



Further Up & Further In

Exploring *Mere Christianity* with C.S. Lewis

Book 3: Christian Behaviour

Memory: 2 Peter 1:3-4

“His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.”



Session 2: Preview

1. Consider the significance of the "Three Parts of Morality" framework.
2. Briefly examine the relationship between moral choices, virtues, and character.
3. Focus on Lewis's idea of pride as the "Great Sin" and humility as the remedy.
4. Discuss the significance of the "Three Theological Virtues."

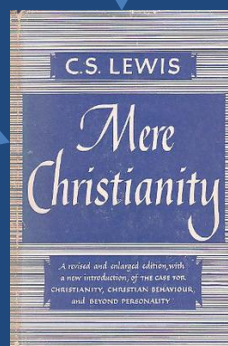
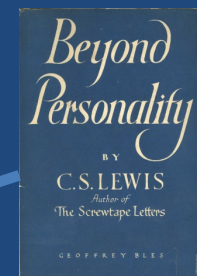
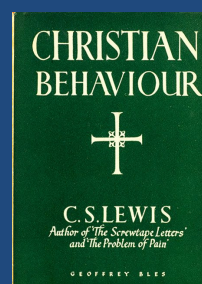
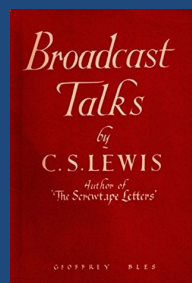
Conscience

Christ

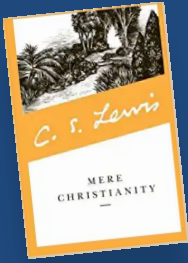
Character

Change

Four BBC Radio talks (1941-1944) that became three books that later became one book (1952)



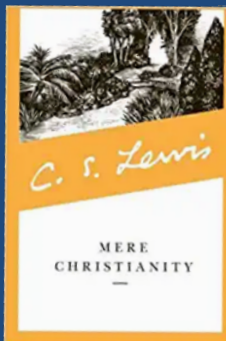
1952



Mere Christianity

1. Book 1: Right and Wrong: As a Clue to the Meaning of the Universe
2. Book 2: Christian Belief
3. **Book 3: Christian Behaviour**
4. Book 4: Beyond Personality: Or First Steps In the Doctrine of the Trinity

Mere Christianity: Book 3



Christian Behaviour

1. The Three Parts of Morality
2. The “Cardinal Virtues”
3. Social Morality
4. Morality and Psychoanalysis
5. Sexual Morality
6. Christian Marriage
7. Forgiveness
8. The Great Sin
9. Charity
10. Hope
11. Faith
12. Faith



Defining Terms

Virtues – a word that is taken from the Latin *virtus*, which means "strength" or "courage." *Mere Christianity*, following Medieval Christianity, suggests that there are seven primary virtues that can be divided into two categories. Cardinal ("pivotal") virtues consist of prudence, temperance, justice, and fortitude. The theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity are often seen as more God-directed virtues though every virtue is ultimately theological.



Defining Terms

Character – "the mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual" (The New Oxford Dictionary). The term "character" is sometimes used positively to refer to a person's aggregate of wisdom and virtue.

