The Surprising Imagination of C.S. Lewis

By Mark Neal

Author and Speaker

C. S. Lewis possessed a fascinating perception of the imagination. Because it was a world he inhabited so frequently, his understanding of it was not limited to a single definition but was distinguished as finely graded parts of a whole. This enabled him to wield one of his greatest powers as an author: using imaginative depiction to enable readers to see a particular thing or truth more clearly. This nuanced understanding has important implications not only for deepening our understanding of Lewis, but for how we use or abuse our own imaginations in matters of life and faith.

In his autobiography, *Surprised by Joy*, Lewis outlines three distinctions of the imagination. First, he describes wish fulfillment, which he also calls reverie or daydream. This is often an unhealthy use of the imagination; it is self-referential and positions the self as the center of the universe and hero of the story. We can easily relate to this. Our daydreams of wealth, power, sex, heroism, and fame are rooted squarely in this type of imaginative fantasy. If we’re honest, we employ this function of the imagination on a daily basis, often without awareness.

The second distinction is invention, at which Lewis was so proficient—the power of depiction, of clarifying one’s vision. It enables us to see the world as it is, not as we wish it to be. The benefit here is an enlargement of our being, of seeing the truth of something more deeply through a skillfully composed image or a well-told story.

The third distinction of imagination describes the perception of realities beyond us. This includes experiences of what Lewis calls joy. He writes that of the three categories of imagination, this is the highest, even the only, distinction that truly matters. This joy is concomitant with *sehnsucht*, a deeply emotional German word denoting an ardent and unfilled longing. The end of this imaginative joy is to orient our longings toward a true object, One who will fulfill these longings at the appointed time.

Although Lewis writes extensively about his experiences of joy—the highest attainment of the imagination—his power as a writer is centered in the second distinction of imagination: depiction. For readers this ability to craft images and story contributes to an enhanced clarity and understanding of the world. Lewis writes elsewhere that “reason is the natural organ of truth; but imagination is the organ of meaning.” Stories and imaginative depictions bring truths to life out of the dry-as-dust regions in which reason often strands us. This does not mean we should denigrate the truths of reason; rather, we should recognize that the imagination gives us an additional bearing on reality.

However, the imagination as truth-bearer is often misunderstood. We relegate its function and primary use to that of childhood or to the strictly imaginary (which we might equate with falsity), thereby debasing it of any meaning or significance. We rarely understand that our imaginations are a vital source of meaning. The American poet and author Wendell Berry corrects this misapprehension:

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When I got the phone call at work, I immediately knew from my aunt’s voice that something tragic had occurred. She said, “Kenny fell over dead in a theology class at Moody Bible Institute about an hour ago.” There was silence on the phone for a few seconds as we both took in the words that had just been spoken. We then talked briefly. After we hung up I could only utter a short repetitive prayer, “Oh, Dear Jesus, Sweet Jesus.” The following day, the coroner reported a brain aneurysm as the likely cause of death.

Kenny’s love for the Lord was infectious. He was playful, yet earnest. He enjoyed deep theological discussions and card tricks. He liked to read, especially the Bible and the writings of C.S. Lewis. Kenny had matured in recent years and at 25, after much prayer and the input of others, was pursuing his calling to be a pastor. He had just taken a part-time job as a worship leader at a local church, was studying at Moody Bible Institute, working at Panera, and discipling younger believers in the faith.

Some may ask the question, “Why? Why would the Lord suddenly take a young, vibrant, joyful follower of Jesus to heaven?” I don’t have a specific answer to that question, only God knows. Enoch did cross my mind as an example from Genesis 5 as someone who walked with God and was suddenly taken. I do, however, have a partial answer to the question that came to light as nearly a thousand people packed out the church to celebrate Kenny’s life at the memorial service. In the words of the apostle Paul, “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21).

While there were many tears shed (and there will be many more to come) over the loss of Kenny on this earth, a real, tangible Hope was present at the memorial service. C.S. Lewis wrote in Mere Christianity,

> Hope is one of the Theological virtues. This means that a continual looking forward to the eternal world is not (as some modern people think) a form of escapism or wishful thinking, but one of the things a Christian is meant to do. It does not mean that we are to leave the present world as it is. If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next… Aim at Heaven and you will get earth “thrown in”: aim at earth and you will get neither.

Kenny was aiming for Heaven and everyone knew it. His words and actions pointed to Jesus. His sudden death was a wake up call to many. As my cousin put it so well at the service, we are in one of three positions: Asleep in the Light (not living in the fullness of the Spirit); Walking in the Light (daily seeking to live a Spirit-filled life); or Asleep in the Dark (desperately in need of Jesus).

We are all only one heartbeat away from our eternal destiny. Are you aiming at Heaven?
How Will They Know? They Will Know Them by Their Love

by Art Lindsley, Ph.D.

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Editor’s Note: This article was originally published in the Spring 2007 issue of Knowing & Doing. All scripture references are from the New American Standard Bible.

One time, on a train ride from Vienna, Austria, to Budapest, Hungary, my wife and I were sitting in a car with four others. Two were atheists, and the other two had at least some connection in their background to the church. As we talked, my wife found out that one was a believer who was related to a prominent leader in the Christian community who faced many difficult struggles. This led to the subject of the difficulty of relationships and the unique way Christ calls us to forgive and to love. One of the atheists, a young man, shared his desire for a loving marriage and family and asked, “Can’t atheists love and forgive?” I responded, “Yes, of course atheists can love and forgive but not because of their atheism.” There ensued a lengthy discussion that went along these lines: in the atheist perspective all is matter. There is no God, no solid basis for moral values (other than my own individual and community preference), and no source for the other-centered (“agape”) love that Christ embodies and teaches his followers to practice.

Atheism leads inevitably to a grim meaningless universe. It encourages autonomy rather than love. Atheist Bertrand Russell held that as a result of his denial of God’s existence, we need to build our lives on the basis of “unyielding despair.” Fellow atheist and existential philosopher Albert Camus said that the only really serious question is whether or not to commit suicide. Fyodor Dostoyevsky has one of his characters argue that if there is no God, everything is permitted. Another atheist, Jean Paul Sartre, said that no finite point had any meaning without an infinite reference point. He believed that there is no infinite reference point; therefore, life is meaningless. He said, whether you choose to help an old lady across the street or beat her on the head, just be authentic. Where in atheism is there a basis or motive for love and forgiveness? If anything, atheism seems to undermine love and forgiveness. Certainly, atheists often love their spouses, children, and others, but not because this is encouraged by or a necessary consequence of their atheism.

Throughout the conversation on the train, the young man followed each point and admitted that he had never thought about this before. I went on to point out that love is at the core of Jesus’ message. We live in a universe where personality is valued (not just impersonal matter). God is personal, in fact tri-personal—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Personality is at the core of the cosmos. The members of the Trinity are in an eternal relationship of love. So love and relationship are also at the center of reality. God has made us in His image. We are given worth, value, and dignity that can never be taken away from us. Furthermore, we are made in the likeness of God to express our God-given personalities, engage in relationships, and love God and other people.

Jesus places love at the very center in His summation of the Old Testament law. When asked which is the greatest commandment, Jesus replies, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind” (Matthew 22:37). Then He quickly adds, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:39). On another occasion, Jesus gives an additional exhortation, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another” (John 13:34). He goes on

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In this article, I turn to St. Mark’s Church in East Belfast, significant in the life of the Lewis family and their more distant relatives, the Ewart and Hamilton families. C.S. Lewis’s grandfather, the Rev. Thomas R. Hamilton, was rector from 1878 (when the church was built) until his retirement in 1900. This church records their names at every corner on numerous plaques, the lectern, and the stained glass. It was here that C.S. (or “Jack”) Lewis was christened as an infant and confirmed (even if in disbelief) in his teenage years.

St. Mark’s Parish Church

St. Mark’s, Dundela, is an imposing sandstone church some five miles from the center of Belfast. It was designed by William Butterfield, a famous Victorian architect closely associated with the Tractarian Movement. St. Mark’s dominates the small hill on which it is built, and its tall tower is a landmark visible from many parts of Belfast.

The font in which Lewis and his brother, Warnie, were baptized still occupies its original position beneath St. Mark’s tall tower, as specified by Butterfield. Several features in the architecture of St. Mark’s are reflected in Jack’s writing. First I note the pattern of tiles immediately in front of the font in the tower floor. The pattern forms a series of chevrons that point along the nave of the church in the direction of the sanctuary at the east wall. Butterfield used this motif as a device to highlight the notion of direction, just as he used the tower itself. The tower is topped with a pointed roof and a spire pointing upward, while the chevrons in the floor point horizontally along the length of the church.

The length of the church is 183 feet, the same length as the height of the tower. While the tower and spire point heavenward, the chevrons point to the cross, located on the east wall and elevated above the other significant church furnishings. In using these devices, Butterfield highlighted the notion of a journey. The idealized journey, commencing with an infant’s baptism, Butterfield depicted as terminating in one dimension at the cross, a powerful Christian symbol of sacrifice and redemption. The journey could be described using alternative words: life’s pilgrimage or voyage.

