The booklet serves as an answer guide to *Mere Christianity Bible Study: A Study Based on the C.S. Lewis Book Mere Christianity*. The Study Guide can be purchased on [Amazon by clicking here](https://www.amazon.com). Visit the [Mere Christianity.org](http://www.merechristianity.org).
1. Ideally, one should place an “X” at the very center of the cross. There are Scriptures in support of each of the four arrows which certain denominations tend to over-emphasize to the exclusion of the others.

2. Being with like-minded people is a benefit derived from denominations. The familiarity and comfort of certain routines and traditions decreases chaos and distractions.

3. Over-emphasis of certain truths and doctrines to the point of completely excluding all others is the detriment of denominations. It tends to leave “thinking” to others, such as pastors and teachers, instead of thinking for ourselves.

4. By “mere Christianity” C.S. Lewis means the agreed upon, common or essentials of Christianity, not the peripheral or tangential.

5. In the past “gentleman” was used to mean “one with a coat of arms and landed property”, but today it means someone who is honorable and courteous, and it is often used not as a fact but as praise. The word “Christian” originally meant “a disciple who accepted the Apostle’s teaching.”
Today, it has come to mean someone who is good or, more commonly, someone who is nice.

6. Richard Baxter (1615-1691) was a Puritan English clergyman who, during the English Civil War of the 1600’s, sought to minimize the differences between and unite Presbyterians and Anglicans and Independent Non-conformists by focusing on a “mere” Christianity.

Book 1: Right and Wrong as a Clue to the Meaning of the Universe
Chapter 1: The Law of Human Nature

1. They are appealing to some kind of standard of behavior they expect the other person to know.

2. The rule or “law” of right or wrong; in the past, this was called “the law of nature” or “the law of human nature.”

3. In the laws of nature, an object cannot choose whether to obey the law or not. In the law of human nature, a man can choose to either obey or disobey.

4. Because they thought everyone knew it by nature – by who they were by human nature – and it was odd if someone did not know right from wrong.

5. Some have said that different civilizations and different ages have had different notions of decent behavior right and wrong.

6. He does it is two ways:

   1. Different moralities were never totally different.

   2. Deniers always go back upon their denials, “throughout history there have absolutely been no absolutes.”

7. None of us really keep the law of human nature. In other words, we fail to practice the kind of behavior we expect of others.

8. A summary might include:
1. Humans are haunted by this curious idea of how they ought to behave.

2. Though we know this ought or Law of Human Nature, we, in fact, fail to behave in accordance with it. We do not practice what we preach.

3. These two points then are the foundations for all clear thinking about ourselves.

**Book 1: Right and Wrong as a Clue to the Meaning of the Universe**

**Chapter 2: Some Objections**

1. **First Objection:**

   A. Herd instincts include a mother’s love, sexual instinct and instincts for food – they prompt us with impulses or desires.

   B. The Moral Law is perceived as an “ought”. An instinct is perceived as a “want,” “desire” or “impulse.” Moral Law is what judges between two instincts and therefore is not itself either of the two.

   C. An instinct is like one note on a keyboard or a key on a piano. Moral Law is like a sheet of music. An instinct is neither right nor wrong in itself, anymore than a key is right or wrong.

   D. The stronger of the two instincts would win out and be followed.

   F. No one impulse or instinct is always good. A mother’s love, patriotism, etc. can lead to unfairness and prejudice within families, communities and nations. Following only one impulse of our nature at all cost can be dangerous and make us into devils.

2. **Second Objection:**

   A. Human conventions we have learned from parents or society include driving on one side of the road, putting napkins on our laps when we eat, or what we wear to a ballgame, etc.

   B. Mathematics.

   C. First, differences between the moral ideas of two different countries or two different time periods are not THAT great, but the differences in
conventions are. Second, if one set of morals is better than another set, one is measuring both by some third standard.

D. Witch burning wasn’t an error of moral law, but a error of fact. Witches do not, in fact, exist. But if they did, and they were torturing and killing people with special powers, then they ought to be stopped.

**Book 1: Right and Wrong as a Clue to the Meaning of the Universe**  
**Chapter 3: The Reality of the Law**

1. The first is that humans are haunted by the notion by some sort of behavior they *ought* to practice, the notion of fair play or decency or morality or Law of Nature. Second, humans do not practice or live up to this notion.

2. CSL says he is not concerned at the present with blame, but rather with trying to find out the truth and if not conforming with the ought has any consequences.

3. “Laws of Nature” as applied to stones or trees are really on descriptions of what stones or trees actually do. Thus, the Laws of Nature are just part of nature. But the Law of Human Nature does not describe what humans actually do, and therefore is not part of the machine of nature.

4. Two different human acts can be equally inconvenient to oneself, while being completely opposite in terms of ‘ought’ or decent behavior. For example, getting a seat on a train: one man gets the seat first versus another man who moves my bag and slips into the seat while my back is turned. Both are inconvenient, but only one involves the ‘ought’.

5. One might ask, “Why ought I be *unselfish*?” The answer is “for society.” Then one might ask, “Why should I care about society except if it benefits me?” The answer is “because you ought to be *unselfish*.” In logic and debate this is called a “tautology” or simply saying the same thing over without ever giving a reason.

6. Each are *applications of the ought*, not *acknowledgements of the existence of the ought* as something separate and apart from the machine of nature, separate and apart from my biological instincts or desires, and apart from learned social conventions.
Book 1: Right and Wrong as a Clue to the Meaning of the Universe
Chapter 4: What Lies Behind Law?

1. The “Materialist View” states that matter and space happen to exist and always have existed. Matter behaves in certain fixed, unalterable ways. All of this came about by chance or by some fluke to produce us – creatures who are able to think!

2. The “Religious View” states that something like a “mind” is behind the universe, and it is conscious or aware and has purposes and preferences.

3. Science can tell us what they learn from external observations of the facts of nature or from the results of their experiments. They cannot answer anything about ultimate questions or the “why” behind the universe.

4. The one thing and only thing is man. We don’t merely observe man, we are men or women. It is the one and only thing we can know more than anything we can ever know from mere external observational knowledge.

5. Either the universe is without purpose and reason, or there is something behind it or outside it. Scientific observations cannot observe anything outside the universe as a fact within the universe any more than one can observe an architect-as-a-wall within a house. But we can know other men because we are men. Just as we receive letters from a mailman-with-little-packets, we know other men receive letters also when the mailman goes to their addresses. Likewise we can know that other men have moral laws that seem to be from outside the universe because we have such a moral law.

6. The third view is “Life Force Philosophy” or “Creative Evolution” or “Emergent Evolution”. It says some kind of force is behind or outside the universe, but if the force is without purpose or presence, then it is merely the chance of the Material View. But if the force has preferences, then it is like a mind, which is the Religious View, with all its thrills but none of the consequences. In other words, it is mere wishful thinking.

See summary chart below:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>View</th>
<th>Materialist View</th>
<th>Religious View</th>
<th>Life-Force View</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Nothing is behind the universe. Matter and space just happen to exist and always have existed. Matter behaves in certain fixed ways, which by some fluke or chance, happened to produce us - creatures who think!</td>
<td>Something like a mind is behind the universe; it is conscious and it has purposes and preferences.</td>
<td>Some kind of Force is behind the universe. But if it is without purposes and preferences, it is only chance. If it has purposes, then it is like a mind. This View has all the thrills of the Religious View but none of the costs; i.e. it is merely wishful thinking!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adherents</td>
<td>Darwinian Evolutionists, Secular Humanists, Marxian Materialists</td>
<td>Most of the World’s Major Religions</td>
<td>Creative Evolutionists, Emergent Evolutionists, Henry Bergson, George Bernard Shaw</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Book 1: Right and Wrong as a Clue to the Meaning of the Universe**  
**Chapter 5: We Have Cause to be Uneasy**

1. If a clock is wrong, you *can* turn it back. Sometimes the only way to progress forward if you’ve made a wrong turn *is* to go back.

