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SCREWTAPE PROPOSES A TOAST

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PREFACE TO THE PAPERBACK EDITION

IT WAS DURING THE second German War that the letters of Screwtape appeared in (now extinct) *The Guardian*. I hope they did not hasten its death, but they certainly lost it one reader. A country clergyman wrote to the editor, withdrawing his subscription on the ground that "much of the advice given in these letters seemed to him not only erroneous but positively diabolical."

In general, however, they had a reception I had never dreamed of. Reviews were either laudatory or filled with that sort of anger which tells an author

that he has hit his target; sales were at first (by my standards) prodigious, and have continued steady.

Of course, sales do not always mean what authors hope. If you gauged the amount of Bible reading in England by the number of Bibles sold, you would go far astray. Sales of *The Screwtape Letters*, in their own little way, suffer from a similar ambiguity. It is the sort of book that gets given to godchildren, the sort that gets read aloud at retreats. It is even, as I have noticed with a chastened smile, the sort that gravitates towards spare bedrooms, there to live a life of undisturbed tranquillity in company with *The Road Mender*, *John Inglesant*, and *The Life of the Bee*. Sometimes it is bought for even more humiliating reasons. A lady whom I knew discovered that the pretty little probationer who filled her hot-water bottle in the hospital had read *Screwtape*. She also discovered why.

"You see," said the girl, "we were warned that at interviews, after the real, technical questions are over, matrons and people sometimes ask about your general interests. The best thing is to say you've read something. So they gave us a list of about ten books that usually go down pretty well and said we ought to read at least one of them."

"And you chose *Screwtape*?"

"Well, of course; it was the shortest."

Still, when all allowances have been made, the book has had readers of the genuine sort sufficiently numerous to make it worthwhile answering some of the questions it has raised in their minds.

The commonest question is whether I really "believe in the Devil."

Now, if by "the Devil" you mean a power opposite to God and, like God, self-existent from all eternity, the answer is certainly No. There is no uncreated being except God. God has no opposite. No being could attain a "perfect badness" opposite to the perfect goodness of God; for when you have taken away every kind of good thing (intelligence, will, memory, energy, and existence itself) there would be none of him left.

The proper question is whether I believe in devils. I do. That is to say, I believe in angels, and I believe that some of these, by the abuse of their free will, have become enemies to God and, as a corollary, to us. These we may call devils. They do not differ in nature from good angels, but their nature is depraved. *Devil* is the opposite of *angel* only as *Bad Man* is the opposite of *Good Man*. Satan, the leader or dictator of devils, is the opposite, not of God, but of Michael.

I believe this not in the sense that it is part of my creed, but in the sense that it is one of my opinions. My religion would not be in ruins if this opinion were shown to be false. Till that happens—and proofs of a negative are hard to come by—I shall retain it. It seems to me to explain a good many facts. It agrees with the plain sense of Scripture, the tradition of Christendom, and the beliefs of most men at most times. And it conflicts with nothing that any of the sciences has shown to be true.

It should be (but it is not) unnecessary to add that

a belief in angels, whether good or evil, does not mean a belief in either as they are represented in art and literature. Devils are depicted with bats' wings and good angels with birds' wings, not because anyone holds that moral deterioration would be likely to turn feathers into membrane, but because most men like birds better than bats. They are given wings at all in order to suggest the swiftness of unimpeded intellectual energy. They are given human form because man is the only rational creature we know. Creatures higher in the natural order than ourselves, either incorporeal or animating bodies of a sort we cannot experience, must be represented symbolically if they are to be represented at all.

These forms are not only symbolical but were always known to be symbolical by reflective people. The Greeks did not believe that the gods were really like the beautiful human shapes their sculptors gave them. In their poetry a god who wishes to "appear" to a mortal temporarily assumes the likeness of a man. Christian theology has nearly always explained the "appearance" of an angel in the same way. It is only the ignorant, said Dionysius in the fifth century, who dream that spirits are really winged men.

In the plastic arts these symbols have steadily degenerated. Fra Angelico's angels carry in their face and gesture the peace and authority of Heaven. Later come the chubby infantile nudes of Raphael; finally the soft, slim, girlish, and consolatory angels of nineteenth century art, shapes so feminine that they avoid being voluptuous only by their total insipidity—the frigid houris of a teatable paradise. They are a

pernicious symbol. In Scripture the visitation of an angel is always alarming; it has to begin by saying "Fear not." The Victorian angel looks as if it were going to say, "There, there."