Both of these ideas are used significantly in two of Lewis’s books: *The Pilgrim’s Regress* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*. This terminology—pilgrimage and voyage—repeated in the
context of a baptismal service for infants in St. Mark’s Church, would have influenced Jack, hearing it at baptisms; the idea would have buried itself deeply in his thinking. This leads to the question of whether there is any evidence in his writing that these ideas—of pilgrimage or a particular destination or goal at the end of life’s journey/voyage—were shaped by his presence in this Belfast congregation.

The Lion

The church rectory, which was the home of Jack’s mother, Flora, and his grandparents, was immediately adjacent to the church when it was first built. The old rectory, as it is now called, is still standing much as it was in 1878. Even after his grandfather retired from his post, Jack undoubtedly would have stood at the front door of the rectory looking intently at the doorknob just above the letter box. On any other rectory door, the pattern of the door furniture might be merely an accidental or an incidental detail, but not on here. This is the rectory of St. Mark’s. The church icon for St. Mark is the lion, and the church locally was called the Lion on the Hill, a reference to that part of the Holywood Road known as Bunkers Hill. The church magazine is called The Lion, and appropriately the brass knob on the rectory door is cast in the form of a lion’s head. That is where Jack no doubt encountered the first image of a lion that impressed him—on the front doorknob of his grandfather’s rectory and his mother’s former home.

In a letter to his publisher in response to a request for some information regarding the origins of the images that bring the Narnian Chronicles to life, Jack indicates that many had been there from his teenage years or earlier, in his childhood. He says in Surprised by Joy that “at the age of six, seven and eight—I was living almost entirely in my imagination; or at least that the imaginative experience of those years now seems to me more important than anything else.”

Was the lion part of this imagery? Certainly yes; he tells us: “I pored endlessly over an almost complete set of old Punches which stood in my father’s study. Tenniel gratified my passion for “dressed animals” with his Russian Bear, British Lion, Egyptian Crocodile and the rest.”

Did he know about the association of the lion with St. Mark? Evidence indicates yes, because he included the image of a lion, wrapped around the shoulders of St. Mark, in the memorial window he had installed in the church in 1933 in memory of his parents. The image of the lion that so dominates the Chronicles of Narnia undoubtedly stems from the church of his childhood, St. Mark’s in East Belfast.

He is portrayed comically at times by Lewis and by the films, but Reepicheep is the ultimate pilgrim, even when the chips are down.

Memorial Window

While winding up their father’s affairs in Belfast, Warnie and Jack agreed to commission a stained-glass window in St Mark’s to the memory of their parents. The window was installed in 1933.

As the photograph shows, the window is in three panels. The top of each panel features an image of a building. The central portion of each panel is dominated by the portrayal of a male figure, and beneath the feet of the three male figures there are various small details, mostly of small buildings characterized by pastel color gable walls and mono-pitched roofs constructed from red roof tiles. There is no difficulty about the identity of the three male figures. Their names are written in the glass. They are, left to right, St. Luke, St. James, and St. Mark, an unusual trio.

The relative positions of some of the icons in the window are also unusual. At the top of the central panel, there is an image of the church itself. While it seems logical that an image of the church itself should occupy a central and topmost position, if the same logic is applied to the male figures, one might expect the image of St.

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C.S. Lewis and the Death of Humanity, or Heeding C.S. Lewis’s Warnings against Dehumanizing Ideologies

by Richard Weikart, Ph.D.
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Many Christians recognize that we are living in a “culture of death,” where—especially in intellectual circles—there is easy acceptance of abortion and increasing support for physician-assisted suicide, infanticide, and euthanasia. While many Christians make cogent arguments against such practices—as they should—we seem to be losing ground. This is because our society is embracing secular philosophies and ideologies, many of which deny that the cosmos has any purpose, meaning, or significance. Once the cosmos is stripped of value, humanity is not far behind, especially since most secularists have also rejected any objective morality. Some intellectuals are complaining that humans are a “plague” whose population needs to be sharply reduced.¹ The famous late-twentieth-century postmodernist philosopher Michel Foucault glorified sadomasochism, mob violence, suicide, and death. Despite this, or maybe because of it, the late Foucault was (and still is) a darling of many progressive intellectuals.

When C.S. Lewis cautioned about the dangers of dehumanizing secular ideologies in The Abolition of Man and his science fiction novel That Hideous Strength, many Christians took notice. But, on the whole, the intellectual world paid little heed, careening further down the fateful road against which Lewis warned. Lewis’s critique is still a powerful antidote to the degrading vision of humanity being foisted on us by intellectuals in many institutions of higher learning. I have tried to update Lewis’s critique in my new book, The Death of Humanity: And the Case for Life.

In The Abolition of Man, Lewis explained how dehumanizing ideas had insidiously crept inside of the British educational system in the mid-twentieth century. For example, textbook authors told impressionable students that when they call a waterfall sublime, they are not making a statement about the waterfall, but rather about their own feelings. Lewis pointed out that this exercise would lead students to two conclusions: that (1) all sentences about values are about the emotions of the speaker, and (2) these statements are ultimately unimportant.² Many intellectuals make the same point about moral values, interpreting them as merely expressions of an individual’s preferences.

Lewis countered this denial of objective truth about morality or aesthetics with two objections. (1) In most cases, skepticism about values is selective. It is used to dismiss (often with contempt) the “traditional” values that one opposes, but it leaves untouched one’s own “progressive” values, which remain unstated but assumed. Lewis asserted, “A great many of those who ‘debunk’ traditional or (as they would say) ‘sentimental’ values have in the background values of their own which they believe to be immune from the debunking process.”³ Lewis understood the hypocrisy behind such debunking. (2) If we are not rational beings in a world with objective values, then we are mere nature to be kneaded and cut into new shapes for the pleasures of masters who must, by hypothesis, have no motive but their own “natural” impulses.”⁴ Thus Lewis recognized that controllers, who claim to be taking the destiny of humanity into their own hands, have no control over themselves.

If everyone’s behavior is determined, ultimately no one can choose to control others. We are all controlled. The claims by the intelligentsia that they have superior knowledge or wisdom to manipulate the rest of humanity are then vacuous, because the intelligentsia’s statements are as much the product of random, material processes as the ideas and behavior of the masses. Their beliefs or plans have no spe-
cial claim to be true or good or beautiful, since none of these categories exists. So why do they get so worked up when proclaiming the superiority of their policies and aspirations? Why do they become indignant at those who—through no fault of their own (since “fault” is nonexistent, according to their worldview)—continue to embrace values they oppose? Perhaps they would respond—if they want to be consistent with their own deterministic philosophy—that they cannot help themselves. But I propose that at some level they view their beliefs as being superior to others. Perhaps their indignation also indicates that they do think that others have some choice about their beliefs and values.

The result of this impoverished view of humanity—that people are nothing more than clumps of chemicals thrown together by chance—is illustrated in Lewis’s novel *That Hideous Strength*. In this dystopia, scientists establish a National Institute of Coordinated Experiments (NICE), an agency that experiments on humans, to manage and transform the society. These scientists see themselves as the new controllers of humanity, and they use every technique in their arsenal to manipulate their fellow humans—including torture and other not-so-NICE methods. They recruit the protagonist of the novel, Mark Studdock, to their program by telling him that since controlling humanity is inevitable, he might as well join them as a controller, rather than hesitating and becoming one of the controlled.

In the view of the scientists at NICE, only physical reality matters, so “friendship is a chemical phenomenon; so is hatred.” Humans, being a conglomeration of chemicals subject to natural laws, have no special purpose or value. The NICE program involves extermination of those considered riffraff and human experimentation to move the species to a higher evolutionary stage. Nothing about humanity is sacred. As a sociologist, Studdock accepts most of these ideas at first—until he finds that he and other scientists at NICE are themselves the targets of manipulation and control. He rebels against the attempts to treat him as just another reagent in the elaborate experiment to reengineer society.

Lewis’s warnings against the “abolition of man” were certainly astute in the mid-twentieth century. Because so few people have heeded these warnings, they have not lost any of their poignancy. Indeed, the problems he exposed are more pronounced today than in his time; we need vigorous and compelling warnings to bring people to their senses.

...we should once again take to heart Lewis’s admonitions to resist the rising tide of dehumanizing philosophies.

Starting from a secular perspective, where human life is reduced to material processes, many intellectuals deny that human life has any intrinsic value or purpose or meaning. Many bioethicists are devaluing human life by arguing that some humans are “persons,” while others are not. These “nonpersons” generally include the unborn and those with cognitive disabilities. Some secular bioethicists, such as Peter Singer at Princeton, consign even newborn infants to the category of “nonpersons,” while others advocate “after-birth abortions.”