2. Religious jaw (i.e. religious talk):

   A. We are not getting our knowledge from churches or Bibles, but rather just from our own “steam” (i.e. experience and reason).

   B. The first bit of evidence is the universe around us, which is artistically beautiful but mercifully cruel. The second bit is the “ought” within us, which won’t indulge us, but is as hard as nails.
C. If the universe is not governed by absolute goodness, then all our efforts are, in the long run, hopeless, like playing Russian roulette. If there isn’t absolute goodness behind the Law of Human Nature, then it won’t bother about or disapprove of human greed, exploitation, etc.

D. If the universe is governed by absolute goodness, then we are also hopeless. We daily make ourselves an enemy of the goodness behind the “ought” or Law of Human Nature, because if we make one just mistake, we have failed; and it is unlikely that we will ever improve. Absolute goodness, then, is the supreme terror.

3. CSL states that he chose this round about manner to get to his real subject because, without first facing the facts, Christianity makes no sense. Only when you know you are in violation of the Law and the Power behind the Law does Christianity begin to speak. Only when you know you are sick do you listen to the doctor. In the long run, Christianity is a thing of unspeakable joy, but it starts off in dismay.

Book 2: What Christians Believe
Chapter 1: The Rival Conceptions of God

1. **Atheists** must believe that all religions are wrong all the way through, and consequently, most humans have been wrong all the way through history. **Christians** don’t have to believe that all religions are wrong all the way through, but they do believe where there is a difference, Christianity is right.

2. **Non-believers in a God or gods:**
   - Western European Materialists

   **Believers in a God or gods:**
   - Christianity   - Stoics
   - Ancient Greeks - Platonists
   - Ancient Romans - Hindus
   - Modern Savages - Muslims

3. Pantheism vs. Theism
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Views of God</th>
<th>Pantheism</th>
<th>Theism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethical or Moral Perspective</strong></td>
<td>God is beyond good and evil.</td>
<td>God is good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cosmological Perspective</strong></td>
<td>God is the universe or “all is one.” Individual things within the universe are manifestations of God.</td>
<td>God is separate and apart from the universe, as an author is separate and apart from a book.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adherent Groups or Individuals</strong></td>
<td>Hegel Hinduism</td>
<td>Judaism Islam Christianity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. The big question is: “If a good God made the world, why has it gone wrong?” Before his own conversion, C.S. Lewis responded by refusing to listen while thinking, “Aren’t all your arguments simply a complicated attempt to avoid the obvious?”

5. First, he wondered how, in the first place, he had gotten the notion of just and unjust, by which to measuring or judge the universe. Then, in trying to prove God did not exist and that the whole of reality was meaningless, he had to initially assume that his view of justice was full of meaning or sense. But, if the whole universe was really senseless, we wouldn’t have ever been able to discover it.

**Book 2: What Christians Believe**  
**Chapter 2: The Invasion**

1. The other view is what Lewis calls “Christianity-and-water”, which posits that there is a good God in heaven but avoids the more complicated doctrines of sin, hell, salvation, etc.

   Christianity-and-water is another word for *deism*, which derives the existence of God from reason and experience, but rejects revelation, prophecy and miracles. Deism came about during the Enlightenment and
had no historical antecedents common to all other religions. It held that God was like a clockmaker who created a clock and then just left it to run down without any further interaction. Adherents of deism include Thomas Jefferson, John Locke and Mark Twain. CSL considered atheism and deism to be “boys’ philosophies” because they simply do not address crucial issues.

2. Real things are not simple (e.g., seeing a table involves atoms, light waves, optic nerve and the brain). Therefore, to expect a simple religion is sophomoric and naïve.

Anti-Christians use “simplicity” to attack Christianity in two ways:

1. They put up a version of Christianity suitable for a six-year-old (i.e. a straw man) and make it the object of their attack.

2. When confronted with genuine Christian doctrine, they complain it is all too complicated.

3. It could not have been guessed or predicted, which means it has all the elements or unusual twists that reality does.

4. The problem is “a universe that contains much that is obviously bad and meaningless, but contains creatures like ourselves who know that it is bad and apparently meaningless.”

   The only two views around that “face all the facts” are Christianity and dualism.

5. Dualism is the belief that there are two equal and independent powers behind everything, one good and one evil, and the universe is a battleground where they fight an endless war. Neither power made the other. Each power thinks it is good or right and the other bad or wrong. Without absolute standards of right and wrong, there is no way to distinguish good from evil, and we are left with only our preferences.

6. Both Christianity and dualism believe in good and evil. Dualism believes evil is eternally co-existent with good. Christianity believes a good God initially created Satan as good, but Satan rebelled and chose to spoil goodness.
Both believe that universe is at war. Dualism believes the war is a never-ending, eternal struggle. Christianity believes it is a temporary evil war or rebellion that will come to a conclusion or end.

7. We live in a land occupied by a Rebel. The rightful King has landed in disguise in our midst, calling us to join Him and take part in a great campaign of sabotage.

For a summary review of the battle terrain, see Appendix 3.

Book 2: What Christians Believe
Chapter 3: The Shocking Alternative

1. The answer revolves around free will. Anyone in authority knows how something can be both against your will in one way and in accordance with your will in another. A mother may tell her children “I am not going to clean up your room every night, you must learn to do it.” When she later finds the room in a mess, it is against her will. But in as much as she has left it up to the children, it is in accordance with her will. Similarly, the happiness which God designed for His higher creatures is the happiness of being freely and voluntarily united to Him. God, of course, knew what would happen if their freedom was used in a wrong way, but He thought it was worth the risk.

2. God did not make any creature out of “rotten stuff” so that it would go wrong. The better stuff a creature is made of – the cleverer and stronger and freer it is – the better it will be if it goes right, but also the worse it will be if it goes wrong. A cow cannot be very good or very bad; a dog can be both better and worse; a child better and worse still; an ordinary man, still more so; a genius, still more so; a superhuman spirit best – or worst – of all.

3. A reasonable (and traditional) guess about Satan is that he chose to put himself first before God – wanting to be the center, wanting to be God – and taught the human race to do the same. Wanting to “be like gods” is, according to CSL, “the key to history.” Seeking happiness outside and apart from God or “trying to run the human machine on the wrong juice,” humans hopelessly sought to be satisfied with other things. The result of Satan’s plot has been poverty, war, prostitution, classes, empires, slavery, etc.
4. God employed three things to prepare humanity for His solution to Satan’s plot:

   1. He left all mankind with a conscience or ‘ought’ or Law of Human Nature. (See Appendix 2 again)

   2. He gave good dreams or visions to people all around the world. (See Appendix 4)

   3. He selected one group of people and spent several centuries hammering into their heads the kind of God He was and the kind of conduct He cared about: the Jews. (See Appendix 4)

5. Then God brought forth his shocking alternative solution. From the Jews there came a man who claimed to be God (remember a Jew is not a Pantheist who believes everything is a manifestation of God). He claimed to be able to forgive any and all sins (this is something only God can do). He spoke of himself as humble and meek (which was a meaningless statement for a man who did the things He did, but not one for God incognito).

6. Based then on what Jesus said, one is not left with the option of calling Him a good moral teacher. He either is a Liar, a Lunatic, or the Lord!

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**Book 2: What Christians Believe**

**Chapter 4: The Perfect Penitent**

1. God has landed in this enemy-occupied world to teach us. The New Testament is chock full of the topic: His death and His coming to life again.

2. The central Christian belief is that Christ’s death has somehow put us right with God (fulfilled the “ought”) and given us a fresh start. Theories as to how His death did this are another matter and are not really Christianity – they are only attempted explanations. Christians believe that the death of Christ is the point in history at which something absolutely unimaginable from outside the universe showed though into our own world, and that by dying, Christ disabled death itself. That is Christianity!
3. CSL thinks that “being let off” or “footing the bill” are too simple and incomplete for explanations of what Christ’s death has done for fallen man. Fallen man is not merely an imperfect man needing improvement; he is a rebel needing to surrender and lay down his arms.