The literary symbols are more dangerous because they are not so easily recognised as symbolical. Those of Dante are the best. Before his angels we sink in awe. His devils, as Ruskin rightly remarked, in their rage, spite, and obscenity, are far more like what the reality must be than anything in Milton. Milton's devils, by their grandeur and high poetry, have done great harm, and his angels owe too much to Homer and Raphael. But the really pernicious image is Goethe's Mephistopheles. It is Faust, not he, who really exhibits the ruthless, sleepless, unsmiling concentration upon self which is the mark of Hell. The humorous, civilised, sensible, adaptable Mephistopheles has helped to strengthen the illusion that evil is liberating.

A little man may sometimes avoid some single error made by a great one, and I was determined that my own symbolism should at least not err in Goethe's way. For humor involves a sense of proportion and a power of seeing yourself from the outside. Whatever else we attribute to beings who sinned through pride, we must not attribute this. Satan, said Chesterton, fell through force of gravity. We must picture Hell as a state where everyone is perpetually concerned about his own dignity and advancement, where everyone has a grievance, and where everyone lives the deadly serious passions of envy, self-importance, and resentment. This, to begin with. For the

rest, my own choice of symbols depended, I suppose, on temperament and on the age.

I like bats much better than bureaucrats. I live in the Managerial Age, in a world of "Admin." The greatest evil is not now done in those sordid "dens of crime" that Dickens loved to paint. It is not done even in concentration camps and labour camps. In those we see its final result. But it is conceived and ordered (moved, seconded, carried, and minuted) in clean, carpeted, warmed, and well-lighted offices, by quiet men with white collars and cut fingernails and smooth-shaven cheeks who do not need to raise their voice. Hence, naturally enough, my symbol for Hell is something like the bureaucracy of a police state or the offices of a thoroughly nasty business concern.

Milton has told us that "devil with devil damned Firm concord holds." But how? Certainly not by friendship. A being which can still love is not yet a devil. Here again my symbol seemed to me useful. It enabled me, by earthly parallels, to picture an official society held together entirely by fear and greed. On the surface, manners are normally suave. Rudeness to one's superiors would obviously be suicidal; rudeness to one's equals might put them on their guard before you were ready to spring your mine. For of course "Dog eat dog" is the principle of the whole organisation. Everyone wishes everyone else's discrediting, demotion, and ruin; everyone is an expert in the confidential report, the pretended alliance, the stab in the back. Over all this their good manners, their expressions of grave respect, their

"tributes" to one another's invaluable services form a thin crust. Every now and then it gets punctured, and the scalding lava of their hatred spurts out.

This symbol also enabled me to get rid of the absurd fancy that devils are engaged in the disinterested pursuit of something called Evil (the capital is essential). Mine have no use for any such turnip ghost. Bad angels, like bad men, are entirely practical. They have two motives. The first is fear of punishment: for as totalitarian countries have their camps for torture, so my Hell contains deeper Hells, its "houses of correction." Their second motive is a kind of hunger. I feign that devils can, in a spiritual sense, eat one another; and us. Even in human life we have seen the passion to dominate, almost to digest, one's fellow; to make his whole intellectual and emotional life merely an extension of one's own—to hate one's hatreds and resent one's grievances and indulge one's egoism through him as well as through oneself. His own little store of passion must of course be suppressed to make room for ours. If he resists this suppression he is being very selfish.

On Earth this desire is often called "love." In Hell I feign that they recognise it as hunger. But there the hunger is more ravenous, and a fuller satisfaction is possible. There, I suggest, the stronger spirit—there are perhaps no bodies to impede the operation—can really and irrevocably suck the weaker into itself and permanently gorge its own being on the weaker's outraged individuality. It is (I feign) for this that devils desire human souls and the souls of one another. It is for this that Satan desires all his own followers and

all the sons of Eve and all the host of Heaven. His dream is of the day when all shall be inside him and all that says "I" can say it only through him. This, I surmise, is the bloated-spider parody, the only imitation he can understand, of that unfathomed bounty whereby God turns tools into servants and servants into sons, so that they may be at last reunited to Him in the perfect freedom of a love offered from the height of the utter individualities which he has liberated them to be.

But, as in Grimm's story,* *des träumte mir nur*, this is all only myth and symbol. That is why the question of my own opinion about devils, though proper to be answered when once it was raised, is really of very minor importance for a reader of *Screw-tape*. To those who share that opinion, my devils will be symbols of a concrete reality: to others, they will be personifications of abstractions, and the book will be an allegory. But it makes little difference which way you read it. For of course its purpose was not to speculate about diabolical life but to throw light from a new angle on the life of men.

