

AN ANSWER FOR ORUAL: C. S. Lewis as Defender of the Faith

International Society of Christian Apologetics Presidential Address, 2016

“You are yourself the answer. Before your face questions die away”

Many have taken pen in hand to discuss the validity of C. S. Lewis’s apologetic arguments. I have been one of them.¹ But here I would like to address what we can learn practically about apologetics as a part of Christian ministry from Lewis’s approach to defending the faith. Lewis was not a pastor, though Providence gave him an informal pastoral role in many lives which is often on display in his letters. He was an evangelist of sorts as well as perhaps the most effective apologist the church has known. A fresh look at his approach to these two areas of ministry and how they fit together could be useful to both evangelists and apologists in the Twenty-first Century.

EVANGELISM

C. S. Lewis did not talk a lot about evangelism. He just did it. He often did it indirectly, but it got done. There is no direct appeal for conversion in the Broadcast Talks that became *Mere Christianity*, but there is an exposition of the Christian faith designed to elucidate its attractiveness as an answer to the problems of fallen man as well as to underscore its truth. And conversion was often the result, as famously with Charles Colson. But while Lewis’s approach to evangelism may have been indirect, it was not unintentional. When Sherwood Eliot Wirt of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association asked Lewis whether he would say that the aim of his writing was “to bring about an encounter of the reader with Jesus Christ,” Lewis replied, “That is not my language, yet it is the purpose I have in view.”² He said elsewhere that “Most of my books are evangelistic, addressed to *tous exo* [“those outside”]”³

Lewis did not feel he had the gifts for the “direct evangelical appeal of the ‘Come to Jesus’ type,” but he thought that those who could do that sort of thing should “do it with all their might.”⁴ Lewis not only practiced evangelism by writing, but also in his speaking on the radio, speaking for the RAF in World War II, and in personal letters and other contacts. Lewis’s commitment to evangelism and the price he paid for it at Oxford are covered brilliantly in the book edited by David Mills, *The Pilgrim’s Guide: C. S. Lewis and the Art of Witness*, especially in the late Chris Mitchell’s essay, “Bearing the Weight of Glory.”⁵

Through all of these varied experiences, Lewis came to have a good understanding of some of the problems with doing effective evangelism in the modern world. One thing he noticed was that “The greatest barrier I have met is the almost total absence from the minds of

¹ E.g. in *C. S. Lewis’s Apologetics: Pro and Con*, ed. Gregory Bassham (Leiden: Brill/Rodopi, 2015), 171-89, 201-4.

² C. S. Lewis, “Cross Examination,” in *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*, ed. Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 262.

³ C. S. Lewis, “Rejoinder to Dr. Pittenger,” in *God in the Dock*, ed. Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 181.

⁴ C. S. Lewis, “Christian Apologetics,” in *God in the Dock*, ed. Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 99.

⁵ Christopher W. Mitchell, “Bearing the Weight of Glory: The Cost of C. S. Lewis’s Witness,” in *The Pilgrim’s Guide: C. S. Lewis and the Art of Witness*, ed. David Mills (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 3-14.

my audience of any sense of sin. . . . We have to convince our hearers of the unwelcome diagnosis before we can expect them to welcome the news of the remedy.”⁶ This was a new situation without precedent in the history of the church. “When the apostles preached, they could assume even in their Pagan hearers a real consciousness of deserving the Divine anger. . . . Christianity now has to preach the diagnosis—in itself very bad news—before it can win a hearing for the cure.”⁷ This means, not an adjustment to the message, but more work for the evangelist, who can no longer do his work effectively without help from the apologist. “Christ takes it for granted that men are bad. Until we really feel this assumption of His to be true, though we are part of the world He came to save, we are not part of the audience to whom His words are addressed.”⁸ There is no hint of the idea that we have to adjust the message to make it more palatable to this new, tougher audience. Rather, we must gird up our loins and do the work required to gain a hearing for this unwelcome diagnosis and the joyous cure that can only make sense when it follows it.

