

A close-up photograph of a lion's face, looking directly at the camera. The lion's eyes are a striking golden-brown color. The fur is a mix of light tan and brown. Numerous white snowflakes are falling around the lion's face, creating a wintry atmosphere. The background is dark and out of focus.

C.S. Lewis  
AND  
EVANGELICALS  
TODAY

David Cloud

*C.S. Lewis and Evangelicals Today*

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# Introduction

The late British author C.S. (Clive Staples) Lewis (1898-1963), who was known as Jack, is extremely popular with evangelicals today. In fact, he could be said to be the “godfather of modern evangelicalism.”

In fact, Lewis is loved with an equal fervor by “conservative evangelicals,” hell-denying emergents, Roman Catholics, Mormons, and even some Atheists, a fact that speaks volumes to those who have ears to hear.

Most Christian bookstores feature the writings of Lewis without a word of warning. Though Lewis died in 1963, sales of his books had risen to two million a year by 1977 and had increased another 125% since 2001, with no end in sight.

The December 2005 edition of *Christianity Today* was devoted to “C.S. Lewis Superstar.” In an article commemorating the 100th anniversary of Lewis’ birth, J.I. Packer called him “our patron saint” and said that Lewis “has come to be the Aquinas, the Augustine, and the Aesop of contemporary Evangelicalism” (“Still Surprised by Lewis,” *Christianity Today*, Sept. 7, 1998).

A *Christianity Today* reader’s poll that year rated Lewis the most influential evangelical writer. In light of the wretched spiritual-doctrinal-moral condition of “evangelicalism” today, that is a very telling statistic.

In its April 23, 2001, issue, *Christianity Today* again praised C.S. Lewis in an article titled “Myth Matters.” Lewis, called “the 20th century’s greatest Christian apologist,” wrote several mythical works, such as *The Chronicles of Narnia*, which *Christianity Today* recommends in the most glowing terms, claiming that “Christ came not to put an end to myth but to take all that is most essential in the myth up into himself and make it real.” I don’t know what to say to this except that it is complete nonsense. In his *Chronicles*, Lewis depicts Jesus Christ as a lion named Aslan who is slain on a

stone table. *Christianity Today* says, "In Aslan, Christ is made tangible, knowable, real." As if we can know Jesus Christ best through a fable that is vaguely and inaccurately based on biblical themes and intermingled with paganism.

Lewis is praised on all spectrums of evangelicalism and beyond. He is credited by John Piper as a father of his doctrine of "Christian Hedonism," and he is praised by Rob Bell in his hell-denying, universalistic book *Love Wins*. Under the Acknowledgements section Bell writes, "... to my parents, Rob and Helen, for suggesting when I was in high school that I read C.S. Lewis."

## Damnabale Heresies

“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnabale heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction” (2 Peter 2:1).

Even *Christianity Today* admits. “Clive Staples Lewis was anything but a classic evangelical, socially or theologically. He smoked cigarettes and a pipe, and he regularly visited pubs to drink beer with friends. Though he shared basic Christian beliefs with evangelicals, he didn’t subscribe to biblical inerrancy or penal substitution. He believed in purgatory and baptismal regeneration” (“C.S. Lewis Superstar,” *Christianity Today*, Dec. 2005).

THE INERRANT INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE is a fundamental of the faith, but Lewis denied it. In a letter to the editor of *Christianity Today*, Feb. 28, 1964, Dr. W. Wesley Shrader, First Baptist Church, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, warned that “C.S. Lewis ... would never embrace the (literal-infallible) view of the Bible” (*F.B.F. News Bulletin*, Fundamental Baptist Fellowship, March 4, 1984).

THE HISTORICITY OF THE BIBLE is a fundamental of the faith, but Lewis denied it. He believed that Jonah and Job were not historical books. In his article “Modern Theology and Biblical Criticism,” Lewis said: “.. Jonah, a tale with as few even pretended historical attachments as Job, grotesque in incident and surely not without a distinct, though of course edifying, vein of typically Jewish humor” (“Modern Theology and Biblical Criticism,” *Christian Reflections*, edited by Walter Hooper, Eerdmans).

THE NECESSITY OF SUPERNATURAL CONVERSION THROUGH REPENTANCE AND FAITH IN CHRIST is a fundamental of the faith, but there is no evidence that Lewis experienced this. I have read several of his books, dozens of

his articles, and several biographies about him, and I have never seen a clear teaching on the new birth or a clear biblical testimony that he was born again. Even *Christianity Today* said that Lewis believed in “baptismal regeneration.”