I am told that I was not first in the field and that someone in the seventeenth century wrote letters from a devil. I have not seen that book. I believe its slant was mainly political. But I gladly acknowledge a debt to Stephen McKenna's *The Confessions of a Well-Meaning Woman*. The connection may not be obvious, but you will find there the same moral inversion—the blacks all white and the whites all black—and the humour which comes of speaking through

* *Der Räuberbräutigam*.

a totally humourless *personna*. I think my idea of spiritual cannibalism probably owes something to the horrible scenes of "absorbing" in David Lindsay's neglected *Voyage to Arcturus*.

The names of my devils have excited a good deal of curiosity, and there have been many explanations, all wrong. The truth is that I aimed merely at making them nasty—and here too I am perhaps indebted to Lindsay—by the sound. Once a name was invented, I might speculate like anyone else (and with no more authority than anyone else) as to the phonetic associations which caused the unpleasant effect. I fancy that *Scrooge*, *screw*, *thumbscrew*, *tape-worm*, and *red tape* all do some work in my hero's name, and that *slob*, *slobber*, *slubber*, and *gob* have all gone into *slubgob*.

Some have paid me an undeserved compliment by supposing that my *Letters* were the ripe fruit of many years' study in moral and ascetic theology. They forgot that there is an equally reliable, though less creditable, way of learning how temptation works. "My heart"—I need no other's—"showeth me the wickedness of the ungodly."

I was often asked or advised to add to the original *Letters*, but for many years I felt not the least inclination to do it. Though I had never written anything more easily, I never wrote with less enjoyment. The ease came, no doubt, from the fact that the device of diabolical letters, once you have thought of it, exploits itself spontaneously, like Swift's big and little men, or the medical and ethical philosophy of *Erewhon*, or Anstey's Garuda Stone. It would run

away with you for a thousand pages if you gave it its head. But though it was easy to twist one's mind into the diabolical attitude, it was not fun, or not for long. The strain produced a sort of spiritual cramp. The work into which I had to project myself while I spoke through Screwtape was all dust, grit, thirst, and itch. Every trace of beauty, freshness, and geniality had to be excluded. It almost smothered me before I was done. It would have smothered my readers if I had prolonged it.

I had, moreover, a sort of grudge against my book for not being a different book which no one could write. Ideally, Screwtape's advice to Wormwood should have been balanced by archangelical advice to the patient's guardian angel. Without this the picture of human life is lopsided. But who could supply the deficiency? Even if a man—and he would have to be a far better man than I—could scale the spiritual heights required, what "answerable style" could he use? For the style would really be part of the content. Mere advice would be no good; every sentence would have to smell of Heaven. And nowadays even if you could write a prose like Traherne's, you wouldn't be allowed to, for the canon of "functionalism" has disabled literature for half its functions. (At bottom, every ideal of style dictates not only how we should say things but what sort of things we may say.)

Then, as years went on and the stifling experience of writing the *Letters* became a weaker memory, reflections on this and that which seemed somehow to demand Screwtapian treatment began to occur to

me. I was resolved never to write another *Letter*. The idea of something like a lecture or "address" hovered vaguely in my mind, now forgotten, now recalled, never written. Then came an invitation from the *Saturday Evening Post*, and that pressed the trigger.

Grace of Christ Yakima

Leader Study Guide: Community Life

Part 1: The Screwtape Letters, C.S. Lewis¹

The First Week in our Fall 2021 10-week Grace of Christ Church-wide Community Life Series (*begins September 12 and continues through the week of November 14*)

Please use only what you find helpful in this guide.

Week 1 (The Screwtape Letters: Preface(s)² and Chapter 1)

Get to Know You Questions

1. What is your least liked vegetable and why? When was the last time you ate that vegetable?
2. Where were you on the morning of September 11, 2001? What were your first thoughts?

Overview of the Study (We will be studying select chapters in the book)

Week 1: Prefaces and Chapter 1	Week 6: Chapters 10, 11, and 12
Week 2: Chapters 2, 3, and 4	Week 7: Chapter 13 and 14
Week 3: Chapters 5, 6, and 7	Week 8: Chapter 15
Week 4: Chapter 8	Week 9: Chapter 16
Week 5: Chapter 9	Week 10: Chapters 17, 18, and 19

Tips to reading The Screwtape Letters:

1. Each chapter was written as if it were a letter from a senior tempter instructing a junior tempter on how to ruin a person's (Christian) life.
2. Remember as you read that it was intentionally written from a diabolical point of view³
3. Each letter reveals plans of the enemy on how to make a Christian ineffective.