APOLOGETICS

The evangelist increasingly needs help from the apologist because the diagnosis is no longer self-evident, and it is no longer self-evident partly because the Christian world view is now a foreign country to most modern people. They must be *persuaded* (the apologist’s job) to try the experiment of looking at the world and their own hearts very differently from the way they habitually do if they are even to understand the relevance of the Gospel to their lives, much less accept it as Good News that is true. The “liberal” approach to this dilemma is to try to accommodate the Gospel to the modern (or now, post-modern) world view, to make it more palatable to the audience that exists. But this approach begs the question. If the Gospel is not *true*, then it is not Good News for anyone; and if it is true, then the modern world view must at points be false. Lewis does not seem to have been tempted at all by the liberal cop-out. He was fully prepared to accept the challenge that, in order to present the Good News today, we must, to an extent that was never necessary before, convince people that not just their behavior and their beliefs but their *thinking* has been mistaken at crucial points.

Apologetics is how we do this job. It is the defense of the faith, that branch of theology which asks of the Gospel, “*Why* should we think it is *true*?” It is the one branch of theology in which Lewis was recognized as an expert, if not a professional. His broad and deep learning, classical, philosophical, and literary, which kept him in touch with the best products of both the human mind and the human heart; his rigorous training in logic and debate by W. T. Kirkpatrick; and the fact that his own conversion was facilitated by reasoned arguments from Chesterton and Tolkien⁹: All these factors combined to make Lewis one of the greatest apologists we have seen. What can he tell us about apologetics as a form of practical theology?

The Need for Apologetics

⁶ C. S. Lewis, “God in the Dock,” in *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*, ed. Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 243-4; cf. “Christian Apologetics,” *op. cit.*, 95.

⁷ C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain* (N.Y.: MacMillan, 1967), 43.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁹ See Donald T. Williams, “G. K. Chesterton, *The Everlasting Man*,” in *C. S. Lewis’s List: The Ten Books that Influenced Him Most*, Ed. David Werther and Susan Werther (N.Y.: Bloomsbury, 2015), 31-48.

Apologetics is needed for many reasons. In the first place it is a biblical mandate: “Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you” (1 Pet. 3:15, NASB). The word translated “defense” is **απολογία** (*apologia*), from which we get the English word *apologetics*. It is a courtroom term which refers to the kind of reasoned case a lawyer would make in defense of his client. Lewis was in tune with a number of the reasons why that mandate exists.

One is the very nature of the faith to which the Gospel calls us. Many modern people, Christians included, treat faith as a kind of strange mystical way of knowing unconnected to reason or evidence. They treat it as a zero-sum game in which, the more reason and evidence you have for any given belief, the less of a role is left for faith to play. The New Testament, however, knows nothing of such ideas. For the New-Testament writers, faith is simply trust, and salvation is granted to people who put their personal trust in Christ as God’s messiah. “If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you shall be saved” (Rom. 10:9 NASB). In Greek the noun *faith* and the verb *I believe* are built on the same root: **πίστις** (*pistis*) and **πίστευω** (*pisteuo*). You could conceivably have that trust for good reasons or bad reasons or no reasons. It is better to have good reasons. Luke says that Jesus offered “many convincing proofs” of his resurrection (Acts 1:3 NASB), and early preachers like the Apostle Paul were constantly giving reasons and evidence to back up their message. So we could say that apologetics is based on a biblical precept (Peter’s command), biblical precedent (the example of the Apostles), and a biblical principle (that the Gospel is *truth* that should be addressed to the whole person, including the mind).

