everyone can identify.
  
  - 2. Individualized: Elwin Ransom, philologist (alter ego of Lewis himself)
  
  - 3. “Creatures” in the story.
  
- C. Myth as apologetic / evangelistic motive.
  - 1. Introduction to *George McDonald: An Anthology*.
  
  - 2. Apologetic for a new view of “space.” Our contemporary “realistic” view of space tends toward ambivalence.
    - a. When we “look along” the universe we think of space as awe-inspiring. E.g., Immanuel Kant.
  
    - b. On the other hand when we “look at” space we see it totally differently. E.g., Lewis’ intro. *The Problem of Pain*

## VI. Apologetic for new view: From “space” to “the Heavens”

- A. Begins with a “realistic” view of the planet (7, 8)
  
- B. Ransom experiences a new view of space: (21, 29)
  - 1. Experience of *sehnsucht* (31)
  
  - 2. “mythology that follows in the wake of science” (32)
  
  - 3. Space must be renamed.(Psa 19:1)
  
  - 4. Weston’s “realistic” response (32)
  
  - 5. Ransom’s experience as they landed on Malacandra (40)

a. Walter Chalmers Smith: “Immortal, Invisible, God only wise”

6. A new “realistic view”: an inversion (153, 4)

C. New view of space demands a new view of human beings. What is man really?

VII. Interesting historical footnotes.

A. American astronauts Scott Carpenter, Jack Schweiker and James Irwin

B. Lewis’ attempts to get *OSP* published in 1937,8.

## Lecture #17 Out of the Silent Planet II: New Realistic View of Man

Dr. Hoffecker

## I. Introduction: New realism II: a new view of human freedom and man's place in the universe.

## II. Reciprocity and human freedom: relationship between

- A. New human perspective of human will (from our point of view).
  - 1. The harder one searches for God, the more this search is reciprocated
  - 2. The more commitment to the seeking, the clearer the search.
  - 3. Man makes the choice but God provides the pathway.
  
- B. Lewis' attempt to reconcile human will and divine will in literary form.
  
- C. Examples in *OSP*
  - 1. Ransom agrees to find Harry
  
  - 2. Ransom kidnapped; taken against his will from earth to Mars (ch 2)
  - 3. Call by the Eldil (79)
  - 4. Hyoui killed on hanakra punt
  - 5. Difficulty of Ransom's journey
  
  - 6. Augray as a reciprocation:
    - a. Interprets the hierarchy of the universe
      - i. Maleldil
      - ii. Oyeresu
      - iii. Eldila
      - iv. Hnau
      - v. Beasts
    - b. Carries Ransom on his shoulders
  - 7. Another experience of Deep Heaven
  - 8. Oyarsa's interpretation of Ransom's journey
    - a. Ransom's response to kidnapping
  
    - b. Oyarsa's action
  
    - c. Role of chance events
  - 9. Cf., II Chronicles 36:15-7; Amos 4:6-8
  - 10. Ransom acknowledges reciprocity.

## III. Hierarchy and structure of Malacandra the universe as a whole

- A. Malacandra as an unfallen world

1. Three distinct species of hnau: position / nature / function (Platonic? Biblical?)
    - a. Sorn / Seroni                      Intellectuals
    - b. Hross / Hrossa                    Poets
    - c. Pfilfltrigg / Pfilfltriggi        Craftsmen
  2. Physical characteristics
  3. Environments of three species
  4. Languages of species (names)
  5. Humor of species
  6. What is hnau?
- B. Ransom's analysis of Oyarsa
1. What distinguishes Oyarsa?
    - a. His voice
    - b. Archtype / ectype
  2. The story of Thulcandra, the silent planet
    - a. Oyarsa of Thulcandra was brighter and greater (Isa. 14:12ff)
    - b. Now bound in the air of his own world
  3. Oyarsa of Malacandra recognizes his place within the hierarchy
    - a. Oyarsa asks Ransom about Thulcandra: he "desires to look into" (121, 124, 140, 141)
    - b. Cf., I Pet. 1:10-12
- C. Ransom tells Oyarsa of earth's redemption