Because of these dehumanizing cultural tendencies, we need to embrace and even celebrate the value and significance of all humans, especially the weak and vulnerable, such as people
As I meet Christians in a variety of settings, I sense a shift in motivations for evangelism. And I’m greatly encouraged by it. For a long time, I think Christians flocked to apologetics seminars and evangelism trainings because they felt guilty. They knew they were supposed to speak up, not be ashamed, make the most of every opportunity, and preach the word in season and out of season. But they didn’t. And they felt guilty for their evangelistic lockjaw. So they hoped some training would alleviate the pain. In some cases, that worked. But for most, it exacerbated the problem.

Then came a tidal wave of apologetics research that emboldened believers to make a defense, demolish strongholds, answer objections, and win arguments. Their motivations shifted from guilt to pride. The results were less than wonderful. We won a lot of debates but lost a lot of hearers. We won but we lost.

But today I hear a different motivation for reaching out—concern. We’re burdened for our friends who don’t know the joy of the gospel. We’re disturbed to see them messing up their lives and families as they follow the hedonistic ways of our culture. We love them and hate what the devil is doing to them. We may not know how to reach people or what to say, but we want to learn—not to alleviate guilt or win a fight but to see people rescued.

Evidence for this change—and perhaps a stimulus to accelerate it—can be seen by Christianity Today magazine’s selection of two books for their 2016 Book of the Year Awards in the category of Apologetics and Evangelism. Os Guinness’s Fool’s Talk and the late Dallas Willard’s The Allure of Gentleness call for “defending the faith in the manner of Jesus” (Willard’s book’s subtitle) and apologetics “shaped by the distinctiveness of the truth it proclaims.” These tones sound different from that of many other apologetics books I’ve read. They point the spotlight more on “winning people than winning arguments.” Willard calls apologetics “a loving service” and comments, “It is the finding of answers to strengthen faith. It should be done in the spirit of Christ and with his kind of intelligence, which, by the way, is made available to us.”

Readers familiar with Dallas Willard’s profound writings will not be surprised by his recurring theme of our need to be shaped through spiritual disciplines. He made that case in The Spirit of the Disciplines and The Divine Conspiracy. He was working on The Allure of Gentleness to apply his thinking to the task of evangelism but was unable to complete it before his death in 2013. His daughter, Rebecca Willard Heatley, compiled his many notes and drafts to present us with this fine book to help us reach out with gospel-shaped apologetics.

In this article, I am not offering book reviews; rather, I highlight several important lessons from these two books and offer my own suggestions for how to apply them to our evangelistic efforts.

First, we must shift our emphasis from questions (theirs) to character (ours!). To be sure, answers and arguments and wrestling with intellectual issues must be pursued. And we must do so with the utmost rigor. But we dare not divorce “apologetics and discipleship,” as we have done for quite some time. We need to ask God to reshape us so we truly love people and see them as “precious, eternal, valuable souls.” Willard
sums up much of his life’s passion and themes when he writes,

The ultimate apologetic is the life of the individual who is living out of the resources of the kingdom of God. To have a nice set of abstract ideas and arguments can be very important for us, but we need to be people who are actually accomplishing things in the kingdom of the heavens through our prayers and our words.6

Second, we must adjust our approaches according to the dramatic changes in our culture. According to Guinness, most evangelism strategies in recent years assume a certain readiness on the part of non-Christians to hear our message. But today “most people quite simply are not open, not interested and not needy… Indeed, many are more hostile, and their hostility is greater than the Western church has faced for centuries.”7

Third, we can admit our doubts to outsiders and invite them to compare their doubts with ours. Then, we can offer reasons for having confidence to believe. This is a far cry from two people simply sharing their ignorance. But it is equally far from a triumphal claim of absolute certainty of which many Christians boast.

Willard shows us two sides of this important insight. On the one hand, “many churchgoers have been taught not to question what they hear in church and that doubt is a bad thing. But they are missing the great value in doubt—it can stimulate you to keep thinking and asking questions.”8 In other words, we might actually come out with greater confidence by admitting our doubts, examining them, and seeking help from the Scriptures and learning from doubters who’ve gone before us. On the other hand, we must challenge non-Christians to doubt their doubts and not just cling to their skepticism as a badge of honor. Willard tells people, “If you’re going to be a doubter, you need to believe your beliefs and doubt your doubts as well as to doubt your beliefs and believe your doubts.”9

Believers don’t have to be as “sure” as we’ve pretended to be in the past, but outsiders should be less comfortable with their doubts than they’ve often been.

In fact, Willard contends that the point of discussion needs to start further back or with larger issues than we’ve typically addressed. I think he is correct when he offers, “My feeling is that in apologetics, however, the real issues are not in the details. They are in the big issues: What the premises are, what the conclusions are, what the real questions are about, what doesn’t make sense, and how to make sense of it.”10

I want to quickly add that both authors have no illusions of this being easy. They continually warn of the dangers of naiveté and the high likelihood of rejection and persecution. This is

When engaging with non-Christians about your own faith, consider how to say things as well as what to say.
Seek after Holiness, Without Which No One Will See the Lord

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What do the words holy, holiness, or holy life bring to mind? I suspect many envision someone old-fashioned, dour, unpleasant, rigid, legalistic, and judgmental. A far different picture is presented in the Bible, where a holy life is grace filled, joyful, attractive, deeply satisfying—and God’s chief goal for His children.

Holiness is definitely out of fashion and much neglected in our day. How has something so central to authentic Christian life become so neglected? John Stott suggests that holiness “has been replaced by an emphasis on experience. Now experience is good, but holiness is better. For holiness is Christlikeness, and Christlikeness is God’s eternal purpose for His children.”

What is holiness? Why is it important? How do we attain it? These are some of the questions we will explore here.

God’s Holiness

To better understand what personal holiness is, we must begin with God’s holiness. The word holy when referring to God means “to separate”; it stresses His separateness and transcendence over His creation, His sovereign power within it, and His moral perfection in relating to it. Nothing in the universe is remotely like God; He is unique and wholly Other. Nothing can resist His will, and all creation is dependent on Him for its moment-by-moment existence. There is no evil or moral flaw in God’s character; such qualities are completely antithetical to His nature. Holiness is the most fundamental and dominant characteristic of God.

Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders? (Exod. 15:11)

God’s holiness evokes awe, fear, and conviction of sin in human beings. The prophet Isaiah describes his encounter with God:

I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim … And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!” And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. And I said: “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!” (Isa. 6:1–5)

The apostle John’s encounter with the ascended Christ in His blazing holiness had a similar effect:

In the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters … When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. (Rev. 1:13–15, 17)

Our Holiness

How does God’s holiness relate to us today? One of the major themes of the Bible is God’s call for His people to become holy like Him. Here is a classic passage from the Old Testament: “And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy’” (Lev. 19:1–2).
There are two aspects to holiness in God’s people. The first is being separated from spiritual death unto spiritual life in God’s kingdom—or new birth. The second, which is our primary focus, is their separation from sin unto holy living.

In the New Testament, the apostle Paul urges believers to pursue holiness in words such as these:

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him” (Eph. 1:3–4); “I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship” (Rom. 12:1); “Let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God” (2 Cor. 7:1). (Clearly, holiness was a very high priority with Paul.)

The apostle Peter emphasizes holiness as well:

Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”

Holiness is a very high priority with Peter. He includes the church as a whole when he says: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Pet. 2:9).

The Goal of Holiness

We may wonder why God places such a strong emphasis on His children pursuing holiness. The answer is simple. God’s ultimate intention is to restore His image in the lives of His children and conform them to the likeness of His Son, who is the firstborn of many brothers (Rom. 8:29). The restoration of God’s image in the lives of the Ephesians is highlighted when Paul urges, “put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness” (Eph. 4:22–24).

As we pursue holiness we become more Christlike. This brings glory to God in this present world and also prepares us to live with Him in the world to come. It is our calling and destiny, and God will settle for nothing less.

Is Holiness Essential or Optional?

From these few sample passages (and there are many others) we can draw some obvious conclusions: First, holiness focuses on our separation from sin and consecration to a holy God. Second, holiness is of crucial importance and is not optional. Lest there be any doubt about that, we are told to “strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14).

Many believers seem to be unaware of the necessity of personal holiness. I say necessity not in the sense of doing works that earn salvation, but (continued on page 28)
Following Christ by Creating
by Terry Peckarsky
C.S. Lewis Institute Fellow

What would you do if money were no object and you could not fail?

The first time I heard this question was during a private session with Dr. Art Lindsley, exploring the topic of “calling” near the end of my Fellows Year One Program in 2007. I did not expect this question. Although I took it very seriously, I responded immediately, “I would make pictures in fabric.” Perhaps Dr. Lindsley did not expect my answer, either, because he promptly replied, “What would you do with that?”

That exchange set in motion a journey I never imagined but that has its origins in childhood affinities and has been nurtured by my walk with the Lord and the companionship of my C.S. Lewis Fellows. What, indeed, would I do with that?