Lewis accepted this biblical perspective fully. This acceptance is shown by his teachings on the nature of truth,¹⁰ by his practice of apologetics, and by direct statement. “My faith is based on reason. . . . The battle is between faith and reason on one side and emotion and imagination on the other.”¹¹ The idea is not that emotion and imagination are inherently opposed to faith (one factor leading to Lewis’s conversion was the “baptism” of his imagination by George MacDonald), but that in fallen human beings they often are opposed to it. When reason appears to be opposed to faith, on the other hand, this opposition is illusory, because if the Gospel is true, then true reason must support it. We practice apologetics in our evangelism then because of the nature of the Gospel as truth and the nature of human beings as whole people who have minds as well as hearts that need to be reached.

The nature both of the Gospel and of human beings then makes apologetics a necessary part of our theology for every generation. The times in which we live can make the need even more pressing. Lewis lived in such times, and the needs he saw have not diminished since he saw them. A skeptical age will have its effects even on people raised in Christian homes. Lewis describes those effects graphically. He wrote to a Mrs. Lockley on 5 March 1951, that “Skeptical, incredulous, materialistic *ruts* have been deeply engraved in our thought.”¹² As a result, even committed Christians like Lewis have moments when Christian truth claims look implausible. What then will be the case for those without his apologetic defenses? In such an

¹⁰ See Donald T. Williams, “C. S. Lewis on Truth,” in *Reflections from Plato’s Cave: Essays in Evangelical Philosophy* (Lynchburg: Lantern Hollow Press, 2012), 103-28.

¹¹ C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (N.Y.: MacMillan, 1943), 122.

¹² C. S. Lewis, *The Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis*, 3 vols., ed. Walter Hooper (San Francisco: HaperSanFrancisco 2004), 3:393.

age, apologetics is essential equipment for believers wanting to preserve and strengthen their faith just as much as it is when they are proclaiming it to others.

The ruts have not only been dug; they are systematically reinforced. Lewis gives an accurate analysis of the spirit of the age:

As long as this deliberate refusal to understand things from above, even where such understanding is possible, continues, it is idle to talk of any final victory over materialism. The critique of every experience from below, the voluntary ignoring of meaning and concentration on fact, will always have the same plausibility. There will always be evidence, and every month fresh evidence, to show that religion is only psychological, justice only self-protection, politics only economics, love only lust, and thought itself only cerebral biochemistry.¹³

The mindset Lewis is describing here is called *reductionism*: Every aspect of reality is reduced to one other thing that is held to explain it exhaustively. For the Marxist, everything is really economics, for the Freudian everything is really just sex, etc. For the materialist everything is only atoms in motion, so in a materialist age various forms of reductionism will be the default setting for understanding any aspect of human experience. The reason you can always find real evidence that seems to support reductionism is that thought, for example, does involve cerebral biochemistry. If you only look at it “from below,” biochemistry is all you will see. But there has to be more to it than that, because if thought is reduced to brain chemistry then there is no reason to believe the thought that thought is only brain chemistry. A scientific age only accepts looking “from below” as valid looking. (Looking *from below* here would correspond to looking *at* as opposed to looking *along* in Lewis’s essay “Meditation in a Toolshed.”¹⁴) We are pounded by this mentality so consistently that it becomes one of the “ruts” Lewis spoke of. We have to make a special and concerted effort to counteract the prejudices that result from such habits of how we look at things in order to be reminded that it cannot be the whole story. Apologetics is how we make that effort.

Our age remains as skeptical as Lewis’s was, and to that challenge we have now added the ruts of pluralism and its offspring multiculturalism. Lewis’s ruts have been worn deeper and new ones have been added. Neither evangelism nor Christian nurture can be conducted effectively without help in navigating around, smoothing out, or bridging over those ruts. Therefore, Lewis’s advice is even more pertinent today than it was when he gave it:

To be ignorant and simple now—not to be able to meet the enemies on their own ground—would be to throw down our weapons, and to betray our uneducated brethren who have, under God, no defence but us against the intellectual attacks of the heathen. Good philosophy must exist, if for no other reason, because bad philosophy needs to be answered.¹⁵

Apologetic Method

¹³ C. S. Lewis, “Transposition,” sermon preached in the chapel of St. Mansfield College, Oxford, 28 May 194, in. *The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses*, ed. Walter Hooper (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1980): 114-115.