IV. Sets stage for the climax of the story

Lecture #18 Out of the Silent Planet III: Scientific Humanism on Trial

Dr. Hoffecker

I. Foreshadowing of opposition between scientism and traditional view of reality

A. Weston's scientific idealism: justification of kidnapping Harry (19)

B. Weston as exponent of scientism (ch 4)

1. Scientific elitism

2. View of the humanities

3. Vivisection

C. Ransom's defense of traditional morality

D. Philosophy of Devine (30) (Expanded later – 132, 134)

II. Scientific humanism on trial: Lewis' technique for the exchanges at Weston's trial

A. Hubris of scientific humanism

1. First exchange: Weston embodies the destiny of the human race

2. Second exchange: new morality: the philosophy of emergent evolution

3. Third exchange: Weston as 3<sup>rd</sup> Adam

4. Fourth exchange: philosophy of human survival (beyond good and evil)

5. Lewis' progressive revelation of scientism

III. Oyarsa interprets scientific humanism



4. Postscript

V. Myth as apologetic technique

A. Criticism of *OSP*

B. Response

Lecture #19 Perelandra I: Imaginative View of New Nature; the Queen

Dr. Hoffecker

I. Introduction. Sequel to *OSP*; published in 1943

- A. What occasioned Lewis' writing *Perelandra*.
  
- B. Lewis' lectures on Milton.
  
- C. Lewis considered *Perelandra* his second favorite of all his books.

II. Lewis' development of "numinous." ("Is Theism Important?")

- A. Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*: Holy = *mysterium fascinans et tremendum*

- B. Lewis' dread of meeting an eldil

- C. Lewis' experience in the presence of the eldil

III. Stages in the struggle of good and evil

- A. First Stage: Thulcandra
  
- B. Second Stage: Malacandra
  
- C. Next stage: Bent One cannot get to *Perelandra* in his own person
  
- D. Ransom's qualification
  
- E. Ransom's megalomania

F. Final stage (?): *THS*

#### IV. Ransom's experience of Deep Heaven

A. *Miracles*: rational speculation on the nature of the heavenly (glorified) life

B. *Perelandra*: imaginative account

C. A foretaste of glorified state in heaven: reality is "too definite for words."

D. Ransom's sensuous experiences upon landing in Perelandra

E. Bathing under the bubble trees

F. "The itch to have things over again."

#### V. The Green Lady: Queen of Perelandra

A. Ransom confronts another myth?

B. Roughly analogous to Eve

1. Relationship with beasts

2. Smile of innocence

3. Direct communication with Maleldil

4. She is the Queen

a. Queen's nature

b. Augustine's view of human nature

5. Will her choices determine a change in her nature?

6. She learns that she is a creature with a will, not a puppet of Maleldil.

7. Autonomous vs. analogous creature (choice)

C. What the Queen does not know

D. Probation (?)

Lecture #20 Perelandra II: Temptation of the Queen; Battle with the Un-man

Dr. Hoffecker

- I. Introduction: Perelandra = another Christian story (a myth) which stretches our credibility.
  
- II. Weston lands on Perelandra.
  - A. Ransom's sense of inadequacy
  
  - B. Weston's philosophy, as expressed in *OSP*, summarized
  
  - C. Weston's philosophy further developed: from pragmatism to pantheism (modernism to postmodernism)
  
  - D. Ransom's response; he distinguishes between Christianity and pantheism
  
  - E. Weston's pantheism
  
  - F. Ransom's questions to dissuade Weston
  
  - G. Weston becomes the Un-man
  
- III. Structure of the story: setting (followed by the threat, the struggle, the denouement)
  - A. What is the nature of the world in which temptation occurs?
  
  - B. Tensions intrinsic to the drama
  
  - C. Will Weston be able to drag this world in the person of Trinidil to disobedience and ruin? Can Ransom avert such a catastrophe?
  
