

Overall thoughts on mere christianity: I really enjoyed the book a lot. There are a lot of neat ideas describing the apologetics or rational argument side of christianity amidst Lewis's background in the matter.

Book is divided into three "books":

1. Right and wrong as a clue to the meaning of the universe
2. What Christians believe
3. Christian Behavior
4. Beyond Personality: or first steps in the doctrine of the trinity

Some sticky note takeaways

pg. 20 Law of right or wrong not man-made that we find pressing on us although different to natural laws because not necessarily deterministic in outcome of behavior which is more nuanced (free will)

pg. 21 two views of universe: materialist (all matter not sure why it happened) and religious view (something behind to what has happened or exists in the world)

pg. 25 page about God being the director and then mentions next page about another hybrid view called creative evolution or emergent evolution

pg. 32 powerful ideas about religion not beginning or being amidst comfort and how comfort is "the one thing you cannot get by looking for it." "If you look for truth, you may find comfort in the end: if you look for comfort you will not get either comfort or truth - only soft soap and wishful thinking to begin with and, in the end, despair. Most of us have got over the pre-war wishful thinking of international politics. It is time we did the same about religion."

--- book 2 (what christians believe)

pg. 36 ideas about pantheism or that God is beyond the ideas of Good and evil (prussian philosopher Hegel). Idea kind of goes with that the universe is almost God and that if it did not exist he would not exist either and anything you find is part of God. Christian idea is that God composed the universe with a certain tune (but a painter is not a picture etc.). Pantheism fails to make the distinction between good and bad seriously lewis notes.

"Confronted with a cancer of a slum the Pantheist can say, 'If you could only see it from the divine point of view, you would realize this is also God.' The Christian replies, 'Don't talk damned nonsense.' For Christianity is a fighting religion. It thinks God made the world - that space and time, heat and cold, and all the colors and tastes, and all the animals and vegetables, are things that God made and that God insists, and insists very loudly, on our putting them right again."

pg. 39 Interesting idea about atheism. "If the whole universe has no meaning, we should never have found out that it has no meaning: just as, if there were no light in the universe and therefore no creatures with eyes, we should never have known it was dark. Dark would be a word without meaning."

pg. 42 Talks about dualism or the idea that there are two independent powers at the back of everything fighting an endless war (good v. bad). Lewis talks about the Lewis idea before about atheism here again in a subtle stance with context of sexual pervisions, sadism. Being aware of these even as a sadists shows we have had a guide and inclination of being right or wrong beforehand (this is making the point that the idea here is a bit more nuanced).

pg. 54 Talks about Lewis's background in the English Church with context of message of Christ and how it works (all agree that it works, but not necessarily how this actually works)

pg. 58 explores the God vs. Man dynamic which is a bit complicated idea in dealing with two separate entities mixing (when Christ became flesh). Lewis paints a picture about a man being rescued from a river (man who is on the bank of a river saves a man drowning in the river by reaching out hand). This is important to combat the idea of 'unfairness' how God used his son to save humans in the context of atonement (this is pretty fundamental).

pg 61. (baptism, belief, and mysterious action)

"But even the best Christian that ever lived is not acting on his own steam - he is only nourishing or protecting a life he could never have acquired by his own efforts. And that has practical consequences. As long as the natural life is in your body, it will do a lot towards repairing the body. Cut it, and up to a point it will heal as a dead body would not. A live body is not one that it never gets hurt, but one that can to some extent repair itself. In the same way a Christian is not a man who never goes wrong, but a man who is enabled to repent and pick himself up and begin over again after each stumble - because the Christ-life is inside him, repairing all the time and enabling him to repeat (in some degree) the kind of voluntary death which Christ Himself carried out." (this is **fundamental** in difference between someone who is just trying to be good to please God. "But the Christian thinks any good he does comes from the Christ-life inside him. He does not think God will love us because we are good, but that God will make us good because He loves us; just as the roof of a greenhouse does not attract the sun because it is bright, but becomes bright because the sun shines on it."

-- book three

pg 115. (previous chapter was about chastity and Lewis mentions that may have not actually been the most unpopular religious virtue) **Forgiveness is a lovely idea until, they have something to forgive, as we had during the war.** Talking about the idea of forgiveness in the context of the Gestapo + Jew (tough). 'Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.' How do we forgive the deepest sins against us? Lewis talks here about mathematics and how you start small. You work your way up in a building block sense as your math skills get better. I like this idea with regards to forgiveness. It is pretty tough to think about.

pg. 121 **Pride Divides** (Self-conceit another synonym) opposite to humility (a virtue in christianity). "Pride leads to every other vice: is it the complete anti-God state of mind."

pg. 129 Theological Virtues (Faith, Hope, and Charity)

Forgiveness is a subset of charity. There are layers in charity (giving alms and more etc.) Need to be aware of liking or affection for people or lack thereof being a bias in charitable action.

pg. 134 Direct focus on hope in context of hope. "Health is a great blessing, but the moment you make health one of your main, direct objects you start becoming a crank and imagining there is something wrong with you. You are only likely to get health provided you want other things more - food, games, work, fun, open air. In the same way we shall never save civilisation as long as civilisation is our main object. We must learn to want something else even more." Lewis also talks about the idea of wanting heaven as we are educated to fix our minds on this world.

pg. 135 (Fool's way , Disillusioned sensible man, and Christian way dealing with desires)

Fool's way - putting the blame on the things themselves that cannot suffice desire (ie only had another woman, went for a more expensive holiday, would have been able to catch something we are really all after)

Disillusioned 'Sensible Man' - giving up chasing the rainbows end and learning to settle down and to not expect much. Lewis notes this is a better stance to the first in being less of nuisance to society and making a man much happier. Although the idea kind of relates to the materialist view that all that exists is matter in this life (at least this is what I gather).

Christian Way - Notion of heaven with regard to our deepest longings (something external). "There is no need to be worried by facetious people who try to make the Christian hope of 'Heaven' ridiculous by saying they do not want to spend an eternity playing harps'. The answer to such people is 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 symbolical attempt to express the inexpressible. Musical instruments are mentioned because for many people (not all) music is the thing known in the present life which most strongly suggests ecstasy and infinity. Crowns are mentioned to suggest the fact that those who are united with God in eternity to share His splendour and power and joy. Gold is mentioned to suggest the timelessness of Heaven (gold does not rust) and the preciousness of it. 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."

pg. 141 Faith + training from previous page.

pg 142. temptation has meaning

pg. 146 Paul and revolutionary change

pg. 148 Faith and works dynamic

pg. 150 light and seeing beyond (reminding me of city of ember) Too busy looking at the source from which light comes and noting that this is near where the stage extends outside of our understanding and world (Prov. 3:5 is solid in this regard)

-- book 4

Book 4 is about the trinity. I didn't make notes on this portion as I am confused by some ideas in the trinity and need to get into the bible more about it. I think there is a lot to digest from many angles, so I encourage you if you read the book to supplement this with some outside thought and bible study.