4. The process of surrender or repentance is a “kind of death” or “killing part of yourself.” CSL notes this presents a dilemma as “only a bad person needs to repent: only a good person can repent perfectly.” The worse a person is, the more he needs to repent and the less he is able to do so. But the Perfect Penitent, or the Perfectly Repentant Person, is also part of God’s solution.

5. By God becoming man, our human nature, which can suffer and die, was amalgamated with God’s nature in one person. That one Person could then help us by surrendering His will to suffer and die because He was man; and He could do it perfectly because He was God.

6. One who complains that Christ’s suffering and death were perhaps easier because He was both God and man is akin to someone drowning who complains it is unfair that the lifeguard has one foot on the shore.

Book 2: What Christians Believe
Chapter 5: The Practical Conclusion

1. Christ’s sacrifice brought about for man not merely the ability to follow His teachings, but to become the “next step” (from the evolutionist view) or a new kind of man possessed by a new kind of life. (To better understand CSL’s thoughts on evolution, see Appendix 5)

2. My thoughts: Just as God made the spread of our physical life a rather odd process (i.e. procreation), He also made the spread of our new spiritual Christ-life a rather odd process (i.e. through baptism, belief, and ‘bread and wine’). These are the three things “that spread the Christ-life to us.” This means that the new life has spread from the Uncreated-Eternal to the created-temporal, that we have been ‘impregnated’ so to speak and that the Christ-life is growing in us or infusing us.
CSL confesses that he does not understand why three things should be “conductors” of the new life, but he goes on to answers some of the most frequent objections to this aspect of Christianity.

The role of belief, baptism and bread and wine as conductors of the Christ-life are to be believed based on Christ’s authority. CSL notes that, “A man who jibbed at authority in other things as some people do in religion would have to be content to know nothing all his life.” This is because we know and take a lot of things of things to be true based on the authority of others. (For example, have you ever actually seen electrons flowing along a wire when you turn on a light switch?)

3. CSL notes that belief, baptism and bread and wine are not substitutes for our own efforts to copy Christ in being good. Nevertheless, the Christian differs from other people who are trying to be good, inasmuch as he “does not think God will love us because we are good, but that God will make us good because He loves us.”

The Christian does not believe that the Christ-life in him is merely something mental or moral. He knows that Christ is actually working through the cells and muscles and fingers of his physical body. He does not shun ‘bodily acts’ such as baptism and the Lord’s Supper thinking they are crude or unspiritual because God did not shun them. “God . . . invented eating. He likes matter. He invented it.”

4. It is unfair to think that the Christ-life is confined only to those who have heard of Christ. “We do know that no man can be saved except through Christ” but we do not know how God is working where the Gospel has yet to be fully proclaimed (again see Appendix 4).

5. According to CSL, the reason for God’s continued secrecy rather than an overt, outright invasion is that He wants to give all mankind a chance to choose to be on His side. “God is going to invade, all right: but what is the good of saying you are on His side then, when you see the whole natural universe melting away . . . Now, today, this is our chance to choose the right side. God is holding back to give us that chance. It will not last forever.”
Book 3: Christian Behavior
Chapter 1: The Three Parts of Morality

1. There are two ways in which human machines goes wrong:

   One way is when human individuals go in different directions and drift apart or conversely collide with one another (like a fleet of ships going off in different directions or running into each other or like different instruments in a band playing at the wrong time).

   A second way is when something goes wrong inside the individual (like something going wrong within a ship that makes it un-seaworthy or like a band instrument being out of tune).

2. The third way in which human machines go wrong is in their purpose or the overriding reason for what they do (where the fleet is trying to go or what song the band is trying to play).

3. Morality therefore appears to be concerned with three things:
   1. Fair play between individuals;
   2. Tidying up or harmonizing things within each individual;
   3. The general purpose of the individuals as a whole.

4. Most modern people usually acknowledge and do not disagree too much about fair play between individuals (or social morality).

5. The second part is also important because we are deceived if we do not recognize the impact that things amiss within an individual, such as greed, cowardice, conceit, or bad-temper, are psychological dysfunctions that will have on society as a whole.

6. CSL notes the third part is just as important because this is where "different beliefs about the universe lead to different behaviour". If one believes himself to be the landlord of his own ship (mind and body) he will not avail himself to God’s purposes. On the other hand, recall that Christianity asserts every human individual is going to live forever. If this is true, even if a state or nation lasts a thousand years, the individual is still not only more important but incomparably more important. The significance is this: whereas my bad temper may not be much to bother about if I am
going to only live seventy years, in a million years it could gradually become an absolute hell.

7. If we are to think about morality, we must think about all three parts: relations between man and man, things within a man, and the relation between man and the power that made him. If you think deeply enough about this, you will realize we are talking about love, faith and hope.

**Book 3: Christian Behavior**

**Chapter 2: The ‘Cardinal Virtues’**

1. **Prudence** means practical common sense or taking the trouble to think out what you are doing and what the consequences will be. Many Christians today have the idea that “provided you are ‘good’ it does not matter being a fool.” They have twisted Christ’s saying about getting into His kingdom by being like children – which Paul flatly refutes. While we are to be “as gentle as doves”, we are also to be “as wise as serpents”. As CSL states, “He wants a child’s heart, but a grown-up’s head”.

2. **Temperance** is unfortunately one of those words that have changed its meaning. It is equated today with “teetotalism” but originally it was not a reference specifically to alcohol but to all pleasures. Additionally, it did not mean abstaining, but going the right distance and no further. There are certain times when abstinence may be appropriate, but CSL notes that one mark of a certain type of bad man is that he cannot give up a thing himself without wanting everyone else to give it up.

3. **Justice** means more than what goes on in a court of law. It is the old word for everything we mean by “fairness” including honesty, truthfulness, keeping promises, etc.

4. **Fortitude** includes two kinds of courage: the kind that faces danger and the kind that endures pain. [Note: courage is not absence of fear, but perseverance in its presence.]

5. The three reasons CSL cites as to why it is important to distinguish between a person doing some virtuous act and a person who is virtuous are:
1. Right actions done for wrong reasons do not build the internal quality or character called virtue.

2. God does not want simple obedience to a set of rules; He wants a specific sort of person.

3. Virtues have value beyond this life – they prepare us for the deep, strong, unshakable kind of happiness God intends for us.

6. More common Biblical names for the ‘cardinal virtues’ are:

   Prudence = wisdom

   Temperance = self-control (i.e. “Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God.” 1 Peter 2:16)

   Justice = righteousness

   Fortitude = perseverance

Book 3: Christian Behavior
Chapter 3: Social Morality

1. The first thing to get clear about Christian morality is that Christ did not come to preach a new morality. Really great moral teachers never introduce new moralities – people are more often in need of reminding, not instructing in what everyone has always known to be right.

2. The second thing to get clear is that Christianity does not have a detailed political program laid out: “It is meant for all men at all times and the particular programme which suited one place or time would not suit another.”

   CSL notes that we are not given a specific political agenda for social morality, any more than we are given lessons in cookery to feed the poor or a Greek-Hebrew lexicon with which to read Scripture.
3. The right way the Church should give us a lead in social morality involves the whole body of practicing Christians – the use of specific talents by those who have them. The wrong way is for the clergy to initiate some kind of political movement.

4. CSL says the New Testament hints at – without going into details – what a fully Christian society might be like. It would be more like what we now call “leftist” with ‘no parasites’ (those who don’t work but who expect to eat), ‘no silly luxuries’ and ‘no sillier advertisements to persuade us to buy them;’ it would be “obedient” to proper government authorities, husbands (ouch!) and parents; it would also be “cheerful” and full of rejoicing with worry and anxiety regarded as wrong. Am I willing to give up all my hard-earned luxuries, to be one hundred percent obedient to all human authority and to parade around in phony cheerfulness when I feeling down?

5. An economic system based on lending money with interest to provide ‘capital’ for others to work, start businesses, etc. is called “capitalism.”