¹⁴ C. S. Lewis, “Meditation in a Toolshed,” in *God in the Dock*, ed. Walter Hooper. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970): 212-15.

¹⁵ C. S. Lewis, “Learning in Wartime,” sermon preached at St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford, 22 Oct. 1939, in *The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses*, ed. Walter Hooper (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1980), 58.

Modern Christian apologists tend to group roughly into three camps in terms of methodology: Classical, Evidentialist, and Presuppositionalist. Classical apologists argue first for the existence of God, and then turn to the evidence for the resurrection of Christ to identify who that God is and how He can be known. Evidentialists differ as to how valid the classical arguments (cosmological, teleological, moral, etc.) are but agree that they only point to an abstract God, not the God of the Bible, and so would prefer to cut to the chase and establish the historicity of the resurrection as pointing to Jesus being God incarnate. Presuppositionalists say we cannot argue *to* God, but only *from* God. In other words, our philosophical assumptions (presuppositions) determine how we are going to evaluate the evidence, and non-Christians' secular world view and rebellious hearts will not let them hear the evidence objectively and conclude that Christ is Lord. So we have to start by showing that all starting points save one (the existence of the God of the Bible) lead to contradiction. Only after we accept God as God do we have a basis for using reason to evaluate the evidence.

Increasingly people are coming to see these approaches as complementary and indeed mutually interdependent, rather than as alternative options. Unless you have reason to believe that a creator God exists, the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus only leads to the conclusion that something really weird might have happened. Unless you see the strength of the evidence for the resurrection, the God of the classical arguments remains only an abstract theory, not a personal savior. Analyzing the world view options and seeing the contradictions of secularism provides a context in which the evidence becomes meaningful. Presenting evidence alone surely does not lead to conversion, but presuppositionalism alone is susceptible to a charge of circularity—and no methodology is successful unless it is blessed and used by the Holy Spirit to bring about conviction and faith. And, despite the purists on all sides, the Spirit has managed to use all three approaches in that way.

C. S. Lewis was not a part of the conversation I've summarized in the last two paragraphs, and he does not discuss the advantages and disadvantages of those approaches. He is best understood as a classical apologist who sometimes argued in ways more typical of evidentialists and presuppositionalists. He was, in other words, an eclectic realist with some common sense. Purists in the three approaches will not find an ally in Lewis, but practical apologists will find much good advice in how to approach their task.

Lewis followed what Groothuis calls the “cumulative case approach.”¹⁶ Lewis uses many types of arguments: classical (the moral argument, the ontological argument¹⁷), evidential (the trilemma), presuppositional (the argument from reason), and existential (the argument from desire¹⁸). His case is not ultimately dependent on any one of them so much as on the fact that they all point to the same conclusion. He explains,

Authority, reason, experience; on these three, mixed in varying proportions, all our knowledge depends. The authority of many wise men in many different times and places forbids me to regard the spiritual world as an illusion. My reason, showing me the apparently insoluble difficulties of materialism and proving that the hypothesis of a

¹⁶ Douglas Groothuis, *Christian Apologetics: A Comprehensive Case for Biblical Faith* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2011), 59.

¹⁷ See Donald T. Williams, “Anselm and Aslan: C. S. Lewis and the ontological Argument,” *Touchstone: A Journal of Mere Christianity* 27:6 (Nov.-Dec. 2014), 36-39.

¹⁸ See Donald T. Williams, “The Argument from Desire Revisited,” *The Lamp-Post of the Southern California C. S. Lewis Society* 32:1 (Spring 2010), 32-33.

spiritual world covers far more of the facts with far fewer assumptions, forbids me again. My experience even of such feeble attempts as I have made to live the spiritual life does not lead to the results which the pursuit of an illusion ordinarily leads to, and therefore forbids me yet again.¹⁹

Authority, reason, experience: When they agree, one can proceed with a certain amount of confidence.