  - D. Issue centers on obedience (analogy of Beavers in Narnia, hrossa in Malacandra, Dimbles in *THS*)

IV. Threat: Temptation of the Green Lady: The Fixed Land

A. 1<sup>st</sup> stage

1. Thinking about the Fixed Land
  
2. Arguing for autonomous choice
  
3. Fall averted I

B. Interlude: Weston's identity as Un-man: the Miserific vision

1. Person of Un-man
  
2. Work of Un-man
  
3. The Diabolical Miracle

C. 2<sup>nd</sup> stage: Theological defense of right / wrong use of human will

1. Evil choice is for nothingness
  
2. Un-man plays up the arbitrariness of Maleldil's command
  
3. Most diabolical temptation: do evil that good may come

a. *Felix peccatum Adae*

b. Biblical texts

c. What good came to those who are lost?

4. Un-man's strategy

5. Green Lady as heroic figure

6. Fall averted II

D. Ransom's role in the story: Why no miracle?

V. Struggle: Battle with the Un-man: Physical combat to the death

A. Myth vs. fact

B. Events on Perelandra were not an allegory: "The same wave never comes twice."

C. Ransom's identity and destiny

D. Evil in various forms; redemption differs

E. Freedom vs. predestination

1. Passion predictions in Gospels: Mk 8:30, 31; 9:30-2; 10:32-4
2. Acts 2:23

F. Fight to the death between Ransom and Weston

1. Weston's apologetic for atheism
  - a. Weston's cosmology
  - b. God outside the globe
2. Descent followed by absolute darkness
3. Death to Un-man

VI. Ransom discovers a wound in his heel

Lecture #21 Perelandra III: The Great Dance

Dr. Hoffecker

I. Introduction. The final scene: denouement.—a dazzling pageant, The Great Dance

II. Ransom meets Perelandra and Malacandra

A. Successful aversion of Fall

B. Two Oyeresu: Malacandra and Perelandra

1. Malacandra and Perlandra represent genders

a. Masculinity and femininity have nothing to do with bodily appearance

b. Fundamental polarities which are manifested in created things

2. Lewis' essay "Priestesses in the Church" (*God in the Dock*, 234-9)

C. Mythology: "Our mythology is based on a solider reality than we dream; but it is also at an infinite distance from that base.... Mythology [is] gleams of celestial strength and beauty falling on a jungle of filth and imbecility."

III. Prohibition of sleeping on the Fixed Land

IV. Perelandra's cultural mandate (Cf., Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15, 16)

A. Ransom's agency

B. Fixed Land

1. Illustration of manna

2. Maleldil revealed what happened in earth; but they did not "learn" evil by doing it.

V. The Great Dance

Lecture #22 That Hideous Strength I: Thematic Development: Three Sets of Opposition

Dr. Hoffecker

- I. Introduction: “That hideous strength” borrowed from Scottish poet, Sir David Lyndsay. He speaks of “the miserabil estait of the World” and “the shadow of that hyddeous strength... sax myle and more it is of length”
  - A. The work becomes more hypothetical
  - B. The story is apocalyptic in form
    1. Primary characteristics
    2. Secondary characteristics
  - C. Themes of previous two stories
  - D. Three sets of opposition
- II. Mythical level: Logres vs. Britain
  - A. Logres: a good kingdom; expressed by a reign of law
    1. Concrete representation of a higher transcendent order
    2. King Arthur
  - B. Britain: an evil kingdom; expressed by the antithesis of law
    1. Mordred, Arthur’s wicked nephew
    2. “The beast”
  - C. Every civilization witnesses struggle: law of undulation
- III. Institutional level: St. Anne’s vs. Belbury (cultural manifestations)

- A. St. Anne's = "the remnant"
  
- B. Belbury = embodiment of evil, the epitome of "Britain"
  
- C. Contrast between St. Anne's and Belbury (worldview components)
  - 1. Nature
    - a. Belbury: scientism
  