   **Pros:** stimulates production and economic growth; both the individual and his money are working.

   **Cons:** causes ‘keeping up with the Jones’ and worries about the future.

CSL stated he wasn’t sure that all forms of lending with interest are wrong. Note: whereas the Bible is firmly critical of “usury” or disadvantageous lending with interest to the poor, one of Christ’s parables rebukes a man for burying his master’s money in the ground and not putting it in the bank where it would earn interest!

6. Giving to the poor is an essential part of Christian morality, but some people feel instead of giving to the poor we should be producing a society in which there are no poor. While the latter is very desirable, anyone who thinks he can stop giving in the meantime has parted from Christian morality. How much are we to give? CSL replies, “The only safe rule is to give more than we can spare . . . For many of us the great obstacle to charity lies not in our luxurious living . . . but in our fear – fear of insecurity.” Please see **Appendix 6**.

7. “The real snag most of us run into drawing up a blueprint for a Christian society” is that we approach it hoping to find support for our own views and not those of Christianity – we are looking for an _ally_ not a _Master or Judge_.

“A Christian society is not going to arrive until most of us really want it and we are not going to want it until we become more Christian” (for more on this see Appendix 7).

**Book 3: Christian Behavior**

**Chapter 4: Morality and Psychoanalysis**

1. A man making a moral choice involves two things:
   1. The act of choosing;
   2. The raw material or psychological makeup of his choice, i.e. his feelings, impulses, etc. This raw material may be either:
      a. normal or
      b. abnormal, i.e. irrational fears, perversions, etc.

2. Whereas psychoanalysis seeks to remove the abnormal psychological fears, etc. and give the man better raw material for his act of choosing, morality is more concerned about the acts of choice themselves. This is illustrated by the example of three different men going to war in the following chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Raw Material of the Men</th>
<th>Result of Psychoanalysis</th>
<th>Result of Moral Effort/Choices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1 Man with a natural fear of danger</td>
<td>No psychoanalysis needed</td>
<td>Becomes a brave man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2 Man with irrational fear of danger</td>
<td>No more irrational fears</td>
<td>Can do what he wants: his duty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3 Man with irrational fear of danger</td>
<td>More ‘cool under fire’</td>
<td>Still only looks out for himself</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Psychoanalysis may be able to improve a man’s raw psychological makeup but it cannot do anything about the man’s free moral choice.

3. CSL states that bad psychological material is not sin but disease. It does not need to be repented of but cured. This is important because we humans judge one another based on external actions, but God judges based on moral choices, not his raw material.

4. Most of a man’s raw psychological makeup is probably due to or residing in his body. The “real central man” – the part that chooses – will stand alone when he dies and his body falls off.

5. Every choice we make, not every rule we keep, is turning the central part of our ourselves – the part that choose – into something a little different: “either into a heavenly creature in harmony with God or a hellish one at war with God.” Note: Romans 8:6 declares that “the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace” (see Appendix 8).

6. Going in the right direction leads not only to peace but also to knowledge. CSL states that “When a man is getting better, he understands more and more clearly the evil that is still left in him. When a is man getting worse, he understands his own badness less and less. A moderately bad man knows he is not very good: a thoroughly bad man thinks he is all right. . . . Good people know about both good and evil; bad people do not know about either.”

This agrees with Proverbs 4:18-19: “The path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, that shines brighter and brighter until the full day. The way of the wicked is like darkness; they do not know over what they stumble.”

**Book 3: Christian Behavior**  
**Chapter 5: Sexual Morality**

Christian morality regarding sex is called the virtue of chastity.

1. The rule of chastity is the same for all Christians at all times; however, the rule of social propriety changes from one society to another. For
example the scant garb of a Pacific island girl and a completely covered Victorian lady may both be equally proper within each of their own societies.

2. CSL believes our sexual instinct is the problem for three reasons:

1. Biological purpose: The biological purpose of sex is offspring just as the biological purpose of eating is to nourish and repair the body. Now if one was to eat whenever he felt like it, he might eat enough for two but he certainly would not eat enough for ten. But if a healthy younger man pandered to his sexual appetite, he might populate a small village. The first goes a little beyond its biological purpose, the latter goes enormously beyond.

2. Sexual vs. food appetite: You can get a large audience together to watch a strip-tease where a girl undresses, but where would you be able to find a crowd to gather to watch a cover slowly being lifted off a plate to reveal a “mutton chop or a bit of bacon” just before the lights went out? You would only be able to find it somewhere where something had gone wrong with the appetite for food; but where do you find a place where something has gone wrong about the appetite for sex? All around us.

3. Perversion and propaganda: we find very few people who do things with food other than eat it because perversions of the food appetite are rare. But perversions of the sex instinct are numerous and unfortunately for years we have been sold the propaganda that our sexual desire is no different than any other natural desire. Our sexual desire has come to be such a mess only because it was hushed up with morals. (It is even more “unhushed” today than it when Lewis wrote, but the mess has only become worse.)

3. There are three points which are positive about Christianity and sex:

1. Many older Christian teachers felt that if man had not fallen, sexual pleasure would, instead of being less, actually have been greater than it is today.

2. Christianity is almost the only great religion to completely approve of the body, to believe matter is good, to acknowledge even God took on a body, and to be assured that someday in heaven we will have a body given to us.
3. More than any other religion, Christianity has exalted marriage and nearly all of the greatest love poems throughout the world have been written by Christians.

4. The “warped” organisms we have inherited from our fallen ancestors have been the constant targets of “propaganda in favour of unchastity” because people make money by inflaming our sex instinct. Sex can sell anything and “a man with an obsession is a man with very little sales resistance.”

5. Three reasons are given why it is now especially difficult to desire – much less achieve – complete chastity to which CSL responds:

   1. “It’s natural” – This is a lie from the devil, our warped natures and propaganda. If we gave into all our instincts we would self-destruct with disease, jealousies, lying, etc. Real happiness and health in this world require some self-restraint.

   2. “It’s impossible” – Chastity or any practiced virtue is difficult, but “it trains us in habits of the soul” which in turn “cures our illusions about ourselves and teaches us to depend on God.”

   3. “It’s repression” – No, it is suppression or conscious resistance to sexual instinct; repression means it is subconscious or unknown. “Virtue – even attempted virtue - brings light; indulgence brings fog.”

6. CSL’s final point about sexual morality is this: Sins of the flesh are bad, but they are the least bad. Of the Animal self and the Diabolical self, the Diabolical is the worst. Judging is worse than falling to one of our physical desires: “A cold, self-righteous prig who goes regularly to church may be far nearer to hell than a prostitute. But, of course, it is better to be neither.”

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**Book 3: Christian Behavior**

**Chapter 6: Christian Marriage**

1. Christian morality regarding marriage is based on Christ’s words, which states that a man and wife are to be as a single organism. This was expressed as fact and not as sentiment or emotion. The creator of the
human machine made two halves, male and female, which were to be combined into pairs not merely on a sexual level but on all other levels as well. Consequently, marriage was meant to be permanent, meant to be for life.

2. The dissolution of a marriage is like a kind of surgical procedure that cuts up a living body. [For an excellent, biblical discussion on the often confusing subject of divorce, I highly recommend Jay Adam’s small book, *Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage in the Bible*, Zondervan, 1980]

3. Marriage vows are promises. Keeping a promise or being honest, as discussed in a previous chapter, involves the virtue of justice. However, to some, the solemn, public vows of marriage made in a church, are a mere formality done largely to gain the “respectability that is attached to marriage without intending to pay the price.” To this, CSL give a shocking response: “If people do not believe in permanent marriage, it is perhaps better that they should live together unmarried than that they should make vows they do not intend to keep... one fault is not mended by adding another: unchastity is not improved by adding perjury.”

4. When promises outlive passions, there are good reasons two people should stay together.
   1. They provide a home for their children.
   2. It protects the woman physically, emotionally and financially.
   3. It goes beyond the good of being in love to the better of a deep unity, to beyond mere feelings into that which is maintained by the will,” “strengthened by habit” and “reinforced by grace from God.”