In 2007 I had never heard of “art quilts,” but that is what I have been making since then, my “pictures in fabric.” As a slow learner, I took classes to develop the skills to turn ideas into reality, to make wall hangings that might bring beauty or inspiration to the beholder. The fact is, I sense that something in me was made to create, though I have never pursued formal art training and have not quite embraced the identity of “artist.” If this is a God-breathed aspect of my being, then surely He has His hand in it, and the journey is as much about hearing Him as it is about making quilts.

Yet I will describe frankly my ongoing dialogue with Him.

I still ask, “Lord, is it really a valid spiritual exercise for me to spend my time engaged in an amateur handicraft?” He answers me with deep communion as I meditate on the Scriptures that have inspired a piece I am working on, as I pray over the message my quilt might convey, or as I worship Him for the creation that has fired my imagination. He also sends encouragement to me through His saints, past and present. At the Fellows Retreat in 2010, Dr. Chris Mitchell introduced me to the writing of Dorothy Sayers, who wrote what could be my own manifesto:

“I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of all things. That is the thundering assertion with which we start; that the great fundamental quality that makes God, and us with him, what we are is creative activity . . . “In the beginning God created”; from everlasting to everlasting. He is God the Father and Maker. And, by implication, man is most god-like and most himself when he is occupied in creation. And by this statement we assert further that the will and power to make is an absolute value, the ultimate good-in-itself, self-justified and self-explanatory.”

Another topic that recurs in my prayers sounds like this: “Lord, I am afraid of letting You down. Really mature Christians are doing great things in Your kingdom, but I am not.” Trusting God’s leading tests my understanding of the truth about the body of Christ and exposes a besetting sin of self-doubt and comparison with others. It is a marvelous, liberating fact that “God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose” (1 Cor. 12:18 ESV)—different on purpose!

Reflecting on the role of an organ in the mystical body of Christ, C.S. Lewis affirms that the “structural position in the Church which the humblest Christian occupies is eternal and even cosmic.” Lewis also states, “Those who are members of one another become as diverse as the hand and the ear. That is why the worldlings are so monotonously alike compared with the almost fantastic variety of the saints.”

Can I really take a deep breath and live out of this conviction? And is it possible that making art—even quilts—can be a way to point people to Jesus?

Well, I am by every measure a novice art quilter, but isn’t it the nature of God to use the foolish and simple to speak for Him? (I recall that Moses insisted he was not eloquent enough to do the job God assigned to him.) So, having made about a dozen quilts, I submitted two to a bian-
Both of my quilts were based on explicitly biblical themes. *Torn*, inspired by a Matthias Grünewald painting called *The Small Crucifixion*, portrays the pierced hand of Jesus on the cross. My statement referred to His agony and described this quilt “as a prayer of thanks to the one who loved so completely.” It is not every day that I have the opportunity to say things to complete strangers with a visual aid at hand that points them to the Lord and Redeemer.

More recently I’ve presented my work—aspects of its inspiration and my spiritual journey—at two local churches. How did that happen? I didn’t seek out the opportunities, but, when asked to speak, I accepted the challenge.

As to my “calling,” the fundamental command of Jesus is “follow Me.” I am learning that a life of transparency and obedience can point to Jesus, a way of saying, like Paul, to believers and not-yet-believers alike, “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1 ESV).

Notes:
3 Ibid., 167.
Worst of all, the fundamentalists of both science and religion do not adequately understand or respect imagination. Is imagination merely a talent, such as a good singing voice, the ability to “make things up” or “think things up” or “get ideas”? Or is it, like science, a way of knowing things that can be known in no other way? We have much reason to think that it is a way of knowing things not otherwise knowable. As the word itself suggests, it is the power to make us see, and to see, moreover, things that without it would be unseeable. In one of its aspects it is the power by which we sympathize. By its means we may see what it was to be Odysseus or Penelope, David or Ruth, or what it is to be one’s neighbor or one’s enemy. By it, we may “see ourselves as others see us.” It is also the power by which we see the place, the predicament, or the story we are in.2

Reason provides only half the story. Imagination makes up the difference. It enables us to see not only the manifest reality of the world around us, but the greater story in which we are participants: the story that is being told for all time, past, present, and future. And this ability to perceive the story we are in is critical in matters of faith.

Imaginative Faith: The Assurance of Things Not Seen

When we exercise faith, what else do we use but our imaginations? We wrap words around things in the world to define them and gain greater clarity. The word definition means “of the finite.” Thus, we use our reason to understand the particulars of our world. But God is infinite; He breaks the category of definition. We can’t wrap words around Him, and our reason collapses in attempting to apprehend Him. To understand God at all, we must speak by what the medieval scholastics called the way of analogy. Jesus Himself spoke about the kingdom of heaven only in parables or similes. That is, He used depictions of the imagination that would allow us to grasp, in human terms, a dim idea of God’s attributes.

Thus Jesus says that the kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed. Like yeast. Like treasure hidden in a field. Like a merchant looking for fine pearls. Each of these is a depiction of a thing from human experience using an analogy that allows us to apply our imaginative grasp of that thing to God.

We see, when we see at all, only through a glass darkly. Scripture informs us that faith is the assurance of things not seen; that is, things that cannot be discovered through discursive reasoning. The imagination helps us maintain and grow this tenuous position. It enables us to speak of heaven and of sehnsucht, of all that we yearn for that cannot be fulfilled on earth. So we need a greater understanding of and respect for the imagination and how it can provide truth about reality in ways that our reason alone cannot.

Lewis spent the early years of his life attempting to reconcile the divided parts of his mind. How could imagination ever be a source of truth comparable with reason? He loved and valued imagination, but his materialistic worldview wouldn’t allow him to believe it was anything more than make-believe. He wrote a poem, titled “Reason,” about this essential division in his mind. In the poem he asks this question:
I believe this split is present in the minds of many followers of Christ today, a division that simply does not give credence to imagination as a primary factor in how we understand and approach God. We are in fact using it, but our ignorance of its role and its functions and our facile understanding of it, as a childish appurtenance that we have long outgrown, causes us to reject and devalue it. We therefore need a more robust conception of how the imagination functions.

**Nuanced Imagination: The Key to Deeper Clarity and Truth**

Lewis understood imagination to be highly nuanced. In fact, he identified more than thirty of these nuances.

For example, Lewis writes of the penetrating imagination that seeks to get at the truth of a thing by looking at it from many different angles. He cites Shakespeare as the great master of the penetrating imagination, often giving numerous metaphors to describe one thing. This allows us to go deeper and expand our understanding.

Primary imagination helps us to make sense of the data supplied by our five senses. Material imagination attempts to depict accurately the material world through vivid description. Realizing that imagination enables us to grasp the complexities of the world and to understand them in matters of truth, we can have a sure, but not a last, word. We can always delve more deeply, apply our understanding more widely, and see it in coherent relation to other truths.

Not every nuance of the imagination is a positive one. Lewis describes the transforming imagination that engages in idealized projection, placing inflated expectations onto the objects of its affection. Similarly, the generous imagination embellishes a thing beyond what it deserves. It is the blind estimation of an idea that can result in groupthink and inner-circle mentality.

To gain more clarity about how Lewis gave overlaid the imagination with nuances, let's examine one positive and one negative use.

**Satisfied Imagination: The Charged World**

The satisfied imagination is a nuance that discovers delight in the familiar and in the repetition of the mundane. Lewis writes that the medieval scholastics were the great masters of the satisfied imagination. They created a cosmology of unbelievable complexity. Their model of the universe was not only systematic but also incredibly repetitious, almost mind-bogglingly so. And they reveled in this extensive repetition.

The model divided the heavens from the earth. All in the realms of the heavens was perfect and ordered, immutable and noncontingent. On earth everything was subject to change and decay and randomness. The medievals delighted in their model because it depicted the heavens as the realm of perfect order that we on earth should attempt to emulate. Contemplation of this order and harmony returns our minds to the source of order and harmony, that is, to God. And perfect order is simply perfect repetition: each thing fulfilling its nature as it was created. The sun rises each day. The stars appear each night. Each created object fulfills its nature again and again. Only humans have the ability to live at random and to interrupt the pattern.

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This ordered repetition of the familiar, Lewis writes, is also where we begin to understand that God is the ground and supplier of both our personal and material reality. All things have their source in God’s sustaining and creative power. Once we embrace this concept, all reality
The Surprising Imagination of C.S. Lewis

becomes a conduit by which we can apprehend God.\textsuperscript{4}

Through this realization, we must learn what it means to reenchant the familiar, to see the world around us anew. G.K Chesterton writes,

Now, there is a law written in the darkest of the Books of Life and it is this: If you look at a thing nine hundred and ninety-nine times, you are perfectly safe; if you look at it the thousandth time, you are in frightful danger of seeing it for the first time.\textsuperscript{5}

How can we do this? Lewis notes that any pleasures we experience are “shafts of the glory as it strikes our sensibility.”\textsuperscript{6} God breaks into our lives through the simplest things: a dog’s smooth fur or the way new leaves appear as green mist on springtime trees. We apprehend God through our pleasures, but we often aren’t aware of it.