Read the preface(s) and chapter 1 Together Out Loud

Questions from the Preface to the 1961 Edition⁴

1. Have you read The Screwtape Letters before? If yes, what was your previous experience with the book? Why do you think some find The Screwtape Letters a challenging book to read?
2. Lewis writes, "the commonest question is whether I really 'believe in the devil.' Now, if by 'the Devil' you mean a power opposite to God, and, like God, self-existent from all eternity, the answer is certainly No.

¹ C.S. Lewis, The Screwtape Letters, 1982 Edition, Touchstone book: Simon & Schuster, New York.

² Some editions have more than one preface

³ On writing The Screwtape Letters, 'Though I had never written more easily, I never wrote with less enjoyment ... though it was easy to twist one's mind into the diabolical attitude, it was not fun, or not for long. The strain produced a sort of spiritual cramp. The work into which I had projected myself while I spoke through Screwtape was all dust, grit, thirst, and itch. Every trace of beauty, freshness, and geniality had to be excluded. It almost smothered me before I was done. It would have smothered my readers if I had prolonged it.'"

⁴ This preface is not included in all editions of The Screwtape Letters. We are including a copy of this preface on the Community Life Page.

There is no uncreated being except God. God has no opposite ... the proper question is whether I believe in devils. I do. That is to say, I believe in angels, and I believe that some of these, by the abuse of their free will, have become enemies of God and, as a corollary, to us. These we may call devils."

- Do you believe in devils? Why or why not?
 - What is your understanding of where the Devil and his minions came from?
 - What kind of power does the Devil have? What does the Devil want with us?
 - Did Jesus believe in the Devil? Discuss.
 - What does the Bible say about the Devil and those evil spirits who serve him? See passages in the Appendix below.
3. What do you think of Chesterton's description of Hell? "Hell as a state where everyone is perpetually concerned about his own dignity and advancement, where everyone has a grievance ..."
- Do you believe in an actual "hell"? If yes, what do you picture "hell" to be like? If no, what is the final destination for those who reject God to the very end of their life?
 - Consider Jesus' parable in Luke 16:19-31. Discuss.
4. Lewis pictured hell as a "society held together entirely by fear and greed. On the surface manners are normally suave. Rudeness to one's superiors would obviously be suicidal ... for of course 'Dog eat Dog' is the principle of the whole organization."
- Do you think Lewis is right about hell? Discuss.

C.S. Lewis Dedicated this book to his friend J.R.R. Tolkien (Author of "The Hobbit" and "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy)

Questions from the Original Preface (Dated July 5, 1941)

5. Lewis writes, "There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. the other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them."
- Do you agree with Lewis?
 - What might the danger be with either of these extremes? Can you think of any examples of those who have adopted one or the other of these positions ... and the result in their life?
 - Lewis adds a quote from Martin Luther, "The best way to drive out the devil, if he will not yield to texts of scripture, is to jeer and flout him, for he cannot bear scorn."
 - If you believe that the devil is real, and that he seeks to do us harm, what is the best way to "drive him out"?

Questions for Chapter One

6. Screwtape advises Wormwood, "It sounds as if you supposed that argument was the way to keep him out of the Enemy's clutches (he means God's clutches). That might have been so if he had lived a few centuries earlier. At that time the humans still knew well when a thing was proved and when it was not; and if it was proved they really believed it. They still connected thinking with doing and were prepared to alter their way of life because of a chain of reasoning. But what with the weekly press and other such weapons, we have largely altered that ... he doesn't think of doctrines as primarily "true" or "false" but

as "academic" or "practical," "outworn" or "contemporary," conventional" or "ruthless." Jargon, not argument, is your best ally in keeping him from the church. Don't waste your time trying to make him think that materialism is true! Make him think it is strong or stark or courageous - that is the philosophy of the future ... The trouble about argument is that it moves the whole struggle onto the Enemy's (God's) own ground ... by the very act of argument you awake the patient's reason; and once it is awake, who can foresee the result?"