This should be cause for the deepest concern. Lewis’ autobiography *Surprised by Joy* presents a very confused testimony of salvation. Lewis definitely experienced a mystical conversion of some sort and he changed from Atheist to Christian, but that in itself is not biblical regeneration. This has happened to many others, including Malcolm Muggeridge, who at the end of the day was committed to a false sacramental gospel (Roman Catholicism), which Paul identified as cursed of God (Galatians 1).

In *The Great Divorce*, which is about salvation, heaven, and hell, Lewis does not mention the necessity of personal faith in Christ, the blood of Christ, or the new birth. It’s all about works and character.

The “PENAL SUBSTITUTIONARY ATONEMENT” is a fundamental of the faith, but Lewis denied it. The Bible plainly states that Christ shed His blood and died to satisfy the penalty of God’s holy Law. But Lewis claimed that it does not matter how one “defines” the atonement and said that it is not an essential part of Christianity. In *Mere Christianity* he made the following statement:

“You can say that Christ died for our sins. You may say that the Father has forgiven us because Christ has done for us what we ought to have done. You may say that we are washed in the blood of the Lamb. You may say that Christ has defeated death. They are all true. IF ANY OF THEM DO NOT APPEAL TO YOU, LEAVE IT ALONE AND GET ON WITH THE FORMULA THAT DOES. And, whatever you do, do not start quarrelling with other people because they use a different formula from yours.” (*Mere Christianity*, HarperSanFrancisco edition, 2001, p. 182)

This is rank heresy. Lewis wrongly claimed that it does not matter if a person believes that he is washed in Christ's blood, that this is a mere "formula" that can be accepted or rejected at one's pleasure. He said that it is just as well to believe that "the Father has forgiven us because Christ has done for us what we ought to have done." That is a bloodless salvation through Christ's life rather than through His Cross, which, according to the Bible is no salvation at all. The "blood" is mentioned more than 90 times in the New Testament, and that is no accident. "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). If Jesus had lived a perfect life in our place and died a bloodless death in our place, we would not be saved.

Lewis said:

"The central Christian belief is that Christ's death has somehow put us right with God and given us a fresh start. Theories as to how it did this are another matter. ... Any theories we build up as to how Christ's death did all of this are, in my view, quite secondary..." (*Mere Christianity*, Harper San Francisco edition, 2001, pp. 54, 55, 56).

This is unscriptural teaching. God has revealed exactly what Christ did and what the atonement means. It is not a matter of theorizing or believing one "formula" over against another. The Bible says our salvation is a matter of a propitiation, a ransom, whereby our sins were washed away by Christ's bloody death, which was offered as a payment to satisfy God's holy Law.

Lewis never mentions the doctrine of propitiation, but propitiation was a necessary part of our salvation and the propitiation was made by blood. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (Rom. 3:25). Propitiation means satisfaction; covering; the fulfillment of a demand. It refers to



God's estimation of Christ's sacrifice. God is fully satisfied by what Jesus Christ did on the Cross. The penalty for His broken law by man's sin has been fully satisfied (Rom. 3:24-25; 1 Jn. 2:2; Heb. 2:17; Isa. 5:11). The Greek word translated "propitiation" in Rom. 3:25 is also translated "mercy seat" in Heb. 9:5. The mercy seat perfectly covered the law which was contained in the Ark (Ex. 25:17, 21). This symbolizes propitiation--Christ covering the demands of God's law. That it is the blood of Christ which satisfied this demand and put away our sins was depicted on the Day of Atonement when blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat by the high priest (Lev. 16:11-17).

Through Christ's blood we have eternal redemption. "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb. 9:12).

Through Christ's blood we can enter into the presence of God. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus" (Heb. 10:19).

That we have eternal redemption and boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Christ is not a "theory" or a "formula"; it is the Word of God; it is the very heart of the Gospel; and if one does not receive it he cannot be saved.

D. Martin Lloyd-Jones warned that Lewis had a defective view of salvation and was an opponent of the substitutionary and penal view of the atonement (*Christianity Today*, Dec. 20, 1963).

SALVATION BY GRACE WITHOUT WORKS AND SACRAMENTS is a fundamental of the faith, but Lewis taught that the "Christ-life" is spread to men through baptism, belief, and the mass. He wrote:

"There are three things that spread the Christ-life to us: baptism, belief, and that mysterious action which different Christians call by different names--Holy Communion, the Mass, the Lord's Supper. ... I am not

saying anything about which of these things is the most essential. My Methodist friend would like me to say more about belief and less (in proportion) about the other two. But I am not going into that” (*Mere Christianity*, p. 61).

