



Mere Christianity

Week 2: May 27, 2018

“What Lies Behind Our Sense of Right and Wrong?”

Up to Now

In the first three chapters, Lewis made the case that there really is an objective law of right and wrong, a set of moral principles that society did not create, which becomes clear when people quarrel. Here in chapter four and five, Lewis now turns to what might be behind this law.¹

Week Two

“What Lies Behind Our Sense of Right and Wrong?”

Mere Christianity chapters covered:

- Book 1, Chapter 4: “What Lies Behind the Law?”
- Book 1, Chapter 5: “We Have Cause to Be Uneasy”

Further Study for the Week

Lewis concludes Book 1 of *Mere Christianity* with chapter five, in which he notes that some readers may be turned off by the fact that it is now clear he is going to speak about religion. He comments that they may even feel as though he has tricked them by seeming at first like he was going to talk about philosophy when all along this has been just another “religious jaw” (28).

Understanding that we all have a sense of right and wrong and that there must be something or someone real behind the universal experience was a pivotal first step for Lewis. People all over the world have a curious idea that humans should behave in a certain way. Lewis realized that he could not even live up to the standards he set for himself.

Question 1: Why might the God of grace who makes available forgiveness and loves people in spite of what they do provide a newfound freedom for Lewis?

Throughout Book 1, Lewis has been making two points: that we, as humans, have insider knowledge that we ought to behave in a certain standard and that we all fail to live up to this standard.

¹ From *Discussing Mere Christianity: Exploring the History, Meaning, and Relevance of C. S. Lewis' Greatest Book* by Devin Brown (Zondervan, 2015)

Question 2: What does Scripture have to say about our fallen nature? (See Romans 1:18-21 and Romans 3:23.)

Question 3: In what way does your own fallen nature most often rear its ugly head?

G. K. Chesterton once wrote, “The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult; and left untried.”

Question 4: Do you know people who are willing to talk about philosophy, or any other topic, but put up barriers to Christianity because they think it has failed them?

Question 5: What would you say to someone who is not interested in anything having to do with Christianity because that would be, as Lewis puts it, trying to “put the clock back”?

Reading for Next Week

- Book 2, Chapter 1: “The Rival Conceptions of God”
- Book 2, Chapter 2: “The Invasion”

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