

KNOWING & DOING

C · S · LEWIS INSTITUTE



A Teaching Quarterly for Discipleship of Heart and Mind

From the Spring 2017 issue of Knowing & Doing:

10 Decade of DISCIPLESHIP



Looking for Adventure?

Notes from the President

by Joel S. Woodruff, Ed.D.
President, C.S. Lewis Institute

We all long for adventure whether it is in real life or in our dreams! Why else would millions around the globe flock to theaters to see the latest sequel of Star Wars or the Jason Bourne series? And how many enjoy spending countless hours reading quest novels like Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* or even C.S. Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia*?

We seem to be wired for adventure and the same basic storyline hooks us every time. As a writer friend shared with me, all good story telling follows this basic formula: A story begins with a character who wants something, struggles to overcome barriers that stand in the way of achieving it and moves through a series of actions to overcome them.

Yet even greater than living vicariously through a story or movie adventure is the joy, challenge and thrill of being part of a real life adventure yourself. The great British explorer, Ernest Shackleton, who managed to save his entire expeditionary team in Antarctica in an amazing adventure, was said to have recruited his crew with the following legendary advertisement:

“Men wanted for hazardous journey. Low wages, bitter cold, long hours of complete darkness. Safe return doubtful. Honour and recognition in event of success.”

Some of you, even today, would love to be part of Shackleton's expeditionary team, while others would shiver at the thought and prefer to remain in the comfort of your own home. Yet, either way, whether you and I are aware of it or not, Jesus has offered us a real, not a virtual or vicarious, life of adventure in which we can experience the challenge, thrill and joy of being part of a purpose greater than ourselves and actually play a vital role. Jesus calls you and me with these words, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it.” (Luke 9:23-24)

Often when we read these verses we speak of the cost of discipleship, the denial of self, the taking up of our cross and the hardships that are entailed in living our lives for Jesus in this fallen world. Yet that is all part of the adventure of discipleship in which a sure promise of great reward is given to all who commit – their very lives or souls are saved! There is no greater reward than that, and the alternative is far worse – the death of our souls.

Yes, the Christian life may be hard at times, but this is part of the adventure and Jesus also tells us, “I came that they (his disciples) may have life and have it abundantly.” There is no greater joy and fulfillment than accepting Jesus’ call and even the hardships can be viewed as part of the adventure of discipleship!

C.S. Lewis puts it this way in *Mere Christianity*:

What we have been told is how we men can be drawn into Christ – can become part of the wonderful present which the young Prince of the universe wants to offer to His Father – that present which is Himself and therefore us in Him. It is the only thing we were made for. And there are strange, exciting hints in the Bible that when we are drawn in, a great many other things in Nature will begin to come right. The bad dream will be over: it will be morning.¹

Are you ready to be drawn into Christ and answer His adventurous call to discipleship? ☒

Joel

Notes:

¹ Lewis, C.S. *Mere Christianity*. New York: Touchstone, 1980, p. 172.



Joel S. Woodruff, President, C.S. Lewis Institute, has worked in higher education, “tent-making,” nonprofit administration, and pastoral ministries in Alaska, Israel, Hungary, France, and Northern Virginia. He served as Dean of Students, Chaplain, and Professor of Bible & Theology at European Bible Institute, where he helped train Europeans both for professional ministry and to be Christian leaders in the marketplace. Prior to joining the Institute, he was on the leadership team of Oakwood Services International, a nonprofit educational and humanitarian organization. He is a graduate of Wheaton College, earned his M.Div. from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and has a doctorate in Organizational Leadership from Nova Southeastern University.

As a Parish-Pulpit Fellow, he studied Biblical Backgrounds & Archaeology in Israel for a year.

Knowing & Doing is published by C.S. Lewis Institute; 8001 Braddock Road, Suite 301; Springfield, VA 22151 | www.cslewisinstitute.org. Electronic copies of this PDF file may be duplicated and transmitted via e-mail for personal or ministry use. Articles may not be modified without prior written permission of the Institute. For questions, you may call us at 703.914.5602 or email us at staff@cslewisinstitute.org.

2017 C.S. LEWIS INSTITUTE, *Discipleship of Heart and Mind*

In the legacy of C.S. Lewis, the Institute endeavors to develop disciples who can articulate, defend, and live faith in Christ through personal and public life.