(Note that he includes the Catholic mass in his list of the various names by which holy communion are known, failing to acknowledge to his readers that the mass is an entirely different thing than the simple Lord’s Supper of the New Testament.)

It is not a Methodist we should listen to but the Bible itself, and the Bible says that salvation is by the grace of Christ alone through faith in Christ alone without works, that works are important but they follow after salvation and are the product of salvation rather than the means of it. The difference between saying that salvation is by faith without works and that works follow, and saying that salvation is by faith *with* works or faith *plus* works, is the difference between a true gospel and a false one. “Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” (Rom. 4:3-4). “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:8-10).

THE SOLE MEDIATORSHIP OF CHRIST is a fundamental of the faith, but Lewis denied it. He believed in prayers for the dead. In *Letters to Malcolm*, he wrote, “Of course I pray for the dead. The action is so spontaneous, so all but inevitable, that only the most compulsive theological case against it would deter men. And I hardly know how the rest of my prayers would survive if those for the dead were forbidden” (p. 109). Lewis confessed his sins regularly to a priest and was given the sacrament of last rites on July 16,

1963 (Roger Lancelyn Green and Walter Hooper, *C.S. Lewis: A Biography*, 1974, pp. 198, 301).

THE EXISTENCE OF HEAVEN AND HELL AND THE ABSENCE OF AN INTERMEDIATE STAGE is a fundamental of the faith, but Lewis denied it. He believed in purgatory. In *Letters to Malcolm*, he wrote:

“I believe in Purgatory. ... The right view returns magnificently in Newman’s *Dream*. There if I remember rightly, the saved soul, at the very foot of the throne, begs to be taken away and cleansed. It cannot bear for a moment longer ‘with its darkness to affront that light’. ... Our souls demand Purgatory, don’t they?” (pp. 110-111).

THE LITERAL SIX-DAY CREATION is a fundamental of the faith, taught from one end of the Bible to the other and placed at the very heart of the gospel (e.g., the literal fall of man), but Lewis denied it. He believed in theistic evolution, calling the Bible’s creation account a “Hebrew folk tale.”

“[T]hat man is physically descended from animals, I have no objection ... For centuries God perfected the animal form which was to become the vehicle of humanity and the image of Himself ... The creature may have existed for ages in this state before it became man ... [I]n the fullness of time, God caused to descend upon this organism ... a new kind of consciousness which could say ‘I’ and ‘me,’ ... which knew God ... [and] could make judgments of truth, beauty, and goodness” (Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*).

THE DOCTRINE OF AN ETERNAL, FIERY HELL is a fundamental of the faith, but Lewis denied it. He taught that hell is a state of mind:

“Hell is a state of mind--ye never said a truer word. And every state of mind, left to itself, every shutting up of the creature within the dungeon of its own mind--is, in the end, Hell” (Lewis, *The Great Divorce*, p. 65).

“If all Hell’s miseries together entered the consciousness of yon wee yellow bird on the bough there, they would be swallowed up without trace, as if one drop of ink had been dropped into that Great Ocean to which your terrestrial Pacific itself is only a molecule.”

THE DOCTRINE OF THE FINALITY OF ONE’S DESTINY AT DEATH is a fundamental of the faith, but Lewis taught a second chance and the possibility of repentance beyond this life. This is the theme of *The Great Divorce*.

“Is judgment not final? Is there really a way out of Hell into Heaven? ‘It depends on the way ye’re using the words. If they leave that grey town behind it will not have been Hell. To any that leaves it, it is Purgatory. And perhaps ye had better not call this country Heaven. Not Deep Heaven, ye understand” (*The Great Divorce*).

In this book Lewis taught that questions such as the finality of men’s destiny and purgatory and eternal destinies cannot be understood in this present life and we should not fret about them.

“Ye can know nothing of the end of all things, or nothing expressible in those terms. It may be, as the Lord said to the Lady Julian, that all will be well, and all will be well, and all manner of things will be well. But it’s ill talking of such questions. ‘Because they are too terrible, Sir?’ ‘No. Because all answers deceive” (*The Great Divorce*, Kindle location 140-150).

THE DOCTRINE OF MORAL PURITY AND THE INVIABILITY OF MARRIAGE is a fundamental of the faith (e.g., 1 Timothy 6:3-5; Titus 2:11-12), but Lewis ignored it.