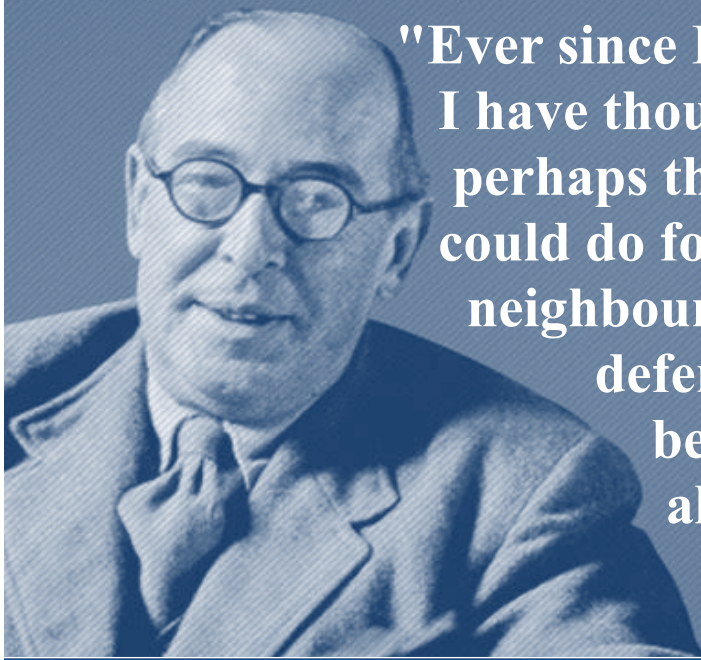
Conscience

Christ

Character

Change

Important!

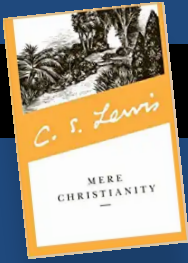


"Ever since I became a Christian, I have thought that the best, perhaps the only, service I could do for my unbelieving neighbours was to explain and defend the belief that has been common to nearly all Christians at all times." p.VII

C.S. Lewis

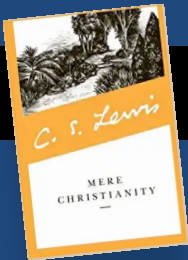
Lewis invites his readers to consider the explanatory power of the Christian faith in light of

- the options available for answering questions about the moral nature of the universe
- the existence of evil in a moral universe
- the significance of free will as it relates to the existence of evil
- the fact that human beings got disconnected from God's purposes
- God's remedy for the human situation
- the radical claims that Jesus made about himself
the central place that Jesus plays in God's plan for history
- the reality that we can partake of the "Christ-life"



Chapter 1: The Three Parts of Reality

“There is a story about a schoolboy who was asked what he thought God was like. He replied that, as far as he could make out, God was ‘the sort of person who is always snooping around to see if anyone is enjoying himself and then trying to stop it’. And I am afraid that is the sort of idea that the word Morality raises in a good many people’s minds: something that interferes, something that stops you having a good time. In reality, moral rules are directions for running the human machine.” p.69

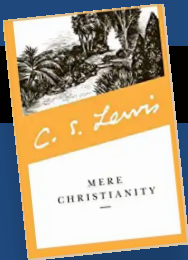


Chapter 1: The Three Parts of Reality

“Morality, then, seems to be concerned with three things. **Firstly**, with fair play and harmony between individuals. **Secondly**, with what might be called tidying up or harmonising the things inside each individual. **Thirdly**, with the general purpose of human life as a whole: what man was made for: what course the whole fleet ought to be on: what tune the conductor of the band wants it to play.” p.72

Time to Discuss

How do you think many people conceive of the purpose of the Christian faith?



Chapter 2: The “Cardinal Virtues”

Prudence/ Wisdom

Practical
common
sense

Temperance/ Self-Control

Going to the right
length and no
further

“not allowing
something to take
over one’s life.”

Justice/ Fairness

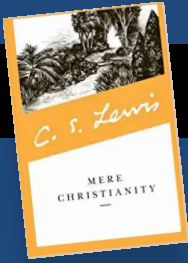
Fairness,
honesty,
truthfulness

“keeping promises”

Fortitude/ Courage

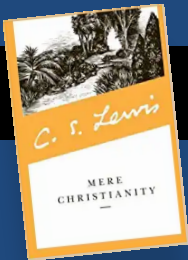
Includes
courage that
faces danger
and sticks it
under pain
“guts”

“We might think that God wanted simply obedience to a set of rules: whereas He really wants people of a particular kind.”
“... right actions done for the wrong reason do not help to build the internal quality or character called a ‘virtue’, and it is this quality or character that really matters.”