As long as familiarity breeds contempt, we will fail. If we are to properly use the satisfied imagination, Lewis notes, we must overcome four obstacles. First is inattention; we are simply not aware enough. The second is the wrong kind of attention. We could imagine that our pleasure in the mundane is simply internal and personal, that its source is not divine. Third is greed; we want the experience again and again. And the fourth is pride, believing that we have been supplied with a secret knowledge denied to others.\textsuperscript{7}

The satisfied imagination acts as a corrective to the “grass is greener” mentality that prompts us to always seek the next thing or the new vista. “The world is charged with the grandeur of God,”\textsuperscript{8} writes poet Gerard Manley Hopkins. Most of the time we are essentially asleep, and we cannot see past the mundane. We must come awake and stay awake if we are to fully use the satisfied imagination and experience Chesterton’s thousandth look.

**Controlled Imagination: Virtue as Fantasy**

The controlled imagination is a negative use. It projects self-seeking desires onto others to gain ascendency over them. It is akin to the distinction of imagination that Lewis labels wish fulfillment. The self becomes the center of the universe. The controlled imagination can also be what Lewis calls servile. Contrast this with the free activity in which the self is not central to the thing imagined. The servile activity fuels the controlled imagination with images and wish fulfillment dreams that keep us imprisoned within a fantasy world. George Macdonald writes that “the one principle of hell is—I am my own.”\textsuperscript{9} Perhaps Lewis’s best example of the embodiment of the controlled imagination is in *The Screwtape Letters*, a fictional work in which a junior devil attempting to guide a human soul to hell is advised by his uncle about the best tactics to use to accomplish this diabolical work.

The most fatal aspect of the controlled imagination is its propensity to encourage a willful ignorance of our inner life: all the motives and machinations that seethe below the surface of our minds and souls. Conversely, the most powerful antidote is our being intentionally aware, turning our gaze inward and practicing self-examination. Lewis writes, “All reality is iconoclastic.”\textsuperscript{10} It is constantly breaking in on us and shattering the images and idols we make of it. This beneficial iconoclasm offers us a vision of the world as it is, not as we would create it. We must cultivate the free activity of the imagination in a way commensurate with reality and without self at the center.

**Seeing With Others’ Eyes: The Imagination as Reconciliation**

Finally, how do we use our imaginations for the glory of God? Most uses of the imagination are ultimately reconciling. They enable us to reconcile ourselves to a larger world, to see that world accurately, even with its sorrows and fail- ures, for what it is rather than what we want it to be. They provide us with hope and idealism...
without illusion. They enable us to see that “we may ignore, but we can nowhere evade, the presence of God. The world is crowded with Him. He walks everywhere incognito. And the incognito is not always hard to penetrate. The real labour is to remember, to attend. In fact, to come awake. Still more, to remain awake.”¹¹ As we give nuance to our own imaginations, they give us bearings on our idea of God, what Lewis terms the “Bright Blur,” consequently enriching our lives and deepening our understanding.

At the end of Experiment in Criticism, Lewis writes that his own eyes are not enough for him. He would see what others have seen. Even that is not enough. He would see what they have imagined. Even more, he regrets that the beasts cannot write books that would allow him to see how the world appears to the eye of a bee or mouse or how it comes charged to the olfactory sense of a dog.¹² We live, as it were, in a narrow prison of self. We desperately need those other eyes to see the world rightly and to continue to expand our understanding. God calls us to live in and know this world well. We best glorify Him when we are most fully ourselves, that is, when we are most like Him and most clearly seeing His creation. The rightly used imagination helps us get there.

Notes:
¹ C.S. Lewis, Selected Literary Essays (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 265.
² Wendell Berry, Imagination in Place (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint Press, 2010), 186–187.
⁶ Lewis, Letters to Malcolm, 89.
⁷ Ibid., 90.
¹¹ Lewis, Letters to Malcolm, 75.

I think that all things, in their way, reflect heavenly truth, the imagination not least.

_C.S. Lewis_

RECOMMENDED READING
The purpose of this book is to introduce C.S. Lewis through the prism of imagination. For Lewis, imagination is both a means and an end. And because he used his own imagination well and often, he is a practiced guide for those of us who desire to reach beyond our grasp. Each chapter highlights Lewis’s major works and then shows how Lewis uses imagination to captivate readers.
to make this kind of love the mark of discipleship—the evidence and confirmation by which people can know that these are His followers: “By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35).

Jesus even goes so far as to say, “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matthew 5:44). He also calls us to radical forgiveness—to forgive “seventy times seven” (Matthew 18:22). Not only does He say that if you forgive you will be forgiven, but He also says, “If you do not forgive others, then your Father in heaven will not forgive your transgressions” (Matthew 6:14-15).

On the train, after giving a summary of the above, I asked the young man, “Which view do you think gives an adequate basis for love and forgiveness, your atheism or faith in Christ?” He readily admitted that it wasn’t his atheism and seemed fascinated by these new insights.

At that moment we arrived at the border of Hungary, where this man found out that as a Canadian he needed a visa to enter the country (Americans didn’t need one), so the border guards escorted him off the train. We made plans to meet him at a certain time in Budapest the next day, but he didn’t make it. I’ve often wondered what happened to this honest, open young atheist.

Some atheists hold to a kind of humanism. Though they agree that our origin is out of matter, time, and chance, and though our destiny is oblivion (no life after death), somehow people are significant. You might diagram it like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Mankind</th>
<th>Destiny</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atheism</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Humanism</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christianity</td>
<td>+</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Some atheists say that our origin is insignificant, our destiny “full of sound and fury signifying nothing,” and that people are merely a “useless passion” (Sartre). In fact, Sartre wrote in his play No Exit, “Hell is other people.” For an atheist, human origin, existence, and destiny are nothing but big zeros.

Humanists, on the other hand, being atheists, contend that we emerged spontaneously out of the cosmic slime, and even the noblest person rots in the grave. Yet somehow humans are a great big plus. But humanists have no basis for giving humans dignity. Perhaps they know in their consciences, the law written on their hearts (Romans 2:14-15), that this is so. Yet they give no sufficient reason why we ought to treat humans with such value. Psychologist Erik Erikson once made the comment that he could think of no other reason to give humans dignity than that they are made in the image of God. In any case, there seems to be no intrinsic basis for an atheist to encourage love and forgiveness.

Christianity argues that God is the origin of life and we are made in His image; therefore, we have intrinsic worth and dignity based not on what we do but on who we are. Because of a loving Creator, we have value, our lives matter, and our destiny is eternal, either for salvation or for judgment.

Atheists find no solid basis for love in a universe where “all is matter.” Followers of New Age spirituality find no firmer foundation for love in a universe where “all is spirit.” There are many forms of Hinduism and Buddhism. I will be focusing on what might be called absolute pantheism as exemplified in the Hindu philosopher Shankara and others holding a similar view. This perspective, as it has come through to the New Age movement in the west, holds
that “all is One.” Marilyn Ferguson in her classic book, The Aquarian Conspiracy, points out that the negative way to express this positive principle is “non-distinction.” There are no real distinctions anywhere. Matter, time, space, cause and effect are all illusory. A second related principle is that “you are divine.” Since you are part of the “One,” you are in a sense “god” or “divine.” A third implication of this view is that the purpose of our existence is to “alter consciousness” so that we come to see that there are no real distinctions in this world. We need to transcend this illusory world and realize that “All is One.” Only then will we be able to achieve “unlimited power” to create our own reality. The only limit to what we can do is our own imagination. Note that the “One” is not a “personal” being but an impersonal force—an “it” rather than “he” or “she.”

Other recent advocates reaffirm this same All is One (non-distinct) philosophy. For instance, Deepak Chopra says in his bestseller, The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success, “The physical universe is nothing other than the Self curving back within itself to experience itself.” In the same context, he said that there are “seeds of divinity within us” and that we are “divinity in disguise.” In Chopra’s book, Ageless Body, Timeless Mind, he agrees with an Indian teacher who said: “As is the microcosm, so is the macrocosm. As is the atom, so is the Universe. As is the human body, so is the cosmic body. As is the human mind, so is the cosmic mind.”

Andrew Weil has emerged in the alternative medicine field and, after years of obscurity, made the cover of Time magazine (May 12, 1997). He also echoed this all-is-one perspective. He said in Natural Health, Natural Medicine, “All religions and spiritual traditions stress the importance of overcoming the illusion of separateness and experiencing unity.” Weil, like Chopra, was educated in medicine and applies his philosophy to issues of health. Gary Zukav, who like Chopra was given extensive national publicity by appearing on the Oprah Winfrey show, also holds the belief that all is one. In his popular book, The Seat of the Soul, he said, “Physical reality and the organisms and forms within physical reality are systems of Light within systems of light, and this Light is the same Light as the Light of your soul.” The ancient Hindu way of saying the same thing is “Atman is Brahman”—the individual is one with the divine.

