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Reflections

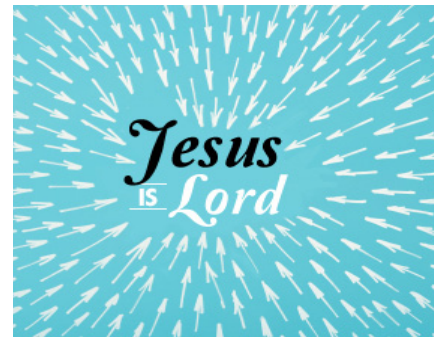
December 2013 - *Christianity Makes Sense of the World*

“*I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen not only because I see it but because by it I see everything else.*”

This famous quote by C.S. Lewis comes from a paper given to The Oxford Socratic Club entitled, *Is Theology Poetry?* Lewis sets out to answer the question, “Is the imagination of followers of Jesus so aroused and satisfied by the poetry of the Gospel message that they have mistaken intellectual assent for mere aesthetic enjoyment? In other words, has the romantic attraction of the story of Jesus trumped the place of reason in coming to faith?”

Lewis writes,

I was taught at school, when I had done a sum, to “prove my answer”. The proof or verification of my Christian answer to the cosmic sum is this. When I accept Theology I may find difficulties, at this point or that, in harmonizing it with some particular truths which are imbedded in the mythical cosmology derived from science. But I can get in, or allow for, science as a whole. Granted that Reason is prior to matter and that the light of the primal Reason illuminates finite minds, I can understand how men should come by observation and inference, to know a lot about the universe they live in. If, on the other hand, I swallow the scientific cosmology as a whole, then not only can I not fit in Christianity, but I cannot even fit in science. If minds are wholly dependent on brains, and brains on bio-chemistry, and bio-chemistry (in the long run) on the meaningless flux of the atoms, I cannot understand how the thought of those minds should have any more significance than the sound of the wind in the trees. And this is to me the final test. This is how I distinguish dreaming and waking. When I am awake I can, in some degree, account for and study my dream. The dragon that pursued me last night can be fitted into my waking world. I know that there are such things as dreams: I know that I had eaten an indigestible dinner: I know that a man of my reading might be expected to dream of dragons. But while in the night mare I could not have fitted in my waking experience. The waking world is judged more real because it can thus contain the dreaming world: the dreaming world is judged less real because it cannot contain the waking one. For the same reason I am certain that in passing from the scientific point of view to the theological, I have passed from dream to waking. Christian theology can fit in science, art, morality, and the sub-Christian religions. The scientific point of view cannot fit in any of these things, not even science itself. I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen not only because I see it but because by it I see everything else.



This Christmas season, know that while the Nativity story of the birth of Christ is poetic, beautiful and powerful, that it is also true and took place in the midst of real time and history. Once we come to know Jesus as the actual Lord and Savior of this world, then everything else begins to make more sense.

*“Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?”
Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”
John 6:28-29 (NIV)*

¹ C.S. Lewis, “They Asked For A Paper,” in *Is Theology Poetry?* (London: Geoffrey Bless, 1962), 164-165.