  
    - b. St. Anne's: personified in Merlin
  
  - 2. Man (human nature)
    - a. Belbury: scientific view of man
  
  
    - b. St. Anne's: obedience to God's will
  
  - 3. View of God
    - a. Belbury: seeks supernatural power
  
  
    - b. St. Anne's: Christian view of God as Creator, Sustainer
  
  - 4. Society
    - a. Belbury: obedience that enslaves
  
  
    - b. St. Anne's: obedience that liberates fully

5. These themes form the antithesis between the cultural manifestations

6. Lewis' eschatology

#### IV. Individual level: Marriage of Mark and Jane Studdock

A. Jane Studdock

B. Mark Studdock

Lecture #23 That Hideous Strength II: Education in Dystopian University

Dr. Hoffecker

I. Introduction: “a tall tale about devilry”

A. Literary genres

1. Utopia: Plato, *Republic* (4<sup>th</sup> century BC); Thomas More, *Utopia* (1516); Robert Owen, *The Book of the New Moral Order* (1836); B.F. Skinner *Walden Two* (1948)

2. Dystopia

B. Other prominent dystopias: John Passmore, *The Perfectibility of Man* (1970); Hoffecker, *Building a Christian World View*, vol 2, ch. 11 (1986)

1. George Orwell, *1984* (1949)

2. Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World* (1932)

II. Dystopia set in a progressive university

A. Huxley’s preface to *Brave New World*

B. Lewis’ experience at Oxford and Cambridge

C. Elements in education subjected to scathing critique

1. Politicization of academia

2. Educational terminology

3. Gullibility of intellectuals

4. Mark as the epitome of educated person

III. Educational presuppositions: against the educational innovators, conditioners.

- A. Lewis' critique in *Abolition of Man* (1943) A tour de force celebration of the necessity of objective moral value. (Cf., Michael D. Aeschliman, *The Restitution of Man: C. S. Lewis and the Case against Scientism* (1983))
1. The problem: educational innovators
    - a. Critique of grammars
    - b. All values are subjective, relative
    - c. Education now = to inculcate values of our choosing
    - d. : "Men without Chests"
  2. Traditional moral truth: The Way (*Tao*): the old platitudinous moral law
  3. Man's conquest of nature: "The Abolition of Man"
    - a. Modern science changes from knowledge (*scio*) to use of power (technique)
    - b. Treating nature as mere quantity
      - i. "Man is a part of nature in the same way that a stone, or a cactus or a camel." Jacob Brownowski, *The Identity of Man*
      - ii. "It is not natural to see man as a natural product. It is not common sense to call man a common object of the country or the seashore... It sins against the light; against that broad daylight of proportion which is the principle of all reality." Chesterton
    - c. Loss of moral parameters governing scientific experimentation
    - d. Human nature = the last triumph of science.
    - e. "The regenerate science I have in mind would not do even to minerals and vegetables what modern science threatens to do with man himself. When it explained it would not explain away. When it spoke of the parts it would remember the whole. While studying the *It* it would not lose what Martin Buber calls the *Thou*-situation.... It would conquer Nature without being at the same time conquered by her and buy knowledge at a lower cost than that of life." *AOM*, 89, 90

4. Appendix: illustrations from the Tao

5. Value in traditional education: *scientia* complemented with *sapientia*.

B. Illustrated in N.I.C.E.: the embodiment of social sciences

1. NICE: putting science itself on a scientific basis

2. Pragmatometer

C. Mark's education

1. 1<sup>st</sup> stage: political power joined with social sciences: Fairy Hardcastle and Lord Feverstone

a. Marriage of sociology and force

b. Elimination

2. 2<sup>nd</sup> stage: Part I: conditioning, the "real education": Filostrato

a. Bill Hingest

b. "Moonlight at Belbury"

i. "Cleaning the planet"

ii. Emergent evolution

iii. Elimination of birth, breeding, death

iv. Accomplished under euphemisms

v. Epitomized in The Head of Alcasan

3. 2<sup>nd</sup> stage: Part II: New Age Religion: Reverend Straik

a. Priest-turned-atheist

b. Prophetic utterances

c. Reinterpretations of Christianity

i. Religion: claims total allegiance

ii. Resurrection of Jesus

iii. Ascension

iv. Parousia

c. End product of “Christianity and Water”