During a long dinner conversation with a senior researcher from a large New Age think tank, we discussed the idea of this impersonal force. For fifteen years this man had been deeply immersed in Eastern philosophy—researching, writing, and advising radio and television specials on New Age topics. He came to me because he was considering returning to his roots (being brought up in a Christian church). One reason he gave for this desire was that he couldn’t find a “home” in any of the Eastern philosophies. He had tried them all and found that they didn’t fit what he had discovered about the universe. Above all, he had met all the top Eastern gurus and New Age advocates and was profoundly disappointed. They were all so “narcissistic.” I explained to him that the thrust of New Age philosophy is “inward” (to the divine within), or “upward” (to merge your identity with that of the One), but definitely not “outward” (to a distinct world that is illusory). I asked why they would be motivated to care a great deal about distinct people and things that their philosophy regarded as illusory. He quickly agreed that if they were true to their philosophy, they would not.

Recently, I asked a college professor (let’s call her Susan), who had been for many years a strong advocate of the New Age perspective, why she would talk about love, given her former view. She said that she would have answered that we need to love “being” in general (“the One”). But when I asked her if this love applied to particular, distinct (illusory) things, she admitted that she wouldn’t have had an answer for that question. She said that the disconnect between her idea of love and the inability to practice it even on a small level never occurred to her.

Tal Brooke, president of Spiritual Counterfeits Project based in Berkeley, California, spent a number of years in India being groomed to be a
How Will They Know? They Will Know Them by Their Love

Western spokesman for Sai Baba, the guru of gurus in India. Sai Baba is the guru most respected by those in the New Age spirituality. He is the one that many other gurus visit to be blessed. Thousands go to even catch a distant glimpse of him, for he is known as the “miracle”-working guru because of the many stories of his powers that have been passed around. Tal had numerous private audiences with Sai Baba.

During his time in India, Tal met a missionary couple, and he tried using his brilliant mind and his logical skills to convert them to Hinduism. They put some dents in his arguments. However, what he noticed about them over time was that they really seemed to care for him more than they did for themselves. Later he described this as other-centered, (“agape”) love. Though the other Hindu disciples were gentle, Tal noticed that they lacked this quality. Above all, after numerous private audiences with Sai Baba, Tal noted that the guru also utterly lacked this other-centered love. He was beginning to understand what the Apostle John meant when he said, “How will they know that these are disciples of Jesus? They will know them by their love” (John 13:35, paraphrased).

Note the context of this last statement. Jesus says in verse 34: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another even as I have loved you.” Underline the fact that this is a commandment which believers in Jesus are to obey. This, of course, implies that it is possible to disobey that charge. In other words, it is not automatically true that believers in Jesus will be loving. They could be disobedient to what Jesus asks of them.

The radical nature of the love required, to love “as I have loved you” is stunning. Jesus gave His life for those who were in rebellion to the God He served. This self-sacrificial (agape) love is to be the indicator that one is a follower of Jesus. Also, note that in verse 35, the way people will know that believers are disciples is “by” their love “if” and only if they love one another.

When those who bear the name of Christ fail to demonstrate God’s love, people are often hurt in the process and feel justified in unbelief. That emotional pain caused by Christians becomes an obstacle to even being able to consider who Jesus is. At a retreat center with top New Age and evangelical leaders, I had the opportunity to engage in discussions about this subject and how they viewed Jesus in light of it. After a few days, the final person to share was the wife of one of the most prominent New Age advocates. She shared that because of what some Christians had done to her fifteen years earlier (she didn’t say what it was), for fifteen years she had not been able to say the name of “Jesus Christ.” When she said that name, she broke down and wept uncontrollably. She thanked me and others present for freeing her to be able to consider who Jesus was and for the first time in a long time to say His name.

As I have traveled around the United States and overseas interacting with believers and nonbelievers, certain common themes have emerged. First, many people desire passion, a passionate commitment to something or someone. Second, many also desire a mentor who exemplifies love and shows them a good way to live. Third, many people crave a perspective that is comprehensive enough to make sense of per-
sonal and public life. Often they have not found what they desired in the church. Many desired passion but found in their churches coldness or lack of emotion. They desired a mentor who embodies truth and love and were disillusioned by hypocrisy and lovelessness. Despite their desire for a perspective that made sense of things, sometimes what they encountered in their churches was narrow in scope and ineffectual to answer the questions they were asking. They desired passionate commitment, modeling of character, and an educated conscience, but were unable to satisfy their hunger for these things.

Of course, there are plenty of exceptions to this pattern. Many believers are passionately committed to Jesus, have found a mentor, and have found solid answers to the big questions. In all these areas, love is at the center. Each one of these believers has been pulled (sometimes kicking and screaming) out of their self-centeredness and overwhelmed by God’s love for them. They have responded by passionately desiring to love Him with their whole being. They found God’s love demonstrated in what Jesus said and did for us and were motivated by His example to reach out and love others. They sought to grow in this love by finding a mentor, someone who could teach in theory and in practice this life of trust in God. They eventually desired to love God more with their minds and take every thought (in personal and public life) captive to Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5).

Theoretically, the whole message of the Gospel is saturated with love. By contrast, atheism (all is matter) and New Age spirituality (all is spirit) have no adequate basis to stimulate or sustain love at all.

My purpose is also to point those who bear the name of Christ to more truly be examples of Christ’s love. A story is told about Alexander the Great. One day the great Greek conqueror was holding court, and a young man was brought to him who was guilty of being a coward in battle, something Alexander despised. Alexander was high on his throne above the young man and asked him “What is your name?” The young man, knowing that Alexander had the power of life or death over him, was shaking and could barely speak. He answered in a trembling voice, “Alexander.” Alexander the Great stood up from his throne and with passion asked, “WHAT IS your name?” The young man responded in an even shakier voice, “Alexander.” Alexander the Great stepped down from his throne and shouted, “What is your name?” By this time the man could hardly speak and responded in a barely audible voice, “Alexander.” Alexander the Great shouted, “Change your conduct or change your name.” We, too, must take the name of Christ with courage and care.

“"All religions and spiritual traditions stress the importance of overcoming the illusion of separateness and experiencing unity.""
How Will They Know? They Will Know Them by Their Love

Jesus. When the missionary asked, “Why?” the chief explained what had happened. Apparently, some of those who believed in Christ had come to their village regularly over a number of years and built a school, wells, a hospital, and other things to help their village. They said no one else had done anything for them. They were attracted to the loving attitudes and actions of these believers. So, you see, there is a spoken love and a silent love. At different times both are needed. Love has both a theoretical and practical place in demonstrating the reality of Christ.

Notes
3 Ibid., p. 3.
7 For a more thorough look at this passage, see Francis Schaeffer’s The Mark of the Christian (Downers Grove: IVP Classics, 2006).
9 From a talk given by Dr. Denny McCain at a conference of the International Institute for Christian Studies, July 20, 2006.

Love, in the Christian sense, does not mean an emotion. It is a state not of the feelings but of the will; that state of the will which we have naturally about ourselves, and must learn to have about other people.

C.S. Lewis

RECOMMENDED READING
Francis A. Schaeffer, The Mark of the Christian (Downers Grove: IVP Classics, 2006)
“It is possible to be a Christian without showing the mark, but if we expect non-Christians to know that we are Christians, we must show the mark.” Too often we have failed to show the beauty of authentic Christian love. In our era of global violence and sectarian intolerance, the church needs to hear anew the challenge of this book. More than ever, the church needs to respond compassionately to a needy world. More than ever, we need to show the Mark.
Mark to be beneath the icon of the church, in the center. Something seems odd with the selection of St. James as the centerpiece. If St. Matthew, for example, had been included in place of St. Mark to be beneath the icon of the church, in the center. Something seems odd with the selection of St. James as the centerpiece. If St. Matthew, for example, had been included in place of St. Mark to be beneath the icon of the church, in the center. Something seems odd with the selection of St. James as the centerpiece. If St. Matthew, for example, had been included in place of St. James leaves the need for some other explanation. There is a yet another puzzle. The Latin inscription at the bottom of the central panel indicates that the window is in memory of Lewis’s father and mother, and it gives their names and dates. This raises the question as to what has been included specifically in the window that serves as a memorial to either of them other than the inscription itself.

Some answers to these puzzles have been suggested. The first is that Lewis’s father was Albert James Lewis; the St. James image is therefore included to his father’s memory. This suggestion may be supported by details of the depiction: St. James is holding a silver chalice in his left hand. The communion silver used in St. Mark’s was gifted to the church by the Lewis family; the Lewis silver is used on occasion for communion services. In Lewis’s own life, an element of estrangement existed in the common and family communion between him and his father. The symbolism might be that of a restored communion and of a restored Christian communion, given that Lewis himself had by 1933 been restored to the Christian tradition in which he grew up.

It is almost as if in the window Lewis wanted to place his father center stage and holding the symbol of a restored communion. There is also the suggestion that St. James is included as the patron saint of the pilgrim. As if to emphasize this, there is an image of a ship above the left shoulder of St. James. The ship is reminiscent not only of a voyage/journey but also of life’s pilgrimage and the patronage of St. James, who is still associated with the European pilgrimages to northern Spain and the veneration of his final resting place at Santiago de Compostela. I previously mentioned one of Lewis’s Narnian Chronicles titled The Voyage of the Dawn Treader, a story of a ship sailing to the utter east with the character of Reepicheep as the image of the ultimate pilgrim.