- Do you agree that most today do not care much about whether Christian faith is true or false, but rather that it is practical or contemporary?
 - What is the best way to communicate the substance of the Christian faith to someone who does not believe?
 - What value does argument (not antagonistic ... logical reasoning) have in our society today? Do most people you know believe there is a real "right" and "wrong" and if shown (by logical reasoning) something is "right" they willingly alter their life to that truth? If not, what do most people base important life decisions on?
7. Read the section in Chapter 1 of the "patient, a sound atheist" whose reading was leading him in the "wrong direction."
- What do make of Screwtape's evaluation of the patient, and his tactic to keep his patient from thinking too much about such an important topic until after lunch?
 - Have you seen this temptation to avoid thinking about something important until a more suitable time play out in your life, or the life of others?
8. In the last paragraph Screwtape advises, "Above all, do not attempt to use science (I mean, the real sciences) as a defense against Christianity. They will positively encourage him to think about realities he can't touch and see. There have been sad cases among the modern physicists ... do remember you are there to fuddle him."
- How do you understand the relationship between Christian faith and the sciences? Do they disagree with each other, ignore each other, or support each other?
 - What about those scientists who dismiss the need for God and affirm the "Big Bang" and "Evolution"?
 - How do you respond to those who say they can't believe in Christian faith or the Bible because science has proven we are the result of evolution?
 - What does the author mean by the "real sciences"?
 - Can a person be a Christian and yet believe in evolution? Explain and discuss?

If you have any questions or comments, if you need help with this study, with members of your group, or with technology, please call (248-7940 x114) or email (curt@yakimagrace.com)

Appendix

Additional Support for Leaders

Scripture Passages to Consider for Question 2 (Preface for 1961 Edition)

- **Matthew 4:1-4** *"Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³ And the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.' ⁴ But Jesus answered, 'It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"*
- **Matthew 25:41** *"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'"*
- **Mark 4:15** *"And these are the ones along the path, where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them."*
- **Mark 5:1-13** *"They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. ² And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. ³ He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, ⁴ for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. ⁵ Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains, he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. ⁶ And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. ⁷ And crying out with a loud voice, he said, 'What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me.' ⁸ For he was saying to him, 'Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!' ⁹ And Jesus asked him, 'What is your name?' He replied, 'My name is Legion, for we are many.' ¹⁰ And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. ¹¹ Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, ¹² and they begged him, saying, 'Send us to the pigs; let us enter them.' ¹³ So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the sea."*
- **Luke 22:3** *"Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was of the number of the twelve ..."*
- **John 8:44** *"Jesus said, 'You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.'"*
- **2 Corinthians 11:14** *"And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light."*
- **Ephesians 6:11** *"Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil."*
- **Jude verse 6** *"And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day."*

- **1 Peter 5:8** *"Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."*
- **Revelation 12:7-9** *"Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, ⁸ but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. ⁹ And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world — he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him."*

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Week 2 (The Screwtape Letters: Chapters 2, 3 and 4)

Get to Know You Questions

1. Describe your first experience in a Christian church. Share your connection (if any) with Grace of Christ.
2. Share one prayer you've prayed (maybe for many years) ... it hasn't yet been answered as you had hoped ... but you keep praying?

Overview of the Study (We will be studying select chapters in the book)

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2. Remember as you read that it was intentionally written from a diabolical point of view²
3. Each letter reveals plans of the enemy on how to make a Christian ineffective.

Read each chapter out loud one at a time (after reading each chapter allow time for enough discussion before moving on to the next chapter). **You may not get through all of the chapters. That's OK.**

Questions from Chapter II (2)

1. Chapter 2 begins, "I note with grave displeasure that your patient has become a Christian ... we must make the best of the situation. There is no need to despair; hundreds of these adult converts have been reclaimed after a brief sojourn in the enemy's camp and are now with us."

¹ C.S. Lewis, The Screwtape Letters, 1982 Edition, Touchstone book: Simon & Schuster, New York.

² On writing The Screwtape Letters, "Though I had never written more easily, I never wrote with less enjoyment ... though it was easy to twist one's mind into the diabolical attitude, it was not fun, or not for long. The strain produced a sort of spiritual cramp. The work into which I had projected myself while I spoke through Screwtape was all dust, grit, thirst, and itch. Every trace of beauty, freshness, and geniality had to be excluded. It almost smothered me before I was done. It would have smothered my readers if I had prolonged it."

