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# A Study Of C.S. Lewis View Of Christian Faith As Depicted In Mere Christianity

## Mere Christianity by C. S. Lewis (Macmillan Publishers, 1952)

C. S. Lewis was an atheist for many years did not see the values of God. After discovering who God is and becoming a Christian, he discovered the value of life. He discovered that life is a journey that can eventually lead us to the ultimate source of joy. Mere Christianity unpacks the different important concepts of the Christian faith. This book is possibly C. S. Lewis' most frequently read work, and was originally given as a series of broadcast talks during the Second World War. These talks were purposeful because they were used to simply "explain and defend the belief that has been common to nearly all Christians at all times." C.S Lewis touches on many different topics in his writing such as, what Christians believe, Christian behavior, and the doctrine of the Trinity. These writings cover many different themes within these topics such as forgiveness, hope, faith, the Trinitarian God, and so on.

In chapter eleven, C.S. Lewis writes on the topic of faith. He splits the topic of faith into two separate ideas because he believes that the first scene of faith is belief by accepting or regarding as true the doctrines of Christianity. The second sense of faith being "higher" sense of the Christian term because we discover this faith when we have tried our hardest to be Christian, and we find that we cannot. This leads us to find out what God truly cares about.

C. S. Lewis starts to talk about the process of accepting Christ. He states that one should only accept Christ if they truly believe it, not just because someone says it is true. However, after accepting Christ within a few weeks "There will come a moment when there is bad news, or he is in trouble, or is living among a lot of other people who do not believe it, and all at once his emotions will rise up and carry out a sort of blitz on his belief" (140). When trouble comes, C.S Lewis states that there will be the temptation that Christianity being untrue will not seem convenient. In these times, the emotions of that particular situation will overwhelm the belief in God. This will lead to disbelief and doubt. Faith is the art of holding on to things that your reason has once accepted even if moods have changed. However, C.S Lewis suggests that one remedy these issues by spending every day deliberately reflecting on some of the main doctrines of Christianity. Stating, "We have to be continually reminded of what we believe" (141). C.S Lewis declares this because he sees the significance of feeding this belief because it will not automatically stay in our mind. He continues on to say that faith in the second or higher sense is the most difficult thing to have. This is because; as much as we try to live a life worthy of His standards we realize that this is not possibly attainable. The chapter is important to the

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rest of the book because faith is the foundation of a Christian. This chapter also gives the rationality for faith and the reason to stick with it rather than falling away when life gets tough.

C.S Lewis makes a strong position in the third book in chapter three when he talks about how Christians should take a lead in the society with their faith in Christ. He summarizes his position on social morality when he states:

“And when they say that the Church should give us a lead, they ought to mean that some Christians- those who happen to have the right talents- should be economists and statesmen, and that all economists and statesmen should be Christians, and that their whole efforts in politics and economics should be directed to putting "Do as you would be done by" into action. (83)

I find this position that he takes to be relevant even in the age of the church in today's culture. He does this by telling his readers that Christians that have the talents to be economists and statesmen should be Christ-centered economists and statesmen. C.S Lewis is making the position that it is not just up to the preachers and clergy to impact others with Christianity but “the job is really on us, on the laymen” (83).

I find this position that he takes to be very simple yet profound. His position makes me think of Cairn Universities Approach to educating students to so there will be, “biblical integration, the cultivation of wisdom, and strategic engagement with the world.” This idea of compartmentalizing our faith is something relevant to Christians today; by trying to integrate “Do as you would be done by” into action in our daily walk of life. This is what Jesus commanded his disciples to do, to drop everything and to follow him. Disciples like Paul used his tent making to reach people for Christ. Paul was a missionary, but his trade was not mutually exclusive or compartmentalized from his ministry. The two roles were intertwined, and he was a tentmaker with the intention of his Christian faith. This can be seen throughout Mere Christianity in the other topics he speaks about such as, Christian Marriage, Forgiveness Charity, Hope, The New Man, and so on. Christians ought to take a lead in their society in these different facets of life. This idea of social morality should affect every aspect of our life and interactions with people in our lives. In result, this is why I believe his position is valid and important to our culture today.

Another topic that C.S Lewis touches on is in book four chapters eight titled “Is Christianity Hard or Easy?” I thought this was a fascinating expiation of how in once sense the Christian walk can be hard, yet easy. C.S Lewis describes this position when he writes have:

Christ Himself sometimes describes the Christian way as very hard, sometimes as very easy. He says, "Take up your Cross"-in other words, it is like going to be beaten to death in a

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concentration camp. Next minute he says, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light." He means both. And one can just see why both are true (197).

He describes how Christ does not just want some of us but yet all of us. The Church in essence exists to draw men into Christ, to make little Christs. I agree with what C.S Lewis writes in this chapter because as I discover and read more of the New Testament I learn that when Jesus says to "follow me" he means all of who we are needs to follow him. Too often in our culture today, Christians give up on fully following Christ and don't rely on trusting God for strength and help when someone times the faith can become difficult. As C.S Lewis said himself putting on Christ "...is the whole of Christianity" (195).

Throughout Mere Christianity, the idea of Christianity has to be about embracing Christ fully while embracing and counting the cost. For example in book three, he discusses that when we discover that our whole life is about God, we can truly start to work on obtaining life. C.S Lewis writes. "...God can really get to work. It is after this that real life begins. The man is awake now" (143). In result, the idea that C.S Lewis proposes that Christianity is hard yet at the time easy is true because even though it may be hard to deny are on own flesh, Christ will give us the continual strength to overcome this desire.

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