This notion of pilgrimage is emphasized in the window by the three icons in the royal blue glass beneath the feet of St. James that depict three of the accessories of the pilgrim: the pilgrim’s staff, the pilgrim’s purse, and the scalloped shell, the badge of the pilgrim. All of this seems to serve the theme of pilgrimage associated with his father’s name, and it is important to remember the date of the window’s installation. It was 1933, just months after the publication of Lewis’s first successful book, The Pilgrim’s Regress, written in Belfast and dedicated to one of Lewis’s closest Belfast friends.

The inclusion of an image of St. Mark in the window in his namesake church is not surprising. But I note that the church icon for St. Mark, the lion, is also closely associated with the symbol for Venice, the city traditionally noted as the saint’s final resting place. In the window...
In Lewis’s own life, an element of estrangement existed in the common and family communion between him and his father.

commissioned by Lewis, the artist has wrapped around the shoulders of St. Mark the image of a winged lion. The other lion motif on the old rectory door has already been described above. These images evident in the church traditionally known as the Lion on the Hill had formed an enduring place in Lewis’s mind long before he wrote about some of them. It is little wonder that when Lewis wrote the Narnian Chronicles, the lion should come bounding in, as he put it, and pull the whole story together. These images, planted in his mind during his early days in Belfast, reappear in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe.

What reason can be advanced for the inclusion of an image of St. Luke in the window? Lewis gives us no direct explanation, but there is a clue in the fact that St. Luke is described in the

Gospels as a physician. In describing the events of 1908 regarding his mother’s illness and death, Lewis says that the family lost her gradually—to morphine, to the illness, and to the medics. His concluding childhood memories of Flora were of her being attended to more and more by the doctors and nurses and less and less by the family. The image of St. Luke (the doctor) is therefore a fitting image of these memories. In the window, the winged ox is wrapped around the shoulders of St. Luke, indicating service to mankind. The images of the small buildings that fill the periphery of the window are not images of local Irish architecture. They are more Italian in appearance. They, with St. Luke, may serve as a fitting memorial to his mother, whose name was Florence and who spent childhood years in Italy.

In a letter to Arthur Greeves dated August 17, 1933, Lewis describes the visit by himself and Warnie to Belfast for the specific purpose of enabling Warnie to see the newly installed window in St. Mark’s: “We…then went down Circular Rd to St. Mark’s to see the window which W. (Warnie) had never seen. He was delighted with it.”

Each time I visit St. Mark’s Church in East Belfast with a touring group, I mention two observations apropos to Lewis’s life and writing.

First, his privileged birth and Christian upbringing did not make him a disciple of Jesus. He was brought up in a Christian environment, where he learned the truth of Scripture and was introduced to the sacraments of the church. He was christened in St. Mark’s and confirmed as a teenager. Yet he came to reject Christianity and adopted for a time an aggressively atheistic worldview. Years later he learned that the path of Christian pilgrimage was entered not through privilege or religious observance but through personal commitment via Him who said, “I am the door” (John 10:9).

My visits to St. Mark’s also draw me to the theme of pilgrimage in Lewis’s writing. They help me to appreciate the description of Lewis’s own intellectual journey as described in The Pilgrim’s Regress. I trust this encourages you to read or reread that particular book.

I also encourage you to reconsider the whole notion raised by Lewis in The Voyage of the Dawn Treader—of life’s voyage or journey or pilgrimage. My challenge is for you to read this Narnian story and focus on Reepicheep. He is portrayed comically at times by Lewis and by the films, but Reepicheep is the ultimate pilgrim, even when the chips are down. He is resolute in traveling to the utter east and to Aslan’s country.

From time to time, all followers of Jesus need to reassess where they are on the pilgrim pathway and journey. Let us resolve like Reepicheep, or the pilgrim in John Bunyan’s famous hymn (“He Who Would Valiant Be”) to be valiant, resolved, and constant in following the Master.

Notes:
3 Ibid., 17.
with disabilities. Whatever their characteristics, all humans are made in the image of God and deserve our love. They are not merely some cosmic accident that emerged from random, impersonal processes. They are not merely a hunk of matter for us to manipulate or dominate.

This means we should once again take to heart Lewis’s admonitions to resist the rising tide of dehumanizing philosophies. With love and humility, but also with courage and boldness, we need to proclaim to our “culture of death” the sage words in the Declaration of Independence that “all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

But words are not enough. We must show by our actions that we value the lives of those considered the least among us, whether they are unborn children, newborns with disabilities, adults with cognitive disabilities, or seniors with Alzheimer’s. By our loving words and deeds, we can build a culture of life. Otherwise, given the way our culture seems to be headed, we will witness the death of humanity.

Notes:
1 http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/earth/earthnews/9815862/
Humans-are-plague-on-Earth-Attenborough.html
3 Ibid., 41.
4 Ibid., 84.

There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations—these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub and exploit—immortal horrors or everlasting splendors.

C.S. Lewis

RECOMMENDED READING
Richard Weikart, The Death of Humanity: and the Case for Life (Regnery Faith, 2016)
The Death of Humanity explores our culture’s declining respect for the sanctity of human life, drawing on philosophy and history to reveal the dark road ahead for society if we lose our faith in human life.
A Welcome Change in Apologetics
(continued from page 9)

because, as Guinness repeatedly affirms, people do not merely disagree with intellectual propositions. They “suppress the truth in unrighteousness” (Rom. 1:18 – NASB). Guinness’s extended “anatomy of unbelief” (all of chap. 5) provides deep insight to the complexity of human behavior and takes seriously the Scriptures’ teaching about the darkness, deception, and dangers of sin. Apologetics has always involved both arguments and armor.

In spite of the obstacles, both writers are hopeful. Guinness goes so far as to say, “Our age is quite simply the greatest opportunity for Christian witness since the time of Jesus and the apostles, and our response should be to seize the opportunity with bold and imaginative enterprise.”

Improvements in communication technology connect us better than ever. The trials and pains of our worlds can open people to consider spiritual solutions. And the rise of self-reflection and self-promotion (for good or for ill) pave the way for airing and considering deep personal views.

Neither book offers many practical tips for applying the truths discussed. That’s not a criticism. Intellectual prophets like Guinness and Willard help us see things we might not otherwise see. But others in the body of Christ can help us take next steps. Here are four suggestions I offer for application:

If you don’t already have close alliances with strong believers, make it a high priority to develop them. We need others in the body of Christ for more than fellowship, accountability, and encouragement. We need people close enough to tell us when we’re sounding harsh or uncaring or argumentative. While we’re expanding our apologetics toolboxes, we also need to be deepening our reservoirs of grace. We need to grow in our wonder at how much we are loved through the cross and find ways to express kindness to outsiders. And that often benefits from feedback that lets us know when we’re not as gentle as we should be.

Step out and begin conversations even if you can’t anticipate how they’ll go. Our reliance needs to be on our sovereign God and His desire that none should perish, rather than on our own rhetorical skills or our hope of winning debates. We might begin by admitting doubts to outsiders and wondering if we can compare our uncertainties with theirs. Then we can offer why we’re hopeful, confident, and joyful even in the midst of struggles. Sooner or later, we could share why our belief in Jesus’ resurrection tips the scales for us in the direction of confident faith and helps us reject despair and unbelief.

When engaging with non-Christians about your own faith, consider how to say things as well as what to say. To use Guinness’s language, we need to recover the art of Christian persuasion. Of course, we want to articulate nonnegotiable truths of the gospel and orthodox faith. But we should consider sequence as well as substance. In other words, we might want to reflect on which parts of our message need to be delivered first. There may be points in our presentation when we need to pause and allow the person with whom we are talking to consider and, one hopes, accept part of our message before moving on to “the rest of the story.” For example, if we’re trying to convince our friends that the Bible is a reliable source of authoritative truth, we might ask them if they think there is such a thing as truth. If not, we might build that

But we dare not divorce “apologetics and discipleship,” as we have done for quite some time.
A Welcome Change in Apologetics

case before talking about historical accuracy or archaeological discoveries.

Tone of voice, volume, and facial expression are all parts of interpersonal communication. We dare not assume that we sound as gracious as we should. In fact, sometimes our tone betrays our words. One way to ensure continuity between our verbal and nonverbal messages is to include stories of ways we’ve been changed by the gospel. It’s one thing to tell our friends that the resurrection really happened in history. It’s another to recount times when we’ve felt comforted by that truth while sitting at a funeral or next to a loved one who was dying. The hope of the resurrection is just as important to express as the evidence for its historicity. A grateful tone of voice and a worshipful demeanor may press our point further than lists of reasons or quotations by experts.