- What is Lewis suggesting here? Is it possible for a person to become a Christian and then lose their Christian faith and end up in hell? (Leaders, this is not a new debate in the Christian church. All through the centuries this has been discussed. To boil down the question ... Can a person lose their salvation? This is a VERY IMPORTANT QUESTION. Grace of Christ, along with all within Reformed Christian faith, and many other churches too, would firmly reject the suggestion/belief that a person who has been truly saved can lose their salvation and end up eternally separated from God. The reason for this strong stand is that if we can lose our salvation then our relationship with God is not a free gift from God, dependent entirely on the work and grace of Jesus Christ.
 - If God helps us become a Christian but it is up to us maintain and sustain our Christian faith ... has not the ultimate responsibility for being a Christian shifted to us?
 - What is it that we have to DO in order to remain Christian? (Be nice, read the Bible a lot, pray without ceasing, have enough faith, do good deeds ... What must we DO so that we do not lose our salvation?)
 - Where is our confidence? When are we able to rest? Won't we worry and wonder if we have done enough? I don't want to get kicked out!
 - Or, as we believe, it is a gift from God. Jesus has done enough! We cannot add to what Jesus has done. We can only live our lives in thankfulness for what we have been given. Our confidence is in Him. His love never fails. (See Appendix for supporting scripture passages.)
2. Screwtape suggests, "One of our greatest allies at present is the Church itself."
- In what ways has the Church (unintentionally at times) advanced the work of the Devil?
 - Was the church "perfect" in the first century? See 1 Corinthians 1:10-17, 1 Corinthians 5, 1 Timothy 1:3-7, Acts 15 (particularly 36-41)
 - How can the church help Christians live for Jesus rather than cause damage to their faith?
 - Respond to this statement, "The church is a hospital for sinner not a museum for saints." Is that true? If yes, how does that affect your view of the church and others inside the church? If no, how would you describe the church to someone who knows little about Christian faith?
 - "Work hard, then, on the disappointment or anticlimax which is certainly coming to the patient during his first few weeks as a churchman."
 - What were your expectations of the church when you became a Christian?
 - Have you ever been disappointed in what you have found and seen in the church?
 - Do you think some give up on Jesus because of their experience in the church? Discuss.
3. How did understanding your own weaknesses and failures help you when you joined a particular church?
- Is it easier to be a part of a local church, or easier to be part of a virtual online church in a far off city? Which is better for Christian growth? How can problems in a church actually help a person grow as a Christian? (How do problems in a friendship or a marriage, or with a child or parent, help you grow as a person? Discuss your answers.

Questions from Chapter III (3)

3. Home, where you have your closest and longest lasting relationships, is often one of the (or is the) hardest places to live a Christian. Why is that?

- The patient's mother has annoying habits ... how might the devil use those annoyances to distract or derail the patient's Christian life?
- "I have had patients of my own so well in hand that they could be turned at a moment's notice from impassioned prayer for a wife's or son's "soul" to beating or insulting the real wife or son without a qualm." Have you seen examples of this? How could this happen?

Questions from Chapter IV (4)

4. Screwtape states, "The best thing, where it is possible, is to keep the patient from the serious intention of praying altogether."
 - How does the devil attempt to keep a Christian from serious prayer?
 - How can a Christian overcome this attempt of the devil?
 - How would you describe prayer? How would you describe "serious" prayer?
 - For self-reflection (not group sharing): Do you take pray seriously enough? Do you prayer seriously?
 - Is there value in praying the same prayer regularly? (Think Lord's Prayer or Psalm 23) What is the danger of praying the same pray over and over and over? What is the value of spontaneous prayer? What is the danger of spontaneous prayer? Do you find repeating the same prayer, or spontaneous prayer, more helpful for you?
5. Does the position of our body (whether we are kneeling, standing, folding our hands, closing our eyes) affect our prayers? What has been your personal experience? When, and what bodily position, setting and situation do you find most meaningful as you pray?
 - Do you agree or disagree with Lewis' comment that "their bodies do affect their souls."?
 - "Teach them to estimate the value of each prayer by their success in producing the desired feeling?"
6. "I have known cases where what the patient called his "God" was actually located - up and to the left at the corner of the bedroom ceiling, or inside his own head, or in a crucifix on the wall."
 - Where is God when you pray?
 - Consider Psalm 139
 - Consider Romans 8:26-30

If you have any questions or comments, if you need help with this study, with members of your group, or with technology, please call (248-7940 x114) or email (curt@yakimagrace.com)

Appendix

Additional Support for Leaders

Scripture Passages and one hymn for Question 1 (Chapter 2)

- Some Scriptural passages to consider:
 - "We love because He first loved us" 1 John 4:19
 - "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." Ephesians 2:8-9
 - "Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Brothers what must we DO?' And Peter said to them, 'Repent and believe every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'" Acts 2:38
 - "But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, HE GAVE THE RIGHT TO BECOME children of God, who were born, not of blood nor the will of the flesh nor the will of man, but of God." John 1:12-13
 - "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out ... And this is the will of Him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that He has given me." John 6:37, 39
 - Hymn: Blessed Assurance Jesus is mine, O what a foretaste of glory divine ..."