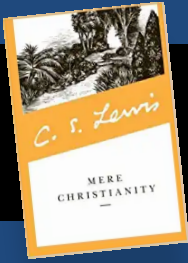
Chapter 3: Social Morality

- Jesus did not teach a new morality. The Golden Rule sums up what everyone knows to be right.
- Christianity does not claim to teach a detailed social program.
- Christians who have the gifts and training to speak to social and political issues should seek to put the Golden Rule into action.
- The rest of us should follow up practicing the Golden Rule in all our relationships. **Continue**



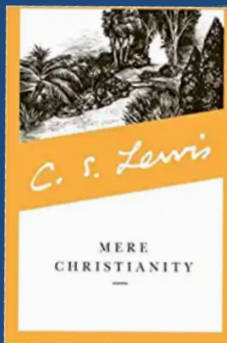
Chapter 3: Social Morality

- A “Christian Society” would encourage responsibility and compassion.
- It would insist on proper respect for those in authority
- Its economic life would be socialistic
- Its family life and code of manners would seem “old fashion.”
- It would be characterized by charity for those in need.



Chapter 4: Morality and Psychoanalysis

“And taking your life as a whole, with all your innumerable choices, all your life long you are slowly turning this central thing either into a heavenly creature or into a hellish creature: either into a creature that is in harmony with God, and with other creatures, and with itself, or else into one that is in a state of war and hatred with God, and with its fellow-creatures, fellow-creatures, and with itself. To be the one kind of creature is heaven: that is, it is joy and peace and knowledge and power. To be the other means madness, horror, idiocy, rage, impotence, and eternal loneliness. Each of us at each moment is progressing to the one state or the other.” p.92