He lived for 30 years with Janie Moore, a woman 25 years his senior to whom he was not married. The relationship with the married woman began when Lewis was still a student at Oxford. Moore was separated from her husband. Lewis confessed to his brother Arthur that he was in love

with Mrs. Moore, the mother of one of his friends who was killed in World War I. The relationship was definitely sexual in nature. See Alan Jacobs, *The Narnian: The Life and Imagination of C.S. Lewis*, pp. 82, 94.

At age 58, Lewis married Joy Gresham, an American woman who pursued a relationship with Lewis even while she was still married to another man. According to two of Lewis' friends, Gresham's husband divorced her on the grounds of desertion (Roger Lancelyn Green & Walter Hooper, *Light on C.S. Lewis*), and he, in turn, married Joy's cousin. Trading husbands and wives is not Christian godliness.

In the book *A Severe Mercy* by Sheldon VanAuken, a personal letter is reproduced on page 191 in which Lewis suggests to VanAuken that upon his next visit to England that the two of them "must have some good, long talks together and perhaps we shall both get high." We have no way to know exactly what this means, but we do know that Lewis drank beer, wine, and whiskey on a daily basis.

SALVATION EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH THE NAME OF CHRIST is a fundamental of the faith which Lewis denied.

Lewis never gave up his unholy fascination with paganism, and as the Bible warns, it had a corrupting influence (1 Corinthians 15:33). On a visit to Greece with his wife in 1960, Lewis made the following strange, heretical statement:

"I had some ado to prevent Joy (and myself) from lapsing into paganism in Attica! AT DAPHNI IT WAS HARD NOT TO PRAY TO APOLLO THE HEALER. BUT SOMEHOW ONE DIDN'T FEEL IT WOULD HAVE BEEN VERY WRONG--WOULD HAVE ONLY BEEN ADDRESSING CHRIST SUB SPECIE APOLLONIUS" (C.S. Lewis to Chad Walsh, May 23, 1960, cited from George Sayer, *Jack: A Life of C.S. Lewis*, 1994, p. 378).

What a blasphemous statement! Christ is not worshipped under the image of pagan gods. And we must remember that this was stated at the end of Lewis' life, long after his "conversion" to Christ.

Lewis elsewhere claimed that followers of pagan religions can be saved without personal faith in Jesus Christ:

"But the truth is God has not told us what His arrangements about the other people are. ... There are people who do not accept the full Christian doctrine about Christ but who are so strongly attracted by Him that they are His in a much deeper sense than they themselves understand. There are people in other religions who are being led by God's secret influence to concentrate on those parts of their religion which are in agreement with Christianity, and who thus belong to Christ without knowing it. For example a Buddhist of good will may be led to concentrate more and more on the Buddhist teaching about mercy and to leave in the background (though he might still say he believed) the Buddhist teaching on certain points. Many of the good Pagans long before Christ's birth may have been in this position" (C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, Harper SanFrancisco edition, 2001, pp. 64, 208, 209).

In the popular *Chronicles of Narnia* series, which has had a great influence on evangelicalism as a whole because of its popularity with children, Lewis taught that those who sincerely serve the devil (called Tash) are actually serving Christ (Aslan) and will eventually be accepted by God.

Consider the following excerpt from *The Last Battle*, chapter 15, "Further Up and Further In."

"Then I fell at his feet and thought, Surely this is the hour of death, for the Lion (who is worthy of all honour) will know that I have served Tash all my days and not him. Nevertheless, it is better to see the Lion and die than to be Tisroc of the world and live and not to have seen him. But the Glorious One bent down his

golden head and touched my forehead with his tongue and said, Son, thou art welcome. But I said, Alas, Lord, I am no son of thine but the servant of Tash. He answered, CHILD, ALL THE SERVICE THOU HAST DONE TO TASH, I ACCOUNT AS SERVICE DONE TO ME. Then by reason of my great desire for wisdom and understanding, I overcame my fear and questioned the Glorious One and said, Lord, is it then true, as the Ape said, that thou and Tash are one? The Lion growled so that the earth shook (but his wrath was not against me) and said, It is false. Not because he and I are one, but because we are opposites, I take to me the services which thou hast done to him. For I and he are of such different kinds that no service which is vile can be done to me, and none which is not vile can be done to him. Therefore if any man swear by Tash and keep his oath for the oath's sake, it is by me that he has truly sworn, though he know it not, and it is I who reward him. And if any man do a cruelty in my name, then, though he says the name Aslan, it is Tash whom he serves and by Tash his deed is accepted. Dost thou understand, Child? I said, Lord, thou knowest how much I understand. But I said also (for the truth constrained me), Yet I have been seeking Tash all my days. Beloved, said the Glorious One, unless thy desire had been for me thou shouldst not have sought so long and so truly. For all find what they truly seek.”

