



Reflections

August 2013 - *What if the best work was always done by a Christian?*

C. S. Lewis, while not perfect, was a sincere follower of Jesus who tried to practice what he preached. In an address to church leaders and clergy entitled, “Christian Apologetics,” Lewis exhorts Christians to influence the world around them by striving for excellence, truthfulness and integrity in their work. Lewis lived this out as a scholar by writing what is still considered today to be the authoritative text on 16th century English literature with the creative title, *English Literature in the 16th Century Excluding Drama*. Not a popular book, but the best in its field. He writes,

While we are on the subject of science, let me digress for a moment. I believe that any Christian who is qualified to write a good popular book on any science may do much more by that than by any directly apologetic work. The difficulty we are up against is this. We can make people (often) attend to the Christian point of view for half an hour or so; but the moment they have gone away from our lecture or laid down our article, they are plunged back into a world where the opposite position is taken for granted. As long as that situation exists, widespread success is simply impossible. We must attack the enemy’s line of communication. What we want is not more little books about Christianity, but more little books by Christians on other subjects—with their Christianity latent. You can see this most easily if you look at it the other way round. Our Faith is not very likely to be shaken by any book on Hinduism. But if whenever we read an elementary book on Geology, Botany, Politics, or Astronomy, we found that its implications were Hindu, that would shake us. It is not the books written in direct defence of Materialism that make the modern man a materialist; it is the materialistic assumptions in all the other books. In the same way, it is not books on Christianity that will really trouble him. But he would be troubled if, whenever he wanted a cheap popular introduction to some science, the best work on the market was always by a Christian. The first step to the re-conversion of this country is a series, produced by Christians, which can beat the *Penguin* and the *Thinkers Library* on their own ground. Its Christianity would have to be latent, not explicit: and of course its science perfectly honest. Science *twisted* in the interests of apologetics would be sin and folly.



What if it were known that the best work in any given field whether it be education, law, business, military, government, sanitation disposal, politics, etc... was always done by a Christian? Would that contribute to the defense of the Christian faith? Would that attract others to looking into what it means to follow Jesus?

“Do you see a man skillful in his work? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before obscure men.”

Proverbs 22:29 (ESV)

¹ C. S. Lewis. *God in the Dock: “Christian Apologetics.”* Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 1998, p. 93.