Christian Behaviour

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Time to Break

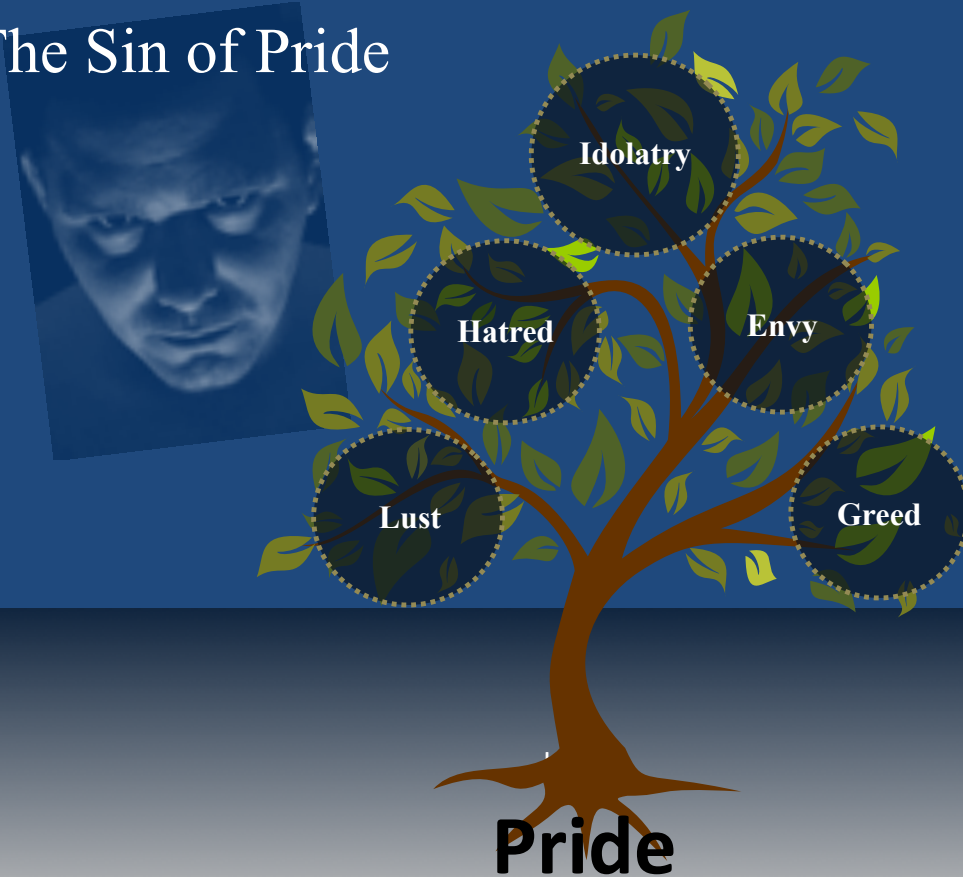
Stand up and take 5



Chapter 8: The Great Sin

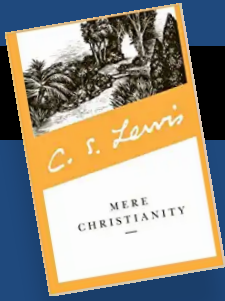
“There is no fault which makes a man more unpopular, and no fault which we are more unconscious of in ourselves. And the more we have it ourselves, the more we dislike it in others.” p.121

The Sin of Pride



Chapter 8: The Great Sin

“Now what you want to get clear is that *Pride is essentially competitive*— is competitive by its very nature— while the other vices are competitive only, so to speak, by accident. Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next man. We say that people are proud of being rich, or clever, or good-looking, but they are not. They are proud of being richer, or cleverer, or better-looking than others.” p.122



Chapter 8: The Great Sin

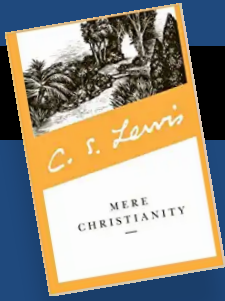
“In God you come up against something which is in every respect immeasurably superior to yourself. Unless you know God as that— and, therefore, know yourself as nothing in comparison— you do not know God at all. As long as you are proud you cannot know God. A proud man is always looking down on things and people: and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you.” p.124



Chapter 8: The Great Sin

“The real test of being in the presence of God is, that you either **forget about yourself** altogether or see yourself as a small, dirty object. It is better to forget about yourself altogether.” p.125

“It is a terrible thing that the worst of all the vices can smuggle itself into the very centre of our religious life. But you can see why. The other, and less bad, vices come from the devil working on us through our animal nature. But this (pride) does not come through our animal nature at all. It comes direct from Hell. It is purely spiritual: consequently it is far more subtle and deadly.” P. 125



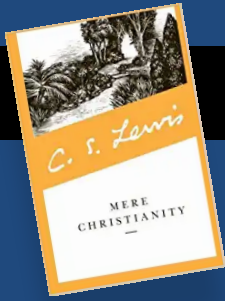
Chapter 8: The Great Sin

“The vain person wants praise, applause, admiration, too much and is always angling for it. It is a fault, but a child-like and even (in an odd way) a humble fault. It shows that you are not yet completely contented with your own admiration. You value other people enough to want them to look at you. You are, in fact, still human. The real black, diabolical Pride, comes when you look down on others so much that you do not care what they think of you.” p.126



Chapter 8: The Great Sin

“The point is, He wants you to know Him: wants to give you Himself. And He and you are two things of such a kind that if you really get into any kind of touch with Him you will, in fact, be humble— delightedly humble, feeling the infinite relief of having for once got rid of all the silly nonsense about your own dignity which has made you restless and unhappy all your life.” p. 127



Chapter 8: The Great Sin

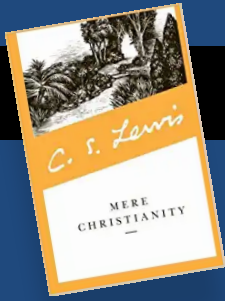
“Do not imagine that if you meet a really humble man he will be what most people call ‘humble’ nowadays: he will not be a sort of greasy, smarmy person, who is always telling you that, of course, he is nobody. Probably all you will think about him is that he seemed a cheerful, intelligent chap who took a real interest in what you said to him. If you do dislike him it will be because you feel a little envious of anyone who seems to enjoy life so easily. He will not be thinking about humility: he will not be thinking about himself at all.” p.129



Chapter 9: Charity/Love

“A state of the will, not of the feelings which we must "learn to have about other people." It is a concern for the well-being of others.”