Practical Apologetics

There are then a number of arguments pointing to the truth of the Christian faith, some of them quite strong. But Lewis realized that having good arguments is not enough. We also need to influence the general climate of opinion. In a secular age, unexamined attitudes and ideas influence our minds in ways that do not affect the validity of the reasons we have always had for believing in God, but may have a powerful effect on their plausibility. For example, Ransom insists that “What we need for the moment is not so much a body of belief as a body of people familiarized with certain ideas. If we could even effect in one per cent of our readers a change-over from the conception of Space to the conception of Heaven, we should have made a beginning.”²⁰ Space is a vast unpopulated emptiness in which life is an anomaly; heaven is a vibrant matrix of being pulsating with life and light. How we imagine the world has an influence on how we think about it, the kinds of arguments we will be drawn to, and the kind of conclusions we will draw about it.

Lewis’s arguments were effective then partly because he knew that more than argument was needed. In Lewis’s apologetic they were supplemented by attempts to imagine what the world would look like if Christianity were true as well as arguments that were not directly about apologetic issues. Lewis wanted Christians to pursue intellectual excellence in general in order to create a situation in which people were not so unused to seeing things from the perspective of the Christian world view as they were already becoming in his generation. “What we want,” he said, “is not more little books about Christianity, but more little books by Christians on other subjects.”²¹ When the best available treatments of art, literature, politics, philosophy, ethics, science, etc. all speak as if Christianity were true (without directly mentioning it), then when the time comes to make the case for its truth directly, a receptive audience will have been created. We have much work left to do in this area.

Lewis was also an effective apologist because he was winsome and intelligent. One of my favorite passages is one in which he slyly turns the tables on the skeptics. As an atheist Lewis had had to believe that the great majority of the human race was wrong; “When I became a Christian,” he remarks, “I was able to take a more liberal view.”²² Here he steals a favorite buzz word, “liberal,” and a favorite stance, that of tolerant open-mindedness, from his opponents, and stands them on their heads to be used against them. Who is really open minded? Lewis makes his point, but he doesn’t rub it in; he makes it and moves on. We could learn a lot from him in manner as well as in message.

¹⁹ C. S. Lewis, “Religion: Reality or Substitute?” in *Christian Reflections*, ed. Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967), 41.

²⁰ C. S. Lewis, *Out of the Silent Planet* (NY: Simon & Schuster Inc., 1996), 154.

²¹ “Christian Apologetics,” op. cit., 93.

²² *Mere Christianity*, op. cit., 43.

Lewis had a unique gift for being able to express the most profound Christian ideas that apologetics needs to defend in language that normal human beings can understand. This was a gift, but it is also a skill that can be cultivated. Lewis wrote to John Beddow on 7 Oct. 1945, “It has always seemed to me odd that those who are sent to evangelise the Bantus begin by learning Bantu while the Church turns out annually curates to teach the English who simply don’t know the vernacular language of England.”²³ He also stressed that you do not really even understand a concept if you cannot translate it into the vernacular. He thought such translation ought to be a compulsory paper for every ordination examination.²⁴ It was good advice for the apologist as well as the pastor and the evangelist. Sadly today in Academia there is a prejudice to the effect that writing cannot be intellectual if it is intelligible. Lewis’s entire corpus gives the lie to that erroneous notion. It would be good if a host of theologians and apologists following his example could give the lie to it too.