That is the heresy of salvation apart from faith in Christ, and a growing number of “evangelicals” hold to this false doctrine, believing that God will somehow receive unbelievers and followers of false religions even though they do not bow to the Lordship and sole Saviourhood of Jesus Christ through repentance and personal faith.

When I interviewed the head of the New Testament department at Serampore University (founded by William Carey in India) in the early 1980s, he told me the same thing. I asked him whether the Hindus will be accepted by God if they are sincere in their religion, and he replied, “Certainly.”

At the time, this was the premier theological institution in India, and it provided accreditation for other schools.

Well, the Bible says certainly not! Ephesians chapter two tells us the condition of every individual outside of regenerating faith in Jesus Christ. He is dead in trespasses and sins (v. 1), controlled by and living according to the working of the devil (v. 2), a child of disobedience (v. 2), dominated by the flesh (v. 3), by nature the child of wrath (v. 3), without Christ (v. 12), an alien and stranger from the covenant of God (v. 12), without hope (v. 12), WITHOUT GOD IN THE WORLD (v. 12), far off from God (v. 13).

The Bible gives absolutely no hope for those who die without personal faith in Christ.

The Lord Jesus Christ had already settled this matter before the penning of Ephesians. In His conversation with Nicodemus, Christ said categorically, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). Nicodemus was a very sincere and religious Jew, and if any category of person could have gone to heaven without being born again, it would have been people like him. Jesus Christ said that it will not happen. In that same conversation Jesus said, “He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not IS CONDEMNED ALREADY, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (John 3:18), and, “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John 3:36).

The Psalms had also settled the matter of who will be saved. It is not merely those who believe in and call upon God in a general sense; it is those who call upon the one and only Jehovah God IN TRUTH. “The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth” (Psa. 145:18).

C.S. Lewis was definitely some sort of universalist, and he has had a wide influence. Clark Pinnock, who denies eternal fiery hell, credits Lewis as a major influence.



"When I was a young believer in the 1950s, C.S. Lewis helped me understand the relationship between Christianity and other religions in an inclusivist way. Because I trusted him as an orthodox thinker, I was open to hear him say that he could detect God's presence among other faiths and that he believed people could be saved in other religions because God was at work among them. His view was wonderfully summed up for me in that incident in *The Last Battle*, the last volume of the Narnia cycle, where the pagan soldier Emeth learns to his surprise that Aslan [the lion which represents Jesus Christ] regards his worship of Tash as directed to himself. Anyone who appreciates that incident is on his or her way to inclusivist thinking" (Pinnock, *More Than One Way?* Zondervan, 1996, p. 107).

Elsewhere Pinnock says:

"Scripture encourages us to see the church not so much as the ark, outside of which there is no hope of salvation, but as the vanguard of those who have experienced the fullness of God's grace made available to all people in Jesus Christ. ... I welcome the Saiva Siddhanta literature of Hinduism, which celebrates a personal God of love, and the emphasis on grace that I see in the Japanese Shin-Shu Amida sect. I also respect the Buddha as a righteous man (Mat. 10:41) and Mohammed as a prophet figure in the style of the Old Testament" (*More Than One Way?* pp. 110-111)

Emerging leader Rob Bell, who denies the eternal fiery hell and believes that atheists can be saved without faith in Christ, credits C.S. Lewis as a major influence in his book *Love Wins*. In the Acknowledgements Bell writes, "... to my parents, Rob and Helen, for suggesting when I was in high school that I read C.S. Lewis."

This is very ungodly, very heretical fruit.

# Why Is Lewis So Popular?

In light of his lack of clear scriptural salvation testimony, his heresies, his worldliness, and the massive pagan influences in his work, why are evangelicals today so enamored with C.S. Lewis? I believe the following are some of the chief reasons:

## Pride of Intellect

New Evangelicals love C.S. Lewis because they are characterized by a pride of intellect and Lewis was definitely an Intellectual.

He had almost a photographic memory and had a triple first at Oxford in Philosophy, Classics, and English. He was one of the greatest experts of that day in English literature and occupied the first Chair in Medieval and Renaissance Literature at Cambridge University. Since New Evangelicals almost worship intellectualism (a spirit that the late David Otis Fuller called “scholarolatry”), it is no surprise that they would look upon the famous intellectual C.S. Lewis as a patron saint.

## Ecumenism

New Evangelicals love C.S. Lewis because of his ecumenical thinking and his refusal to practice separation.