5. The thrill of being in love dies and gives way to a “quieter interest and happiness that follows.” [Note: I personally do not believe that the *mature* love of Christian marriage means an absence of passion, but only an absence of passion as a *foundation* for marriage. For a good book on this subject, see David Clark’s *Kiss Me Like You Mean It: Solomon’s Crazy in Love How-To Manual*, Revell, 2009]

6. CSL points out that when two individuals are not in agreement, either they must separate or one must decide the issue. This “head” must be agreed upon, as in a constitution, before an impasse of disagreement arises.
Having this head therefore maintains the permanence of the marriage. Why must the head be the man? Beyond the fact that God made it that way, CSL states that it is not natural or flattering for a woman to be the head (the man shrinks from his God-given position to a less manly status). He also feels the man is more connected to the outside world; whereas a woman is fighting for her children, the man is fighting against the world.

**Answers to Questions**

**Book 3: Christian Behavior**

**Chapter 7: Forgiveness**

1. On second thought CSL suspects that forgiveness or loving thy enemy or the Christian virtue of charity may be more unpopular than the virtue of chastity. Whether or not we think we can forgive, Christianity mandates that we must forgive: “Forgive us our sins as we forgive those that sin against us.” To be forgiven, we need be forgiving. We are not offered forgiveness on any other terms!

2. Two things are suggested in order to make forgiving easier:
   1. Try learning to forgive easier things first.
   2. Implicit within “loving your neighbor as yourself” is the recognition that I must understand exactly what loving myself means.

3. Loving my neighbor as myself does not mean:
   1. That I have to feel fond of him, or find him attractive,
   2. That I have to think he is nice,
   3. That I am not allowed to loathe and hate some of his actions – “hate the sin but not the sinner.”

(Note that Paul called himself the “least of the Apostles” and yet stated “I am what I am by the grace of God.” Within this is a measure of self-acceptance not based upon one’s natural abilities, merits, or accomplishments, but upon God’s love and grace.)

4. The result of incorrectly thinking our neighbor or enemy to be as bad as possible is that it will make us into devils. We will insist on seeing
everything – ourselves, friends and even God – as bad. We will not be able to stop seeing everything as bad, and we will become fixed in a universe of pure hatred.

5. Loving myself does not mean I should not subject myself to just punishment – even to death if warranted! Consequently, loving my enemy means the same thing.

When Christ quotes the sixth commandment in Matthew, Mark and Luke, the Greek word used is “murder” not “kill” – “You shall not murder” not “You shall not kill.” Furthermore, Christ did not tell the Roman Centurion soldier to leave the army, whose business it is to kill.

6. CSL responds, “All the difference in the world.” Christians think man lives forever; therefore, what really matters are the changes that take place in the central, inside soul part of a person that make us, in the long run, into either heavenly creatures or hellish ones. “We may punish if necessary, but we must not enjoy it.” As Christians, something in us must be killed, day after day, year after year – if hatred is a pleasure, we must “give it up like giving up beer or tobacco . . .”

**Book 3: Christian Behavior**

**Chapter 8: The Great Sin**

1. As CSL noted in an earlier chapter, contrary to what many people think, sexual morality is not the center of Christian morals – rather, it is pride or self-conceit. According to Christian teachers, pride is the “essential vice” and “utmost evil.” In comparison, unchastity, anger, greed, drunkenness and all other vices are “mere fleabites.” It was through the vice of pride that the devil became the devil. “Pride is the vice that leads to every other vice.” It is “the complete anti-God state of mind.”

2. The easiest way to see how proud you are is to note how much you are upset when someone else snubs, refuses to acknowledge or patronizes you. This is because “each person’s pride is in competition with everyone else’s pride.” Pride is essentially competitive by its nature whereas the other vices are only competitive by accident. A greedy person may want to become rich and, along the way (i.e. by accident), may acquire more wealth
than all his peers. A proud person may want to become not only rich, but richer than everyone else. This may be applied to any of the vices: an unchaste man may want a girl to satisfy his lust and by accident end up with the most ‘sexually loose’ girl around. But a proud man does not want just any unchaste girl; he wants your girl just to prove he is a better man than you. Pride does not want to be good looking, it wants to be the best looking; pride does not want to be smart; it wants to be the smartest. Understandably then “pride is the chief cause of misery” in the world. Unlike the other vices which may bring people together, pride always brings enmity (i.e. hostility) between man and man. Additionally, it also brings enmity between man and God.

3. In coming to God, one comes up against something that in every way is incalculably superior to oneself. And unless you know God as this – and yourself as comparatively nothing – you do not know God at all. Knowledge of God summons humility; the proud cannot know God. “A proud man’s God is an imaginary God.” The real test of being in God’s presence, according to CSL, is that you either forget about yourself altogether or see yourself as a small dirty object; forgetting about yourself is better.

4. Pride can sneak its way into the center of our religious life. The less bad vices come from the devil working on us through our animal nature. But pride does not come through our animal nature; it is purely spiritual and comes unimpeded “directly from Hell.” Consequently, it is far more subtle and deadly. A man through pride may beat down his simpler vices and overcome anger or cowardice or lust and learn to think that such things are beneath his dignity – but the spiritual source of this is pride; in other words, it is anti-God. It amuses the devil to watch you become content, brave and chaste as he establishes in you a “Dictatorship of Pride.” He cures your rash and gives you cancer in return. “For Pride is spiritual cancer: it eats up the very possibility of love, or contentment, or even commonsense.” (The real issue is not, “Look what I can do” but rather, “Lord, what would You have me to do?”)

5. CSL lists four possible misconceptions about pride that should be guarded against:

1. Pleasure in being praised is not pride. The problem begins when you pass from thinking “I pleased so and so” to “What a fine person I am.” Note: vanity is pride-lite – it wants applause too much.
2. Being proud of one’s son or one’s school is warm-hearted admiration. Anything that is directed outside of you is not pride.

3. We must not think God forbids pride because He is offended by it or that He demands humility in order to sustain His own dignity – this would imply God Himself is proud. He is not concerned about His dignity, He is concerned about you knowing Him, receiving Him and becoming like Him.

4. A humble – less prideful – man is not a greasy, smarmy person who is always telling you that he is nobody. Most likely, all you will notice about him is that he seemed to be a cheerful, intelligent person who took a real interest in what you said to him.

**Book 3: Christian Behavior**  
**Chapter 9: Charity**

The four ‘Cardinal’ virtues are prudence, temperance, justice and fortitude. We will now begin to look at the three ‘Theological’ virtues of charity, hope and faith. This chapter deals with the first of these, charity. As discussed before (Chapter 7) charity means forgiveness. But it also has another more broad meaning.

1. Previously, CSL contrasted the sin of fornication with the virtue of chastity and infidelity with the virtue of fidelity. Similarly, he contrasts the sin of pride here with the virtue of genuine humility and, here, charity. Whereas pride is always self-focused, charity is other-focused.

2. The word “charity” has today come to mean “alms” or “giving to the poor.” You can see how this has happened: if a man has “charity” the most obvious thing he does is give to the poor. However, CSL points out that just as rhyme is the most obvious thing about poetry, poetry is not simply rhyme and nothing else. Similarly, although the most obvious thing about charity might be giving to the poor, it is not the whole thing.

3. Originally it has a much wider connotation. It meant “Love, in the Christian sense.” In other words, the Christian virtue of charity is another name for “Christian love.”
4. “Christian love does not mean an emotion” or a “state of feelings”. Rather, it means a “state of the will which we naturally have for ourselves and must learn to have for others.”

5. This state of the will does not mean that we necessarily like ourselves or our neighbors (see Chapter 7). So charity (or Christian love) is quite a different thing from liking or affection. While we do want our own and our neighbor’s good, our affections are a secondary matter.

6. Natural liking or affection for people makes it easier to be charitable toward them. Therefore we should encourage our affections for the purpose of liking people as much as we can. On the other hand, care should be taken to avoid allowing our affections to cause us to become biased and thereby uncharitable, like a doting mother who spoils her child at the expense of the child real happiness later on.