Grace of Christ Yakima

Leader Study Guide: Community Life

Part 1: The Screwtape Letters, C.S. Lewis¹

The Third Week in our Fall 2021 10-week Grace of Christ Church-wide Community Life Series (*started September 12 and continues through the week of November 14*)

Please use only what you find helpful in this guide.

Week 3 (The Screwtape Letters: Chapters 5, 6 and 7)

Get to Know You Questions

1. Share one thing you are passionate about ... bordering on the extreme (hobby, travel destination, family event, holiday, food, sport, favorite team, tv show, music group ...). What are some examples of your passion for the above?
2. Do you prefer crunchy or creamy peanut butter? A particular brand? Why?

Overview of the Study (We will be studying select chapters in the book)

Week 1: Prefaces and Chapter 1

Week 6: Chapters 10, 11, and 12

Week 2: Chapters 2, 3, and 4

Week 7: Chapter 13 and 14

Week 3: Chapters 5, 6, and 7

Week 8: Chapter 15

Week 4: Chapter 8

Week 9: Chapter 16

Week 5: Chapter 9

Week 10: Chapters 17, 18, and 19

Tips to reading The Screwtape Letters:

1. Each chapter was written as if it were a letter from a senior tempter instructing a junior tempter on how to ruin a person's (Christian) life.
2. Remember as you read that it was intentionally written from a diabolical point of view²
3. The devil and his followers are master liars. Keep that in mind as you read this book.
4. Each letter reveals how our enemy, the Devil, hopes to render us ineffective in our Christian life, and ultimately to ruin/destroy us.

Read each chapter out loud one at a time (after reading each chapter allow time for enough discussion before moving on to the next chapter). **You may not get through all of the chapters. That's OK.**

¹ C.S. Lewis, The Screwtape Letters, 1982 Edition, Touchstone book: Simon & Schuster, New York.

² On writing The Screwtape Letters, 'Though I had never written more easily, I never wrote with less enjoyment ... though it was easy to twist one's mind into the diabolical attitude, it was not fun, or not for long. The strain produced a sort of spiritual cramp. The work into which I had projected myself while I spoke through Screwtape was all dust, grit, thirst, and itch. Every trace of beauty, freshness, and geniality had to be excluded. It almost smothered me before I was done. It would have smothered my readers if I had prolonged it.'

Questions from Chapter V (5)

1. Screwtape states, "You say you are 'delirious with joy' because the European humans have started another of their wars ... you are not delirious; you are only drunk ... I must warn you not to hope too much from a war ... Let us therefore think rather how to use, than how to enjoy, this European war. For it has certain tendencies inherent in it which are, "in themselves, by no means in our favour. We may hope for a good deal of cruelty and unchastity. But, if we are not careful, we shall see thousands turning in this tribulation to the enemy ..."
 - As you surprised that "war" does not, according to Screwtape, always, and in every way, serve the purposes of the devil?
 - What aspects of "war" serve the devil's purposes?
 - What aspects of war do not serve the devil's purposes?
 - What is the worst that comes with war?
 - What is the best that can come from war? Can you think of examples?
 - How does "war" create an environment where thousands turn to God?
2. How do you respond to the image Lewis creates when he has Screwtape write to Wormwood, "If, on the other hand, by steady and cool-handed application here and now you can finely secure his soul, he will then be yours forever - a brimfull living chalice of despair and horror and astonishment which you can raise to your lips as often as you please."
 - Is this image comforting or terrifying to you?
 - Could Lewis be right as he paints a word picture of the devil's desire to possess us for all eternity, constantly feeding off of us and our fears?
 - If you disagree with this image of what the Devil ultimately intends for us, what do you picture happens to those who reject God to their very last breath/thought? Do we just cease to exist? Do we all get to heaven no matter how we've lived or the choices we've made? Do we get a another chance (reincarnation, spend time in purgatory where we are held in spiritual prison until we have made up for our bad thoughts and deeds ...)?
3. Screwtape states, "Consider too what undesirable deaths occur in wartime." And then a little later, "How much better for us if all humans died in costly nursing homes amid doctors who lie, nurses who lie, friends who lie, as we have trained them, promising life to the dying, encouraging the belief that sickness excuses every indulgence, and even, if our workers known their job, withholding all suggestion of a priest lest it should betray to the sick man his true condition."
 - How can death, from the Devil's perspective, ever be undesirable?
 - What is the benefit of going somewhere you know you might die?
 - Would you rather know your death may come at any moment, with time to think and reflect, or would you prefer that your death crept up on you, so slowly and comfortably that you do not feel any urgency to think and reflect on what is happening?
 - When your time comes, do you want those around you to be polite, avoid the subject of death, lie to you about your real condition, or, tell you the truth? Why or why not?