Lewis was also careful not to claim too much. He gives multiple arguments to the best explanation and does not typically claim to have a slam-dunk proof. He wrote to Sheldon Vanauken on 23 Dec. 1950, “I do not think there is a *demonstrative* proof (like Euclid) of Christianity, nor of the existence of matter, nor of the good will & honesty of my best & oldest friends. I think all three are . . . far more probable than the alternatives.”²⁵ Not only does this approach relieve us of the burden of trying to prove more than we can, it is also consistent with the nature of the response we are looking for. As Lewis further explained, God does not give us a demonstrative proof because a response of mere intellectual assent is not what He is after. “Are *we* interested in it in personal matters? . . . The very fairy tales embody the truth. Othello believed in Desdemona’s innocence when it was proved; . . . Lear believed in Cordelia’s love when it was proved: but that was too late.”²⁶ Faith—personal trust—is not indifferent to evidence. But we do not value faith very highly when it is given only if there is no intellectual alternative, or when it wavers with every fluctuation in the ebb and flow of circumstances.

The Final Apologetic

Lewis would have agreed with Francis Schaeffer that “the final apologetic” is a life lived as if the Christian message were true.²⁷ Lewis noted, “If Christianity should happen to be true, then it is quite impossible that those who know this truth and those who don’t should be equally well equipped for leading a good life.”²⁸ Christians so equipped should indeed be leading a life that not only exhibits human thriving from the application of Christian truths but also a sacrificial commitment to showing the love of Christ to each other and to the world. Without this “final apologetic,” no argument will be compelling to people from whom we are asking not just intellectual assent but life commitment. And to some, it will be the only argument that can speak. As Lewis wrote to a Miss Gladding on 7 June 1945, “When a person . . . has lost faith

²³ *Collected Letters*, op. cit., 2:674.

²⁴ “Christian Apologetics,” op. cit., 98-99.

²⁵ *Collected Letters*, op. cit., 3:75.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Francis Schaeffer, *The God Who is There: Speaking Historic Christianity into the Twentieth Century* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1958, 152; cf. *The Mark of the Christian* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1970)..

²⁸ C. S. Lewis, “Man or Rabbit?” in *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*, ed. Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 109.

under so very great and bewildering a trial, no intellectual approach is likely to avail. But where people can resist and ignore arguments, they may be unable to resist *lives*.”²⁹

The final practical point is the realization that apologetics is a form of spiritual warfare, and not one without casualties. The best way to be one of those casualties is to ignore the danger. Lewis did not. He realized that “Nothing is more dangerous to one’s own faith than the work of the apologist. No doctrine of that faith seems to me so spectral, so unreal, as the one I have just successfully defended. . . . For a moment, you see, it has seemed to rest on oneself.”³⁰ Therefore it is indispensable that we have a serious reckoning with the fact that intellectual preparation is necessary but not enough. The apologist must be a person who walks with the Lord in such a way that he cannot forget on Whom things truly rest.

CONCLUSION

Why do we need apologetics? We live in a world filled with people who think like Trumpkin: “I have no use for magic lions which are talking lions and don’t talk, and friendly lions though they don’t do us any good, and whopping big lions though nobody can see them.”³¹ The only cure for that attitude was for Trumpkin actually to meet Aslan. Well, we are all of us constitutionally unbelieving Narnian dwarfs. “You see,” said Aslan. “They will not let us help them. They have chosen cunning instead of belief. Their prison is only in their own minds, yet they are in that prison; and are so afraid of being taken in that they cannot be taken out.”³²

Only the Holy Spirit can take us out of ourselves, out of those internal prisons, to the point that we can hear the evidence for Christ and respond to it with faith. But the Spirit wants us to be ready and able to present that evidence when He does so. Lewis’s friend Austin Farrer put it well: “Though argument does not create conviction, the lack of it destroys belief. What seems to be proved may not be embraced; but what no one shows the ability to defend is quickly abandoned. Rational argument does not create belief, but it maintains a climate in which belief can flourish.”³³