This has been admitted by *Christianity Today*. “Lewis’ ... concentration on the main doctrines of the church coincided with evangelicals’ concern to avoid ecclesiastical separatism” (*Christianity Today*, Oct. 25, 1993). *CT* therefore admits that C.S. Lewis is popular to Evangelicals today because, like them, he despised biblical separation.

C.S. Lewis was, in fact, very ecumenical. The following is an overview of his ecumenical philosophy and his influence on the present-day ecumenical movement:

“Lewis was firmly ecumenical, though he distanced himself from outright liberalism. In his preface to *Mere Christianity*, Lewis states that his aim is to present ‘an agreed, or common, or central or mere Christianity.’ So he aims to concentrate on the doctrines that he believes are common to all forms of Christianity--including Roman Catholicism. It is no surprise that he submitted parts of the book to four clergymen for criticism--an Anglican, a Methodist, a Presbyterian, and a Roman Catholic! He hopes that the book will make it clear why all Christians ‘ought to be reunited,’ but warns that it should not be seen as an alternative to the creeds of existing denominations. He likens the ‘mere Christianity’ that he describes in the book to a hall from which various rooms lead off. These rooms are the various Christian traditions. And just as when you enter a house you do not stay in the hall but enter a room, so when you become a Christian you should join a particular Christian tradition. Lewis believes that it is not too important which room you enter. It will be right for some to enter the door marked ‘Roman Catholicism’ as it will for others to enter other doors. Whichever room you enter, says Lewis, the important thing is that you be convinced that it is the right one for you. And, he says, ‘When you have reached your own room, be kind to those who have chosen different doors.’

“Mention should also be made of Lewis’ views of the sacraments. The sacraments ‘spread the Christ life to us’ (*Mere Christianity*, book 2, chapter 5). In his *Letters to Malcolm* Lewis states that he does not want to ‘unsettle in the mind of any Christian, whatever his denomination, the concepts--for him traditional--by which he finds it profitable to represent to himself what is happening when he receives the bread and wine’ of the Lord’s Supper. What happens in the Lord’s Supper is a mystery, and so the Roman Catholic conception of the bread and wine becoming the actual body and blood of Christ might be just as valid as the Protestant view of

the Lord's Supper as a memorial (*Letters to Malcolm*, chapter 19). ...

“This enigma of C.S. Lewis was no more than a slight bemusement to me until recently three things changed my bemusement into bewilderment.

“In March 1994 the Evangelicals and Catholics Together movement produced its first document. This was a programmatic document entitled *Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium*. It was rightly said at the time that this document represented ‘a betrayal of the Reformation.’ I saw no connection between this and C.S. Lewis until a couple of years later when the symposium *Evangelicals and Catholics Together: Working Towards a Common Mission* was published. In his contribution to the book, Charles Colson--the Evangelical ‘prime mover’ behind ECT--tells us that C.S. Lewis was a major influence which led him to form the movement (Billy Graham was another!). In fact Colson says that *Evangelicals and Catholics Together* seeks to continue the legacy of C.S. Lewis by focusing on the core beliefs of all true Christians (*Common Mission*, p. 36). The enigma took on a more foreboding aspect.

“The enigma darkened further when just last year (after becoming connected to the Internet at the end of 1996) I discovered, quite by accident, that C.S. Lewis is just as popular amongst Roman Catholics as he is amongst Evangelicals. Perhaps I should have known this already, but it had never struck me before.

“The third shock came last autumn when I read that *Christianity Today*--reputed to be the leading evangelical magazine in the USA--had conducted a poll amongst its readers to discover whom they considered the most influential theological writers of the twentieth century. You will have already guessed that C.S. Lewis came out on top!

“After these three things it came as no surprise to me this year to find that C.S. Lewis has exerted a major influence on the Alpha course, and that it quotes or refers to him almost *ad nauseum*. Could not the Alpha course be renamed the ‘Mere Christianity’ course? ...

“In conclusion, I offer the following reflection. If it is true to say that ‘you are what you eat,’ then it is also true to say that ‘a Christian is what he hears and reads’ since this is how he gets his spiritual food. Thus if Christians are brought up on a diet of C.S. Lewis, it should not surprise us to find they are seeking ‘to continue the legacy of C.S. Lewis.’ The apostle Paul said, ‘A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump’ (Gal. 5:9--the whole passage is relevant to the present context); thus IF EVANGELICALS READ AND APPLAUD SUCH BOOKS AS MERE CHRISTIANITY IT SHOULD COME AS NO SURPRISE IF WE FIND THEM ‘WORKING TOWARDS A COMMON MISSION’ WITH THE ENEMIES OF THE GOSPEL. THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN SHOULD BE VERY CAREFUL WHAT HE READS, AND THOSE IN POSITIONS OF AUTHORITY (PASTORS, TEACHERS, PARENTS) SHOULD BE VERY CAREFUL WHAT THEY RECOMMEND OTHERS TO READ” (Dr. Tony Baxter, “The Enigma of C.S. Lewis,” *CRN Journal*, Winter 1998, Christian Research Network, Colchester, United Kingdom, p. 30; Baxter works for the Protestant Truth Society as a Wycliffe Preacher).