I am writing this article during the summer of 2016 as the political climate in the United States continues to grow hotter than I ever imagined it would. I don’t know who will win the next elections, but I am sure the campaigning will get louder, meaner, and uglier. Our culture sounds shrill, angry, and harsh. Sadly, many Christians sound no different than the media moguls on both sides of the political spectrum. To quote the book of James, “My brothers, this should not be.” Let us find words to tell people of their need for salvation and the astounding news that God has provided that salvation. But let us proclaim that good news with more than just words. Let us ask God to make our voices, faces, and eyes match the grace of His gospel. Let us recover persuasion, release the allure of gentleness, and reach out in the manner of Jesus.

My feeling about people in whose conversion I have been allowed to play a part is always mixed with awe and even fear: such as a boy might feel on first being allowed to fire a rifle.

C.S. Lewis

Notes:
1 Os Guinness, Fool’s Talk: Recovering the Art of Christian Persuasion (Downers Grove: IVP Books, 2015), 41.
2 Ibid., 18.
4 Guinness, 17.
5 Willard, 49.
6 Willard, 143.
7 Guinness, 22.
8 Willard, 277.
9 Willard, 28
10 Willard, 107.
11 Guinness, 16.

RECOMMENDED READING
Dallas Willard provides a new model for how we can present the Christian faith to others. This beautiful model of life — this allure of gentleness — he argues, is the foundation for making the most compelling argument for Christianity, one that will convince others that there is something special about Christianity and the Jesus we follow.
Seek after Holiness, Without Which No One Will See the Lord  
(continued from page 11)

in the sense of living to please and glorify the God we love. Paul, the great Apostle of Grace, emphasizes the necessity of holiness when he reproves some in the church in Corinth, the most immoral city in the Roman Empire:

Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. (1 Cor. 6:9–11)

Before their conversion, the Corinthians had been enslaved to various sins, many of them sexual. But they had been set free “by the Spirit of our God.” Some, however, were still committing sexual sin. To them, Paul says clearly that if they continue to practice sexual immorality, adultery, and homosexuality, they will not inherit the kingdom of God. (This would apply to any of the other sins mentioned as well.)

... Paul says clearly that if they continue to practice sexual immorality, adultery, and homosexuality, they will not inherit the kingdom of God.

The church in Thessalonica also receives strong censure.

For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you. (1 Thess. 4:3–8)

These passages teach us that those who continue to deliberately practice sin will not go to heaven. They also reflect the fact that the Greco-Roman world of Paul’s day was a moral cesspool. This is true of the Western world today. We live in a sex-obsessed culture, and it is corrupting the lives of many in the church, as it did in Paul’s day. Research in 2011, for example, showed that 80 percent of evangelicals aged eighteen to twenty-nine have been sexually active outside of marriage. In one survey of professing Christians, 35 percent admitted committing adultery. Pornography is so pervasive that it needs no statistical documentation. Sexual sin is widespread in the church.

A Caution

It would be misleading to assume from the preceding comments that holiness is mostly about sexual behavior. It isn’t. Because sex is such a powerful human drive, sexual sins have always been a major problem. However, as we see from the other sins included in the list set forth in 1 Corinthians 6:9–11, holiness addresses every area of life.

It would also be misleading—and dangerously so—to assume that the pursuit of holiness contributes in any way to God’s gift of salvation in our lives. God does not foresee that we will accept Christ and then save us because of that, nor does He save us because of any good works...
we have done or will do. He does not save us because we pursue holiness. Rather,

God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together in Christ... For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Eph. 2:4–5, 8)

The pursuit of holiness is the fruit (and evidence) of God’s saving grace in us, not its cause, “for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:10). Indifference to holiness raises the question of whether a person has truly received the grace of God and been born again.

The Motivation for Seeking Holiness

What is the motivation for holiness? Fear? Guilt? Duty? These are powerful motivators of behavior, to be sure, and they drive some believers. But they are not God’s way and eventually produce bitter fruit. The proper motivation for pursuing a holy life is gratitude to God for His amazing goodness, grace, and love toward us. We naturally seek to please the One we love, and it is grateful love for God that should move our hearts to please Him in all we think and say and do.

J.I. Packer puts it this way:

Holiness starts inside a person, with a right purpose that seeks to express itself in a right performance. It is a matter, not just of the motions I go through, but the motives that prompt me to go through them. A holy person’s motivating aim, passion, desire, longing, aspiration, goal, and drive is to please God, both by what one does and what one avoids doing.4

The Source of Holiness

What is the source of holiness? Discipline? Willpower? These are surely important and have a vital role in our becoming holy, but they are not the source. The ultimate source of holiness, which alone can make our discipline and willpower effective, is the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity. “There is no greater secret of holiness than the infilling of him whose name is Holy,” says John Stott.9

Every true child of God has been born anew of the Holy Spirit and has the Spirit dwelling within. A vital work of the Holy Spirit, as His name suggests, is to make us holy. And He empowers us to overcome sins as we earnestly seek to put them to death (Rom. 8:13). We cannot do it without Him, and He will not do it without us. Unfortunately, in many of us the Spirit is resident but not ruling; we do not submit and yield to His rule in our lives, to His guidance and direction of our daily attitudes and behaviors.

There is no evil or moral flaw in God’s character; such qualities are completely antithetical to His nature.

That is why Paul exhorts the Ephesians (who had received the Spirit when born again [Eph. 1:13]): “Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18). The Greek verb for filled’ is a present passive imperative, meaning a command to let the Spirit fill us continuously; that is, to continuously yield ourselves, be obedient, to the Spirit’s control. Paul goes on to describe what this looks like. More generally, the Spirit’s daily leading normally takes the form of calling to our minds the teaching of Scripture (or its implications) in whatever situation we face.

Paul gives similar counsel to the Galatians: “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh” (Gal. 5:16). When we are filled with and yielded to the Holy Spirit, we have power to overcome the desires of the flesh and to live in a holy obedience that pleases God. We are able to “walk by the Spirit” (Gal. 5:25, NASB), which produces in us the fruit of the
Seek after Holiness, Without Which No One Will See the Lord

Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. This a beautiful portrait of the character of Jesus—of holiness. Study what the Bible teaches about the Holy Spirit and seek to be filled with the Spirit daily. It is the path into the Christlike holiness that God calls us to.

Pursuing Holiness

John Stott once said, “No one ever drifted into holiness.” Again and again in the Scriptures we are exhorted to respond to God’s free grace by earnestly pursuing holiness. Such vigorous effort is the fruit of God’s grace in us, not an attempt to earn it (which is legalism). We must begin by heeding Paul’s instruction: “I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship” (Rom. 12:1). Until we do this, we will not yield ourselves to the leading of the Holy Spirit and will not experience His enabling power to overcome sin. But once we have surrendered wholeheartedly to God, we can go forward in holiness. “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Rom. 12:2), and “Cleanse yourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God” (2 Cor. 7:1); or as Paul said to the Philippians, to “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work his good pleasure” (Phil. 2:12–13).

What does this holiness look like on a practical level? A helpful description comes from J.C. Ryle:

“Holiness is the habit of being of one mind with God, according as we find His mind described in Scripture. It is the habit of agreeing in God’s judgment, hating what He hates, loving what He loves, and measuring everything in this world by the standard of His Word.”

A good immediate step to take toward holiness is to pray as did Robert Murray McCheyne, “Lord, make me as holy as a pardoned sinner can be made,” then ask God to convict you of any sin in your life, anything that is hindering your growth in holiness. Follow King David’s example and pray:

Search me, O God, and know my heart!  
Try me and know my thoughts!  
And see if there be any grievous way in me,  
and lead me in the way everlasting!  
(Ps. 139:23–24)

Whenever we are convicted of sin, we must repent, confess, and forsake it and accept God’s forgiveness. This restores our fellowship with God and our joy, for “if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). Then we must ask the Holy Spirit to fill us afresh as we continue yielding ourselves to Him in obedience. This is the path of true holiness and joy in the Holy Spirit!

Through Christ’s atoning death, we have been freed from the penalty of sin; by the Spirit’s empowering presence, we are being delivered from the power of sin; and by the Father’s great mercy, we will one day be delivered from the presence of sin. Thanks be to God!

Notes:
1 John Stott, Essential for Tomorrow’s Christians (London: Scripture Union, 1978)
2 Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version. Any italics are mine.
3 See also 1 Thess. 3:12–13.
4 See also Eph. 5:1–2.
5 See also Gal. 5:19–21.
10 J.C. Ryle, Holiness (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2012 - 1602)
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Os Guinness Talk

Our American Moment: The Decline of Culture and How Christians can Respond | November 11, 2016, McLean Presbyterian Church, McLean. 7:30pm – 9:30pm.

Truth in the Northwest: Real Questions/Real Answers
Featuring: Nathan Betts and Margaret Manning
Date: Saturday, December 3, 2016 | Location: University Presbyterian Church
4540 15th Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98105 | Time: 10:00 AM

The Gospel and Sexual Identity with Dr. Christopher Yuan
Date: Thursday, October 27, 2016
Location: Ford Family Recital Hall-DeYor Performing Arts Center
260 West Federal St. | Youngstown, OH 44503 | Time: 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

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