Lewis, in other words, well understood that the goal of apologetics is not just to win arguments. It must be what he allowed to Sherwood Eliot Wirt was the goal of all his writing: “to bring about an encounter of the reader with Jesus Christ,” the kind encounter Lewis described so well: “There comes a moment when people who have been dabbling in religion (‘Man’s search for God’) suddenly draw back. Supposing we really found him? We never meant it to come to that! Worse still, supposing he found us?”³⁴

The purpose of apologetics then is to help people channel the shock of that encounter into a serious consideration of the claims of Christ. It is to ensure that this encounter is with the Christ of history and not a counterfeit, that it is an encounter of the whole person with that Christ, and that the faith we hope these people will put in Him will be a rational and well-considered and well-grounded faith. It is to help believers whose faith is more fragmented and superficial grow into that rational, well-considered, and well-grounded faith themselves so that they may be preserved in it. It is to remind them in their inevitable moments of doubt that

²⁹ *Collected Letters*, op. cit., 2:659.

³⁰ “Christian Apologetics,” op. cit., 103).

³¹ C. S. Lewis, *Prince Caspian* (NY: HarperCollins, 1979), 156.

³² C. S. Lewis, *The Last Battle* (NY: HarperCollins, 1984), 185-6.

³³ Austin Farrer, “The Christian Apologist,” in *Light on C. S. Lewis*, ed. Jocelyn Gibb (NY: Harcourt, Brace, & World, 1965), 26.

³⁴ C. S. Lewis, *Miracles: A Preliminary Study* (N.Y.: MacMillan, 1947), 96-7.

faith is “the art of holding onto things your reason has once accepted, in spite of your changing moods.”³⁵

The goal is not just to win arguments. It matters little that we persuade people that theism is true in the abstract unless this enables them to meet God. Lewis reminds us, “We trust not because ‘a God’ exists, but because *this* God exists.”³⁶ We want to get people to the place where “What would, a moment before, have been variations in opinion, now become variations in your personal attitude to a Person. You are no longer faced [simply] with an argument which demands your assent, but with a Person who demands your confidence.”³⁷ For if indeed they can be brought to see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, they will be ready to say with Orual, “You are yourself the answer. Before your face questions die away.”³⁸

³⁵ *Mere Christianity*, op. cit., 123.

³⁶ C. S. Lewis, “On Obstinacy in Belief,” in *The World’s Last Night and other Essays* (N.Y.: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1960), 25.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 26.

³⁸ C. S. Lewis, *Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold* (Harcourt Brace & World, 1956; rpt. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968), 308.

WORKS CITED

- Bassham, Gregory, ed. *C. S. Lewis’s Apologetics: Pro and Con*. Leiden: Brill/Rodopi, 2015.
- Farrer. Austin. “The Christian Apologist.” *Light on C. S. Lewis*, ed. Jocelyn Gibb. NY: Harcourt, Brace, & World, 1965: 23-43.
- Groothuis, Douglas. *Christian Apologetics: A Comprehensive Case for Biblical Faith*. Downers Grove, Il.: Intervarsity Press, 2011.
- Lewis, C. S. “Christian Apologetics.” 1945. *God in the Dock*, ed. Walter Hooper. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970: 89-103.
- . *The Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis*, 3 vols., ed. Walter Hooper. San Francisco: HaperSanFrancisco 2004.
- . “Cross Examination.” Orig. printed as “I Was Decided Upon,” *Decision II* (Sept. 1963): 3 and “Heaven, Earth, and Outer Space,” *Decision II* (Oct. 1963): 4; rpt. *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*. Ed. Walter Hooper. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970: 258-67.
- . “God in the Dock.” As “Difficulties in Presenting the Faith to Modern Unbelievers,” *Lumen Vitae III* (Sept. 1948): 421-6; rpt. *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*. Ed. Walter Hooper. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970: 240-44.
- . *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*. Ed. Walter Hooper. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970.
- . *The Great Divorce*. N.Y.: MacMillan, 1946.
- . *The Last Battle*. 1955; NY: HarperCollins, 1984.
- . “Learning in Wartime.” Sermon preached at St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford, 22 Oct. 1939. *The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses*. Ed. Walter Hooper. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1980: 47-63.
- . *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. 1950; NY: HarperCollins, 1978.
- . “Man or Rabbit?” S.C.M., 1946; rpt. *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*. Ed. Walter Hooper. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970: 108-113.
- . “Meditation in a Toolshed.” *God in the Dock*, ed. Walter Hooper. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970: 212-15.