In April 1998, Mormon professor Robert Millet spoke at Wheaton College on the topic of C.S. Lewis. In a recent issue of *Christianity Today*, Millet, dean of Brigham Young University, is quoted as saying that C.S. Lewis “is so well received by Latter-day Saints [Mormons] because of his broad and inclusive vision of Christianity” (John W. Kennedy, “Southern Baptists Take Up the Mormon Challenge,” *Christianity Today*, June 15, 1998, p. 30).

## Sympathy with Rome

New Evangelicals love C.S. Lewis because of their shared fascination for and sympathy with Rome.

Today's evangelicals have given us "Evangelicals and Rome Together" and even those who do not go that far usually speak of Rome's errors in soft, congenial terms rather than labeling it the blasphemous, antichrist institution that it is and that Protestants and Baptists of old plainly called it. As we have seen, C.S. Lewis considered the Roman Catholic Church one of the acceptable "rooms" in the house of Christianity and longed for unity between Protestantism and Romanism. Lewis believed in prayers to the dead and purgatory.

Some of Lewis' closest friends were Roman Catholics. J.R. Tolkien of *Lord of the Rings* fame is one example. Tolkien and Lewis were very close and spent countless hours together. Lewis even credited Tolkien with having a large role in his "conversion." Lewis was also heavily influenced by the Roman Catholic writer G.K. Chesterton. When asked what Christian writers had helped him, Lewis remarked in 1963, six months before he died, "The contemporary book that has helped me the most is Chesterton's *The Everlasting Man*" (*God in the Dock*, edited by Walter Hooper, 1970, p. 260).

Lewis carried on a warm correspondence in Latin with Catholic priest Don Giovanni Calabria of Italy over their shared "concern for the reunification of the Christian churches" (*The Narnian*, Alan Jacobs, pp. 249, 250). Calabria was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1988.

In 1943, Lewis gave a talk on "Christian Apologetics" for a group of priests in Wales (*The Narnian*, p. 229).

From the 1940s to the end of his life, Lewis' spiritual advisor was a Catholic priest named Walter Adams (*The Narnian*, p. 224). It was to this priest that Lewis confessed his sins.

Roman Catholics love C.S. Lewis as much as evangelicals do. His books are typically found in Catholic bookstores. Michael Coren, a Roman Catholic, wrote a biography of Lewis entitled “C.S. Lewis: The Man Who Created Narnia.” The Catholic news agency Zenit asked Coren, “What do Catholics need to know about C.S. Lewis?” He replied:

“They should know he wasn’t a Catholic, but that doesn’t mean he wouldn’t have become one eventually. G. K. Chesterton became a Catholic in 1922 but had really been one for 20 years. ... Lewis was born in Belfast, in sectarian Northern Ireland, so he was raised anti-Catholic like most Protestant children there. He was a man of his background but HIS VIEWS WERE VERY CATHOLIC: HE BELIEVED IN PURGATORY, BELIEVED IN THE SACRAMENTS, WENT TO CONFESSION” (“The Subtle Magic of C.S. Lewis’ Narnia: Michael Coren’s Perspective as the New Movie Looms,” Zenit, Dec. 7, 2005).

Peter Kreeft, a convert to Rome from the Dutch Reformed denomination, says C.S. Lewis was one of the “many strands of the rope that hauled me aboard the ark”:

“Even C. S. Lewis, the darling of Protestant Evangelicals, ‘smelled’ Catholic most of the time. ... Lewis is the only author I ever have read whom I thought I could completely trust and completely understand. But he believed in Purgatory, the Real Presence in the Eucharist, and not Total Depravity. He was no Calvinist. In fact, he was a medieval” (“Hauled Aboard the Ark,” <http://www.peterkreeft.com/topics/hauled-aboard.htm>).

Kreeft is right. Evangelicalism’s love affair with C.S. Lewis is evidence of its deep spiritual compromise and lack of sound doctrinal discernment.