   The one rule for us all is not to waste time wondering whether or not you love your neighbor, but to begin to act as if you do. When you behave as if you love someone, you will find yourself coming to love him. “Fake it ‘til you make” will eventually lead to the obedience of Christian love.

7. Though Christian charity sounds cold to those who are sentimental and though it is quite distinct from affection, nevertheless, Christian charity leads to affection. The difference then between a Christian and a worldly man is not that the worldly man has only affections and the Christian has only charity. The worldly man treats certain people kindly because he likes them. The Christian, trying to treat everyone kindly, finds himself liking more and more people as he goes, even some he could not have imagined himself liking at the start. This spiritual law also works, unfortunately, in the opposite direction: good and evil both increase with compound interest. The smallest good acts or the most trivial sinful indulgences of today will have their futures.

8. The answer is the same as before: if you do not feel love toward God, act as if you do. Ask yourself, “If I were sure that I loved God, what would I do?” He will give you feelings of love if He pleases. No one can have devout feelings toward God all the time, but feelings are not what God primarily cares about. Again, it is a matter of the will. Our feelings come and go, but His love for us does not.
Book 3: Christian Behavior
Chapter 10: Hope

1. CSL defines hope as a continual looking forward to the eternal world.

2. CSL points out that hope is not some form of escapism or wishful thinking but one of the things Christians are meant to do here in this world.

3. History bears witness that the Christians who did the most for the present world were those who thought most about the next: the Apostles who set off the conversion of the Roman Empire, the great men who built up the Middle Ages, the English Evangelists who abolished the Slave Trade. All left their mark upon the earth because their minds were so occupied with heaven. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this one. Aim for heaven and get earth thrown in; aim at earth and get neither.

4. Two reasons why many of us find it difficult “to want heaven:”
   1. We have not been trained to do so: our entire education has tended to fix on minds on this world;
   2. When the real desire is present for heaven is in us, we fail to recognize it. Most people, if they had really learned to look into their own hearts, would know that they do want something that cannot be had in this world. There are many things that trigger the longing but never fulfill it. It is like when we first fall in love or first think of some foreign country or first study some subject that excites us – but these are longings which no marriage, no foreign travel or no learning – no matter how excellent they are – can ever really satisfy (Appendix 9).

5. The two wrong and one right way CSL states that we can deal with our real longings for heaven are:
   1. The Fool’s Way – This is the way of a man who blames the objects that initially elicited the longings. He goes on all his life thinking that if only he had tried another woman or gone on a more expensive vacation to that foreign country, then he would have captured the mysterious something we are all after. He spends his life changing
from one woman to another and traveling from one continent to another.

2. The Way of the Disillusioned “Sensible Man” – This is the way of the man who soon decides that the whole of his transcendent experiences was somehow “moonshine” or “rainbow chasing.” He settles down, learns not to expect much, and suppresses that part of himself.

3. The Christian Way – A Christian understands that “creatures are not born with desires unless satisfaction for those desires exists. A baby feels hunger: well, there is such a thing as food. A duckling wants to swim: well, there is such a thing as water. Men feel sexual desire: well, there is such a thing as sex. But if I find in myself a desire which nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world. . . . [And most likely] earthly pleasures were never meant to satisfy it but rather to arouse it.”

6. Tell them “that if they cannot understand books written for grown-ups, they should not talk about them. All the scriptural imagery (harps, crowns, gold, etc) is, of course, a merely symbolic attempt to express the inexpressible . . . People who take these symbols literally might as well think that when Christ told us to be like doves, He meant that we were to lay eggs.”

**Book 3: Christian Behavior**  
**Chapter 11: Faith**

The word Faith is used in two senses by Christians.

**Faith in the first sense: “belief – accepting or regarding as true the doctrines of Christianity”**

1. For “faith” or belief to be considered a virtue once baffled CSL. He thought that the basis for believing or not believing a set of statements was the evidence not moral virtue. A sane man accepts or rejects any statement based on the evidence, not on what he wants. If he is mistaken about the
evidence, he is not immoral, just not very clever; and if he tries to force himself to believe in spite of the evidence, then he still is not bad, just merely stupid.

2. CSL had initially assumed that the human mind is completely ruled by reason when actually it is not. He eventually came to see that it is not reason that takes away faith; rather “the battle is between reason and faith on one side and emotion and imagination on the other.” He illustrated this with the following examples:

1. CSL was perfectly convinced by his reason that anesthesia will not smother him and that a properly trained surgeon will not begin operating until he is unconscious; but when he is down on the table and the mask is placed over his face, a childish panic comes over him. It is not reason that removed his faith, it is emotion.

2. A man, who knows, on good evidence, that a pretty girl is a liar and revealer of secrets, loses his faith in that bit of knowledge, starts thinking “Perhaps she’ll be different this time,” and once again makes a fool of himself by revealing some confidential information.

3. A boy learning to swim has seen many people float and swim without sinking in water. When he takes swimming lessons, however, the whole question before him is whether he will be able to go on believing this or will he suddenly stop believing and, in fright, begin to drown.

3. Faith (as belief) is not the denial of reason, nor filling in the gaps of reason, nor the replacement of reason.

Faith is the art of holding on to the things your reason has once accepted in spite of your changing mood. Faith clings to reason when your mood objects. Faith is confidence, mood is vacillation. A Christian has moods in which the whole thing seems improbable, but an atheist has moods in which Christianity looks terribly probable. This is why faith is such a necessary virtue – unless you teach your moods what their place is, you will never be either a sound Christian or a sound atheist but only person storm-tossed by moods.
Thus, one must train the habit of faith. This is done by first recognizing that my moods change, and second, by deliberately bringing some of the main doctrines of Christianity before my mind on a regular basis. This is done through daily prayer, Bible or religious reading, attending church and so on. Continual reminder is important because beliefs will not automatically remain alive in the mind. Most people who have lost their faith in Christianity have not been “reasoned out of it by honest argument” but “just drift away.”

**Faith in the second sense: “putting of the doctrines of Christianity into practice”**

4. Faith in the second, higher sense is more difficult. After the recognition of a personal shortcoming – for example, pride – the next step should be some serious attempt to practice a Christian virtue – say, humility. CSL suggests a week is not enough, but perhaps six weeks!

   The main thing we learn from trying to practice a virtue is truth about ourselves. We never find out the strength of an inner evil impulse until we try to fight it. We learn that we fail; that is, we have no inherent virtues ourselves.

   Christ is the only man who never yielded to temptation. He, thus, really knows temptation and is the only complete realist.

5. In practicing the virtue, however, we make two discoveries:

   1. We come to learn something we could never have been learned without attempting the virtue: no man knows how bad he really is until he has tried very hard to be good and the main thing that results from a serious attempt to practice any and all of the Christian virtues is that we fail. Any notion that we can somehow earn a passing mark in God’s tests or bargain to put God in our debt is “blown to bits.”

   2. We realize that every ability we have, every power of mind and muscle that we possess, is given to us “moment by moment by God”. If the whole of the rest of one’s life was devoted to God’s service, we could not give Him anything that was not already His. Doing anything for or giving anything to God is like a child asking his father for money to buy his father a birthday gift.
When a man has made these two discoveries, God can really get to work and his real life begins – the man is awake now! See Appendix 10.

Book 3: Christian Behavior
Chapter 12: Faith

Faith in the second sense: putting of the doctrines of Christianity into practice (continued)

1. “I mean really discovered” – We are not to just parrot the words or traffic in unlived truths, but we need to make these discoveries by personal practice and experience. We do not discover our moral bankruptcy by repeatedly saying, “I’m so poor” but by trying to buy something.

2. “Do not, I implore you, start asking yourselves, ‘Have I reached that moment?’” – Just as a watched pot never boils, so a watched mind never thinks right. Many of the most important things in life happen when we are not aware of them. It is only later that we realize the change has occurred. Sometimes changes come in a flash, but sometimes they are gradual. What is important is that the change takes place, not how we feel when it is happening. A second, higher sense of faith is a change from being confident in our own efforts to despairing about our own efforts and ‘leaving it to God.’