-
- . *Mere Christianity*. N.Y.: MacMillan, 1943.
- . *Miracles: A Preliminary Study*. N.Y.: MacMillan, 1947.
- . "On Obstinacy in Belief." *The Sewanee Review*, Autumn, 1955; rpt. *The World's Last Night and other Essays*. N.Y.: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1960: 13-30.
- . *Out of the Silent Planet*. NY: Simon & Schuster Inc., 1996.
- . *Prince Caspian*. 1951; NY: HarperCollins, 1979.
- . *The Problem of Pain*. N.Y.: MacMillan, 1967.
- . "Rejoinder to Dr. Pittenger." *The Christian Century* LXXV (26 Nov. 1958): 1359-61; rpt. *God in the Dock*, ed. Walter Hooper. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970: 177-83.
- . "Religion: Reality or Substitute?" *World Dominion* XIX (Sept.-Oct. 1941); rpt. *Christian Reflections*, ed. Walter Hooper. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967: 37-43.
- . *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of my Early Life*. N.Y.: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1955.
- . *Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold*. Harcourt Brace & World, 1956; rpt. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968.
- . "Transposition." Sermon preached in the chapel of St. Mansfield College, Oxford, 28 May 1944. *The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses*. Ed. Walter Hooper. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1980: 91-115.
- Mills, David, ed. *The Pilgrim's Guide: C. S. Lewis and the Art of Witness*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.
- Mitchell, Christopher W. "Bearing the Weight of Glory: The Cost of C. S. Lewis's Witness." In David Mills, ed., *The Pilgrim's Guide: C. S. Lewis and the Art of Witness*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998: 3-14.
- Schaeffer, Francis. *The God Who is There: Speaking Historic Christianity into the Twentieth Century*. Downers Grove, IL.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1958.
- . *The Mark of the Christian*. Downers Grove, IL.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1970.
- Williams, Donald T. "Anselm and Aslan: C. S. Lewis and the Ontological Argument." *Touchstone: A Journal of Mere Christianity* 27:6 (Nov.-Dec. 2014): 36-39.
- . "The Argument from Desire Revisited." *The Lamp-Post of the Southern California C. S. Lewis Society* 32:1 (Spring 2010): 32-33.
- . "G. K. Chesterton, *The Everlasting Man*." *C. S. Lewis's List: The Ten Books that Influenced Him Most*. Ed. David Werther and Susan Werther. N.Y.: Bloomsbury, 2015: 31-48.
- . "Identity Check: Are C. S. Lewis's Critics Right, or Is His 'Trilemma' Valid?" *Touchstone: a Journal of Mere Christianity* 23:3 (May-June 2010): 25-29.
- . "Lacking, Ludicrous, or Logical? The Validity of Lewis's 'Trilemma.'" *Midwestern Journal of Theology* 11:1 (Spring 2012): 91-102.
- . *Mere Humanity: G. K. Chesterton, C. S. Lewis, and J. R. R. Tolkien on the Human Condition*. Nashville: Broadman, 2006.
- . "Pro: A Defense of C. S. Lewis's 'Trilemma.'" Bassham, Gregory, ed. *C. S. Lewis's Apologetics: Pro and Con*. Leiden: Brill/Rodopi, 2015: 171-89.
- . *Reflections from Plato's Cave: Essays in Evangelical Philosophy*. Lynchburg: Lantern Hollow Press, 2012.