"Don't waste time bothering whether you love your neighbor, act as if you did." p. 199



Chapter 10: Hope

“Living in the present world with a longing for God and his coming Kingdom and an expectancy that is based on the promise of the coming world. This expectancy enables a person to work toward a better world because of the promise of the future.”

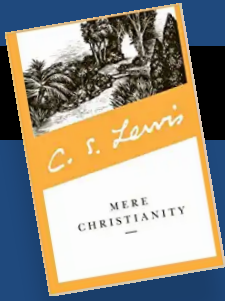
"If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world." p. 137



Chapter 11: Faith

“1. Belief—accepting or regarding as true the doctrines of Christianity

“Now Faith, in the sense in which I am here using the word, is the art of holding on to things your reason has once accepted, in spite of your changing moods. For moods will change, whatever view your reason takes. I know that by experience.” p.140



Chapter 12: Faith

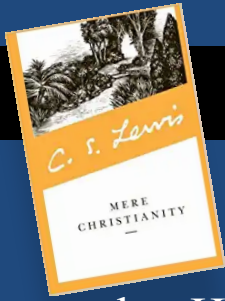
2. Trust—realizing that we cannot be virtuous on our own, we entrust ourselves to God to fulfill our requirements.

"What God cares about is not exactly our actions. What he cares about is that we should be creatures of a certain kind of quality—the kind of creatures He intended us to be—creatures related to Him in a certain way." p. 145



Chapter 12: Faith

"I know the words 'leave it to God' can be misunderstood, but they must stay for the moment. The sense in which a Christian leaves it to God is that he puts all his trust in Christ: trusts that Christ will somehow share with him the perfect human obedience which He carried out from His birth to His crucifixion: that Christ will make the man more like Himself and, in a sense, make good his deficiencies. In Christian language, He will share His 'sonship' with us, will make us, like Himself, 'Sons of God': in Book IV I shall attempt to analyse the meaning of those words a little further. If you like to put it that way, Christ offers something for nothing: He even offers everything for nothing. In a sense, the whole Christian life consists in accepting that very remarkable offer." p.147



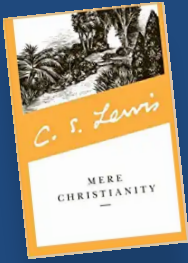
Chapter 12: Faith

“To trust Him means, of course, trying to do all that He says. There would be no sense in saying you trusted a person if you would not take his advice. Thus if you have really handed yourself over to Him, it must follow that you are trying to obey Him. But trying in a new way, a less worried way. Not doing these things in order to be saved, but because He has begun to save you already. Not hoping to get to Heaven as a reward for your actions, but inevitably wanting to act in a certain way because a first faint gleam of Heaven is already inside you.” p.147-148



Chapter 12: Faith

“I think all Christians would agree with me if I said that though Christianity seems at the first to be all about morality, all about duties and rules and guilt and virtue, yet it leads you on, out of all that, into something beyond. One has a glimpse of a country where they do not talk of those things, except perhaps as a joke. Every one there is filled full with what we should call goodness as a mirror is filled with light. But they do not call it goodness. They do not call it anything. They are not thinking of it. They are too busy looking at the source from which it comes. But this is near the stage where the road passes over the rim of our world. No one's eyes can see very far beyond that: lots of people's eyes can see further than mine.” p.149-150



Mere Christianity

BOOK 4:

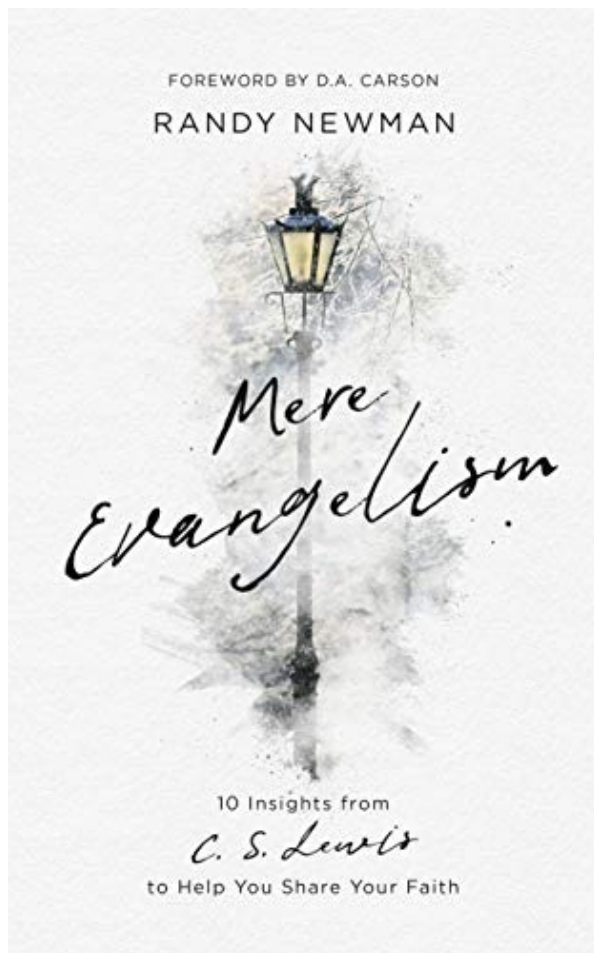
Beyond Personality: Or First Steps in the Doctrine of the Trinity