3. “I know the words ‘leave it to God’ can be misunderstood” – The Christian way to ‘leave it to God’ is to put all his trust in Christ, trusting that Christ will somehow share His perfect human obedience. In Christian language, He will share His ‘sonship’ with us. In a sense, the whole of the Christian life consists in accepting this incredible offer. The difficulty is to reach the point of recognizing that all we have done and can do is nothing. Thus if you have really handed yourself over to Him, it must follow that you are trying to obey Him – but trying in a new and less worried way. Not doing these things to be saved, but because he has begun to save you already;
not doing them to get into heaven as a reward for your efforts, but acting in a certain way because the first gleam of heaven is already in you.

4. “Christians have often disputed as to whether what leads the Christian home is good actions or Faith in Christ” – Invariably, it is both. The Bible clinches the matter when it puts both things into one amazing sentence: “Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who worketh in you.” Don’t be side-tracked by the paradox.

5. “Though Christianity seems at the first to be all about morality, all about duty and rules and guilt and virtue, yet it leads you on, out of all that, into something beyond.” – We come to glimpse that place where people are filled with goodness as a mirror is filled with light. God is at work in each. Some have glimpsed this place more than others,

Book 4: Beyond Personality: First Steps in the Doctrine of the Trinity
Chapter 1: Making and Begetting

1. Just as a map is a representation of a real place and not actually the place itself, Theology, though useful, is also a representation of the actual experience of God, and not God Himself. Admittedly, Doctrine ≠ God. Nevertheless, like a map, Theology is based on masses of experiences with the real thing. Therefore, if you want to get anywhere, a map (i.e. Theology) is absolutely necessary and practical. Not listening to Theology will not leave you clueless about God; it will leave you with a lot of wrong clues.

2. The popular view was that Jesus was a great moral teacher, and Christianity was just one more bit of good advice. Therefore, both are of no importance because, for the past 4,000 years, there has been no lack of good advice (Plato, Confucius, etc.) and more really won’t make any difference.
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5. Bios (Biological life) comes from nature, tends to run down and decay and needs constant subsidies from nature. Zoë (Spiritual Life) comes from God, is eternal, never runs down or decays, and does not need external subsidies. “A man who changed from bios to having zoë, would have gone through as big a change as a statue that changed from being a carved stone to being a real man.”

Book 4: Beyond Personality: First Steps in the Doctrine of the Trinity
Chapter 2: The Three-Personal God

1. Impersonal: A thing, a computer, or a force. This means ultimately being absorbed into a mere physical thing and individuality ceasing to exist, like a drop of water in an ocean.

   Super-personal: Extra personal. This means being taken into life, remaining distinct, and even become more distinct.
2. A 2-D being could only comprehend a separate, distinct, 2-D square, but not a 3-D cube. A person similarly cannot comprehend how God is 3 distinct persons, yet one Being. There is just no good talking about Him without being drawn into Him.

3. Prayer to God is prompted from God within and is assisted by God at our side. God is the definition or goal, the motivation or motor, and the way or the road. By simply praying, we are drawn into a higher zoë or spiritual life in which God is already active.

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<td>Zoology: the study of animals</td>
<td>% by animals = 5% (?)</td>
<td>% by you = 95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology: the study of humans</td>
<td>% by other humans = 50%</td>
<td>% by you = 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theology: the study of God</td>
<td>% by God = 100%</td>
<td>% by you = 0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. God has no favorites, just as sunlight has no favorites. He shows Himself to all. But just as a dusty mirror cannot reflect sunlight well, men with minds and characters in the wrong condition cannot see Him well. The right “instruments” for viewing God are men in a Christian community in brotherhood waiting together for Him.

Book 4: Beyond Personality: First Steps in the Doctrine of the Trinity
Chapter 3: Time and Beyond Time

1. “At the same moment” – our life comes to us moment by moment, one moment disappears as another moment appears. But for God, 10:00 p.m. and every other moment in time is always present to Him.

2. Mary is always bound in the imaginary story, but her author is not. Similarly, God is not bound to the time flow of the universe. It is always
1920 and 2013 for Him. He can, therefore, give one all the attention he might get if he was the only person in the world.

3. Christ’s life as a man was “in time,” but His life as God has never been “in time.” (CSL suggests a timeless truth that human nature, weakness, sleep, etc. are somehow included in Christ’s whole divine life.) God has no history or coming future. He is too real for anything to be slipping away or yet to be.

4. If God knows today what I am going to do tomorrow, am I really free today to do what I want? The answer to this is every moment is present always to God, but this does not eradicate our free-willed choices. As a matter of fact, besides God knowing everything I freely will do, He also knows everything I freely could do. . . and He is able to orchestrate it all.

Book 4: Beyond Personality: First Steps in the Doctrine of the Trinity
Chapter 4: Good Infection

1. An eternal distinction gives rise to two different things. One may appear to be a cause and the other the result, as in Book B’s spatial location above the table appearing to be the result of Book A under it, or the begotten Son temporally appearing to be the result of the begetting Father. However, each has eternally existed.

2. Unless is God is at least two persons. CSL reverently states that “God is love” means the “living, dynamic activity of love has been going on in God forever and has created everything else.” God “is not a static thing, but a dynamic, pulsating activity, a life, almost a kind of drama or a kind of life.”

3. Out of the love dance, joint life of the Father and the Son grows the Holy Spirit. The whole dance is to be played out in each one of us. Each of us must enter the pattern and take our place in the dance. There is no other way to the happiness for which we were made. If you want joy, power, peace and eternal life, you must get close to the source, unite with Him in His love life dance.

4. CSL: “Now the whole offer which Christianity makes is this: that we can, if we let God have His way, come to share in the life of Christ. If we do
we shall then be sharing a life which was begotten, not made, which always has existed and always will exist. Christ is the Son of God. If we share in this kind of life, we also shall be sons of God. We shall love the Father as He does, and the Holy Spirit will arise in us. He came to this world and became a man in order to spread to other men the kind of life He has – by what I call ‘good infection.’ Every Christian is to become a little Christ. The whole purpose of becoming a Christian is simply nothing else.”

5. For extra credit and extra fun:

1. The heavens and earth came into being exactly at the same time. What preceded them was the distinction or separation that gave rise to their existence.

2. Day 2 of creation is the only day in which a “separation” did not occur, God altered what all ready existed but did not create anything anew.

3. My best guess as to why God used the word “bara” in these three places is because He brought something new into His creation from the outside which wasn’t there before.

Book 4: Beyond Personality: First Steps in the Doctrine of the Trinity
Chapter 5: The Obstinate Toy Soldiers

1. The natural life in us is self-centered, wants to be admired, takes advantage of others and exploits the whole universe. It especially wants to be left to itself: to keep away from anything better, stronger or higher than itself. It knows that if the spiritual life gets hold of it, it’s self and self-centeredness are going to be killed.

2. The Eternal Being became human, born of a created woman, progressing from an embryo to a fetus to a baby. Becoming like us would be like us becoming a slug or a crab. He chose an earthly career which involved the daily killing of His own human desires, poverty, misunderstanding from His own family, betrayal by friends, being jeered at,
manhandled by the police, executed by torture. Then the man in Christ rose again, not only the God in Christ. With that we saw the first real man: one tin soldier – tin, like us – become “splendidly alive.”

3. If one tin soldier or statue came alive it wouldn’t affect all the other tin soldiers or statues – they are all separate. But humans are a part of each other. Every man was once part of his mother and earlier, his father, and earlier, his grandparents. If we could see humanity spread out in time – as God does – it would look like one single, growing thing, such as a complicated tree. Christ affected the whole connection of humanity, like dropping something into a glass of water that changes its whole color or taste.

4. The business of becoming a son of God, of being turned from a created thing into a begotten thing, of passing from temporary biological life into eternal spiritual life has already been done for us. The really hard work has already been accomplished, we just need to open ourselves to the one Man in which this life is fully present. He will do it in us, we will catch the “good infection” from Him, if we draw close.