Lecture #24 That Hideous Strength III: Education in Objectivity to Descent of Gods

Dr. Hoffecker

I. Introduction: Summary of Mark's education

II. 4<sup>th</sup> Stage: training of conditioners in becoming "objective": Frost

A. Study man objectively (cf., Auguste Comte (1798-1857) founder of sociology

B. Epiphenomenalism: study man as you would a chemical reaction

C. Feelings are nothing but chemical reactions

D. "The Objective Room" (Cf., "Room 101" of Orwell's *1984*)

E. Mark's experiences

1. Taking sides

2. Courage

3. Lust

4. Question of change of will

5. The Crucifix

III. "Banquet at Belbury"

A. Not a repeat of Tower of Babel: the reversal of Pentecost

B. Powers of That Hideous Strength unleashed

1. Deaths of leaders of NICE

a. Wither

b. Filostrato and Straik

## c. Frost

## IV. St. Anne's (Logres) and the Director's opposition to Belbury (Britain)

## A. Merlin and his magic

1. Role of magic in primitive religious cults
2. Merlin a magician from the Arthurian legend: before magic became debased
  - a. Merlin's view of nature: an older order
  - b. The presence of "neutrals"??
3. Magic became debased in the Renaissance – the origins of modern science
  - a. Evident in alchemy
  - b. Culminates in Belbury

B. Now the soul has gone out of nature; the universe has "come to a point"

C. Merlin confronts the Director: no longer lawful to operate on nature

D. Merlin the vehicle through which the Oyeresu will work their powers

## V. Counterpoint to "Banquet at Belbury": "Descent of the Gods" at St. Anne's

- A. Jane Studdock's experience at St. Anne's parallels Mark's development at Belbury
- B. Group at St. Anne's experience genuine koinonia
- C. Another version of "The Great Dance"

D. Ransom, the Director (Space Traveler [*OSP*, *Perelandra*], Fisher King [mythic figure of Grail legend], Pendragon, successor of Arthur)

1. Tutors Jane
2. Strange power over animals
3. Transported to Third Heaven

E. Who will be the next Pendragon?


**REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**  
SYSTEM

**Course Objectives Related to MDiv Student Learning Outcomes**

Course: ST620 Theology of C. S. Lewis

Professor: Dr. Hoffecker

Campus: Jackson

<b><u>MDiv Student Learning Outcomes</u></b>		<b><u>Rubric</u></b> ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ N/A	<b><u>Mini-Justification</u></b>
<b>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</b>	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.	Strong	Analysis and critique of modernity / postmodernity. Essay exams and paper requiring analysis and synthesis of philosophical and theological themes in C. S. Lewis.
<b>Scripture</b>	Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)	Moderate	Comparison / contrast drawn between biblical views and those of Lewis and his contemporaries
<b>Reformed Theology</b>	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	Traditional reformed categories used for analyzing and critiquing Lewis' apologetics
<b>Sanctification</b>	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	Personal application made to figures and ideas presented in class
<b>Desire for Worldview</b>	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Strong	Detailed analyses of modern and postmodern worldviews especially as manifested in Lewis' Ransom Trilogy
<b>Winsomely Reformed</b>	Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)	Strong	Fair yet appropriate evaluation of positions differing from classical reformed theology. Strengths of Lewis' positions recognized.
<b>Preach</b>	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	N/A	
<b>Worship</b>	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	N/A	

<b>Shepherd</b>	Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.	Moderate	Discussion of alternative views in literature and how pastors can inculcate imagination.
<b>Church/World</b>	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Strong	Detailed attention to Lewis' impact on secular culture continuing today especially scientism.