In fact, even Mormons love Lewis. In April 1998, Mormon Robert Millet spoke at Wheaton College on the topic of C.S. Lewis. In *Christianity Today*, Millet, dean of Brigham Young University, is quoted as saying that C.S. Lewis “is so well

received by Latter-day Saints [Mormons] because of his broad and inclusive vision of Christianity” (John W. Kennedy, “Southern Baptists Take Up the Mormon Challenge,” *Christianity Today*, June 15, 1998, p. 30)

“Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?” (1 Cor. 5:6).

“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Cor. 15:33).

“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away” (2 Tim. 3:5).

“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Rom. 16:17).



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practical in its teaching, as it also depicts believer priests carrying Christ through this world (1 Pet. 2:5, 9). Like the Israelites in the wilderness, believers today are on a pilgrimage through a foreign land on the way to our eternal home (1 Pet. 2:11). 405 pages, \$19.95.

**BIBLE TIMES AND ANCIENT KINGDOMS: TREASURES FROM ARCHAEOLOGY.** ISBN 978-1-58318-121-8. This is a

package consisting of a book and a series of PowerPoint and Keynote (Apple) presentations which are a graphical edition of the book. The PowerPoints are packed with high quality color photos, drawings, historic recreations, and video clips. Bible Times and Ancient Kingdoms is a course on Bible geography, Bible culture, and Bible history and has a two-fold objective: to present apologetic evidence for the Bible and to give background material to help the student better understand the setting of Bible history. We cover this fascinating history from Genesis to the New Testament, dealing with the Table of the Nations in Genesis 10, the Tower of Babel, Ur of the Chaldees, Egypt, Baal worship, the Philistines, the Canaanites, David's palace, Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, Ahab and Jezebel, the fall of the northern kingdom of Israel, the Assyrian Empire, Hezekiah and his times, Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylon, the Medo-Persian Empire, Herod the Great and his temple, the Roman rule over Israel, and the Roman destruction of Jerusalem. Many of the archaeological discoveries from the past 200 years, which we relate in the course, are so fascinating and improbable that they read like a novel. It is easy to see God's hand in this field, in spite of its prevailing skepticism. The course also deals with Bible culture, such as weights and measures, plant and animal life, Caesar's coin, the widow's mite, ancient scrolls and seals, phylacteries, cosmetics, tombs, and the operation of ancient lamps, millstones, pottery wheels, and olive presses. The course begins with an overview of Israel's geography and a timeline of Bible history to give the student a framework for better understanding the material. Each section includes maps to help the student place the events in their proper location. The course is packed with important but little-known facts that illuminate Bible history and culture. The preparation for the book is extensive, the culmination of 40 years of Bible study,

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**INDEPENDENT BAPTIST MUSIC WARS.** This book is a warning about the transformational power of Contemporary Christian Music to transport Bible-believing Baptists into the sphere of the end-time one-world "church." The author is a musician, preacher, and writer who lived the rock & roll "hippy" lifestyle before

conversion and has researched this issue for 40 years. We don't believe that good Christian music stopped being written when Fanny Crosby died or that rhythm is wrong or that drums and guitars are inherently evil. We believe, rather, that Contemporary Christian Music is a powerful bridge to a very dangerous spiritual and doctrinal world. The book begins by documenting the radical change in thinking that has occurred among independent Baptists. Whereas just a few years ago the overwhelming consensus was that CCM is wrong and dangerous, the consensus now has formed around the position that CCM can be used in moderation, that it is OK to "adapt" it to a more traditional sacred sound and presentation technique. The more "conservative" contemporary worship artists such as the Gettys are considered safe and their music is sung widely in churches and included in new hymnals published by independent Baptists. As usual, the driving force behind this change is the example set by prominent leaders, churches, and schools, which we identify in this volume. The heart of the book is the section giving eight reasons for rejecting Contemporary Christian Music (it is built on the lie that music is neutral, it is worldly, it is ecumenical, it is charismatic, it is experienced-oriented, it is permeated with false christs, it is infiltrated with homosexuality, and it weakens the Biblicist stance of a church) and the section answering 39 major arguments that are used in defense of CCM. We deal with the popular argument that since we have selectively used hymns by Protestants we should also be able to selectively use those by contemporary hymn writers. There are also chapters on the history of CCM and the author's experience of living the rock & roll lifestyle before conversion and how the Lord dealt with him about music in the early months of his Christian life. The book is accompanied by a DVD containing two video presentations: The Transformational Power of Contemporary Praise Music and The Foreign Spirit of Contemporary Worship Music. 285 pages. \$14.95

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**AN UNSHAKEABLE FAITH: A CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS COURSE**, ISBN 978-1-58318-119-5. (new title for 2011) The

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