**Book 4: Beyond Personality: First Steps in the Doctrine of the Trinity**

**Chapter 6: Two Notes**

1. **The easy part:** the process of being turned from a creature into a son would not have been so difficult and painful if the human race had not long ago rebelled. They were only able to rebel because God gave them free will. He gave them free will because mere robots cannot love and know infinite happiness. Adam and Eve, before the fall, therefore, would probably have had a less difficult and painful transformation.

2. **The hard part:**

   1. Insisting on asking, “Could there have been many sons of God?” gets into deep water. Asking if some created thing could be different is one thing, but asking if God, the uncreated, rock bottom, irreducible fact could be different is nonsensical. It is like asking if the Trinity could be a Quadrupally or an Octonity.
2. Aside from asking whether God could be other than God, asking if many sons could be begotten from eternity is not really answerable. We know the Father differs from the Son, but how would two Sons differ from one another? Two identical pennies differ from one another by occupying different places in space and being made of different atoms. But eternal Sons of God would be before all creation of space and atoms. There may be no other way of getting numerous eternal spirits except by first making numerous natural creatures within a universe and then spiritualizing them.

3. Two opposite ideas are expressed: things of a single organism can be very different from each other, like a nose and a lung. Conversely, things which are not of a single organism and are separate can be very much alike, such as six pennies. When you want to suppress difference and make all people alike, you are a totalitarian. When you think other people aren’t any of your business, you are an individualist. A Christian is neither of these two errors. The devil sends pairs or errors into the world to get us to waste our time arguing which is right.

Book 4: Beyond Personality: First Steps in the Doctrine of the Trinity
Chapter 7: Let’s Pretend

1. When we pray, “Our Father”, you are putting yourself in the place of a Son of God, dressing up as Christ. You are pretending! The audacious “cheek” is this: the Son of God’s will and interest are one with those of the Father, but you and I are a bundle of self-centered fears, hopes, greeds, jealousies and conceits. Thus, we know we are not a Son of God. So why do we continue to do it? He has ordered us to!

2. Christ who is man, just like us, and God, just like His Father, is actually at your side and is already at that moment, beginning to turn your pretense into reality. This isn’t merely listening to your conscience. Doing that will get one result, but remembering you are dressing up as Christ will get a completely different one.
3. God works in: other humans (even non-Christians), nature, books, experiences, and through each other (Church). “Men are mirrors or carriers of Christ to other men.”

4. Don’t dismiss them, discern what they mean. It is not a question of a good man who died 2,000 years ago; it is a living Man-God, actually coming and interfering with your own very self, killing your own very self, and replacing it with the kind of self He has. At first, it may only for moments, then for longer periods, then finally, if all goes well, permanently turning you into new little Christs, which in a small way has the same kind of life as God.

5. The two discoveries:

   1. We notice not just our particular sinful acts, but our sinfulness. We begin to be alarmed not only about what we do but about what we are.

   2. Realizing we can’t, by moral effort, change ourselves is humiliating. But whereas all this seems like we are doing everything, in reality it is God doing it. You might even say that He is pretending! He is pretending we are a Son and not a grumbling human animal.

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Book 4: Beyond Personality: First Steps in the Doctrine of the Trinity
Chapter 8: Is Christianity Hard or Easy?

1. The ordinary view starts with our ordinary self and its desires, and then admits that “morality” or “the good of society” or “the law of human nature” has claims on this self. “Right or wrong” overshadows all he does. He lives hoping all the demands are met and that there will be some left over. In contrast, the Christian view starts dressed up as Christ in whom the law of right and wrong is fulfilled.

2. The results of practicing ordinary morality:

   1. He will give up trying to be good – the natural man will just seek its own desires.
2. He will become unhappy – the more you obey your conscience, the more it will demand of you and your natural self. Being starved, hampered and worried, you will only become angrier and angrier.

3. The Christian way is harder because handing over the natural self, the old self – not just your time, treasures and talents, but your very self – to be killed daily is difficult. No half measures will do, nevertheless, this is still easier than ordinary morality. The Christian way is also easier in that the new self is yoked to Christ, whose burden is light.

4. The real problem is that all our wishes and hopes for the day rush at us like wild animals. This occurs when we first wake up each morning. How we respond is by shoving them all back, listening to that “other voice” and taking that other point of view. Responding properly in this manner will result in that other, stronger, quieter life flowing in. “Be perfect” is hard, but half-compromises are harder.

5. It is easy for the Church to have a lot of different objectives and focuses: education, building projects, missions, special services, and so on. These aren’t bad or wrong things, they are just other things. The only reason for the Church to exist is none other than to draw men into Christ and to make them little Christs. Just as animals and things are “drawn” into us by our attention and love, so we can be drawn into and made like Christ.

**Book 4: Beyond Personality: First Steps in the Doctrine of the Trinity**

**Chapter 9: Counting the Cost**

1. This doesn’t mean “unless you are perfect I will not help you.” It does mean that the only help God will give you is help to become perfect. “You may want less, but I will give you nothing less.” When CSL had a toothache as a child, he wanted his mother to give him an aspirin, but she made him go to the dentist.

2. Once He starts, He won’t stop. He’ll never rest, He’ll never give up working on us. Be warned!

3. He is changing us into a saint, even if we only wanted to become a decent, ordinary person. Shrinking back, not because of humility but
because of cowardice or laziness, and not moving forward in His purposes and intentions is a fatal mistake we must avoid. “He is the inventor, we are the machine. He is the painter, we are only the picture.”

4. With progress overcoming certain habits and so on, we might think things should get easier. But God’s goal is not for our self-satisfaction, but for our continued transformation. Higher levels mean more difficult situations.

5. CSL notes: quote: “The command Be ye perfect is not idealistic gas. Nor is it a command to do the impossible. . . If we let Him – for we can prevent Him, if we choose – He will make the feeblest and filthiest of us into . . . a dazzling, radiant, immortal creature, pulsating all through with such energy and joy and wisdom and love as we cannot now imagine . . . The process will be long and in parts very painful, but that is what we are in for. Nothing less. He meant what He said.”

**Book 4: Beyond Personality: First Steps in the Doctrine of the Trinity**  
**Chapter 10: Nice People or New Men**

1. The conversion is largely imaginary.

2. Our bad behavior makes Christianity unbelievable to the outside world.

3. They demand, before they will believe in Christianity, that the whole world be neatly divided into two camps - Christian and non-Christian – and that all people at all times in the first camp should be obviously nicer than all people in the second.

4. Actual real, live specimens of each.

5. True.

6. God.

7. True – one can depend on his niceness and fail to see his need for redemption.

8. Turn it into a winged creature.
9. Seeing that Christianity is probable and then setting up some stupid and unsatisfactory Christian as a “new man” example is mere evading the issue.

**Book 4: Beyond Personality: First Steps in the Doctrine of the Trinity**

**Chapter 11: The New Men**

1. We are still part of nature, still in the womb – what I call myself is really just due to eggs, alcohol, a good night’s sleep, propaganda, etc. In my natural state I am not nearly so much of a person as I believe.

2. The new men’s voices and faces are different; stronger, quieter and more radiant. They are not very much like the ordinary idea of “religious people” you form from general reading. They love you more but need you less. Once one is recognized, the next is more easily recognized. They recognize each other. Becoming holy is like joining a secret society and must be great fun.

3. Losing ourselves to become new men means moving out of ourselves and into Christ. “His will is to become ours, and we are to think His thoughts, to ‘have the mind of Christ’.” However, this “oneness” with Christ does not erase but rather enunciates what it is that gives us our distinction.

   Light makes everything distinguishable, more distinct. It brings out the real you. CSL once wrote elsewhere that when the sun rises, not only do we see it, but we see everything else by it, too.

   Salt has its own taste, but when added to food, it brings out their distinct flavors.

   Light and salt bring out the real distinctions of a new man.

4. “Sameness is found most among the most ‘natural’ men, not among those who surrender to Christ. How monotonously alike all the great tyrants and conquerors have been: how gloriously different are the saints.”

Please see both **Appendix 11** and **Appendix 12**.