Conscience

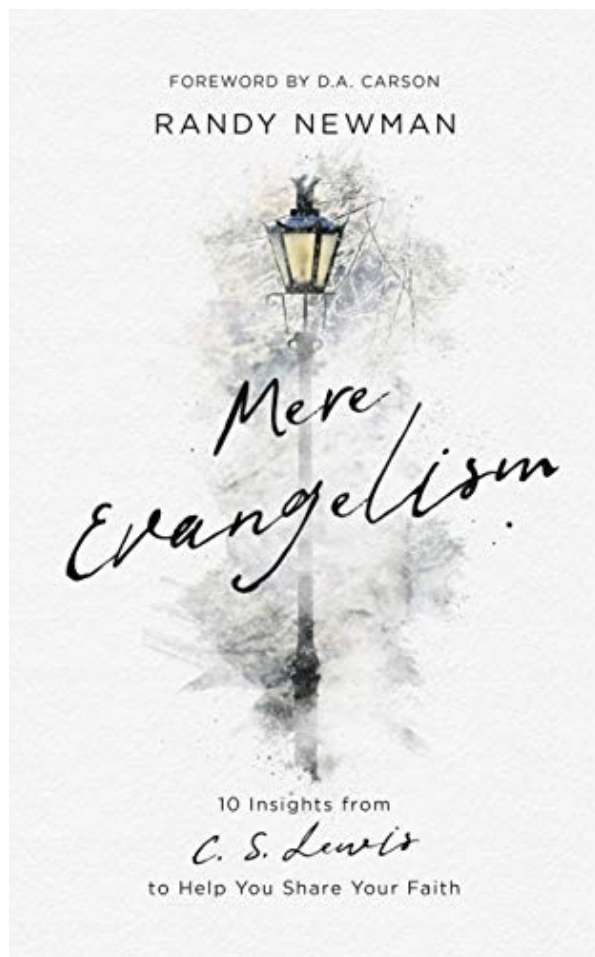
Christ

Character

Change



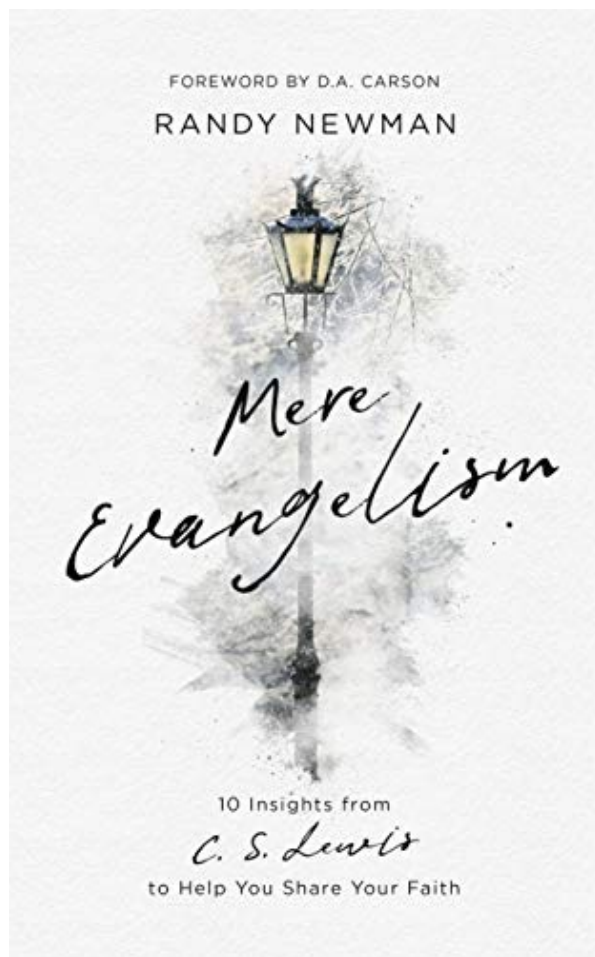
What do you think of John Stott's comment on page 23 that "people are looking for an integrated worldview that makes sense of their experience?"



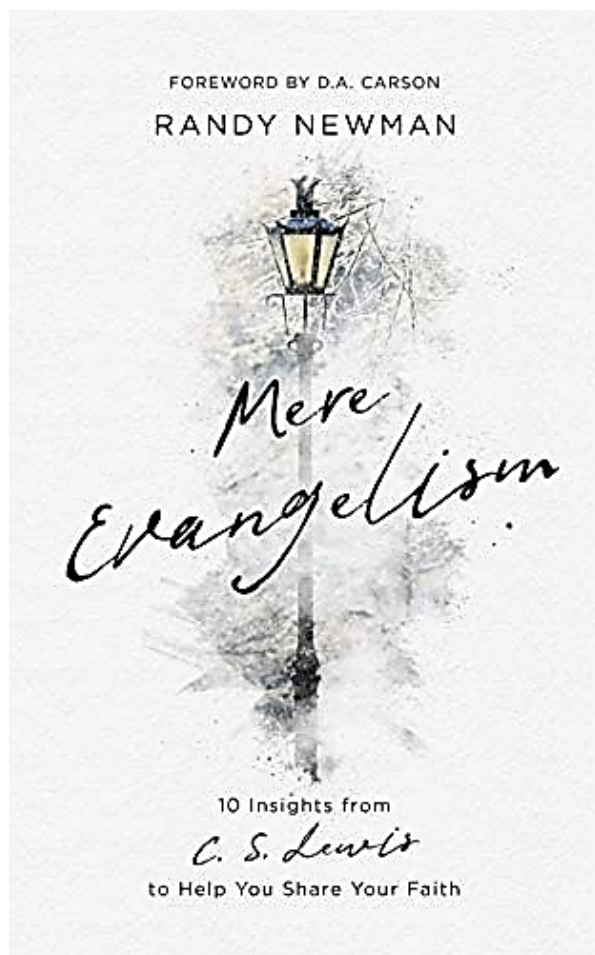
“People’s presuppositions—their underlying, often unspoken beliefs about themselves, God, and the world—either set them up for belief in the gospel or for the rejection of it. Some assumptions pave the way for acceptance. Others need to be torn down.” (p.25)

Sowing and Reaping: Jn. 4:34-38

“My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Don’t you have a saying, ‘It’s still four months until harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. Thus the saying ‘One sows and another reaps’ is true. **I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor.**”



“There are four key points. **First**, the different tasks of sowing and reaping may be accomplished by different people. **Second**, Jesus calls sowing “the hard work.” **Third**, reapers benefit from the work done by others before they pursue their task. **Fourth**, we can expect the dual process to yield joyful results.” p. 29



What does Randy Newman mean when he says that the gospel creates a tension by including both bad news and good news?

(see pages 57 ff.)