4. Respond to this statement from Screwtape, "How disastrous for us is the continual remembrance of death which war enforces. One of our best weapons, contented worldliness, is rendered useless. In wartime not even a human can believe that he is going to live forever."
- What does he mean by "contented worldliness"?
 - How does the awareness that we will not live forever encourage us to seek God? When did you realize you would not live "forever"? What did that awareness cause you to do?

Question from Chapter VI (6)

5. Screwtape states, "They (men and women of England) are creatures of that miserable sort who loudly proclaim that torture is too good for their enemies and then give tea and cigarettes to the first wounded German pilot who turns up at the back door."
- Is it easier for you to love your next-door neighbor or to profess your love to someone you've never met who lives half way around the world? Explain.

Question from Chapter VII (7)

6. Screwtape writes, "I wonder you should ask me whether it is essential to keep the patient in ignorance of you own existence ... our policy, for the moment, is to conceal ourselves ... I have great hopes that we shall learn in due time ... a belief in us (though not under that name) will creep in while the human mind remains closed to belief in the Enemy. The "life Force," the worship of sex, and some aspects of psychoanalysis may here prove useful. If we can produce our perfect work - the Materialist Magician, the man, not using, but veritably worshipping what he vaguely calls "Forces" while denying the existence of "spirits" - then the end of the war will be in sight."
- How would you define a materialist-magician?³
 - Are there those who do not believe in God but speak of their faith in a "life force"? Think Star Wars, "May the Force be with you." Where does this philosophy/religion lead a person? what would our society look like if it were the dominant religious worldview?
 - A "Life Force" without real demands on us, or a personal relationship with us, may provide comfort that some power/force is in control in the universe but without pesky demands or intrusions on our life. Is that attractive? What are the problems with such a life philosophy? Most can't access this "life force" in a powerful way ... only a few gifted with certain special genetics are able to tap into this force in a way that makes a real difference in the lives of others, the life of the universe. Does this appeal to you?
 - How does the "Life Force" Star Wars philosophy differ from the beliefs of Christian faith?
 - **John 1** "And the Word (Jesus) became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth ... 16 For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known."

³ Materialist: someone who believes only what the physical senses can confirm. No miracles. Nothing supernatural.
Magician: someone who lives in the world of magic/miracles/the mysterious. Questions the value (and even reality) of the physical world.

7. Respond to this quote, "All extremes except extreme devotion to the Enemy (God) are to be encouraged."

- Is it possible that an extreme commitment to a good cause (feeding the homeless, saving the environment, fighting for the rights of the abused, educating children, any cause) could end up ruining a person's relationship with God and with others? Explain your answer.

8. Respond to this quote of Screwtape, "We want the church to be small not only that fewer men may know the Enemy but also that those who do may acquire the uneasy intensity and the defensive self-righteousness of a secret society or clique."

- Have you ever encountered a group that has become defensive and self-righteous, a "secret society and clique?"
- Is this something you've seen in the church?
- How can the church guard against this?
- What is the main purpose of the Church (universal)?
- What is the main purpose of the church you are a part of?

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9-24-2021 CM

Grace of Christ Yakima

Leader Study Guide: Community Life

Part 1: The Screwtape Letters, C.S. Lewis¹

The Fourth Week in our Fall 2021 10-week Grace of Christ Church-wide Community Life Series (*started September 12 and continues through the week of November 14*)

Please use only what you find helpful in this guide.

Week 4 (The Screwtape Letters: Chapter 8)

Get to Know You Questions

1. Share a hobby you had when you were a kid that you are no longer passionate about. What did you like about that hobby when you were younger? Why are you no longer actively involved in that hobby?
2. Share a time when you felt closest to God. Where were you, who were you with, and what were you doing?

Overview of the Study (We will be studying select chapters in the book)

Week 1: Prefaces and Chapter 1

Week 6: Chapters 10, 11, and 12

Week 2: Chapters 2, 3, and 4

Week 7: Chapter 13 and 14

Week 3: Chapters 5, 6, and 7

Week 8: Chapter 15

Week 4: Chapter 8

Week 9: Chapter 16

Week 5: Chapter 9

Week 10: Chapters 17, 18, and 19

Tips to reading The Screwtape Letters:

1. Each chapter was written as if it were a letter from a senior tempter instructing a junior tempter on how to ruin a person's (Christian) life.
2. Remember as you read that it was intentionally written from a diabolical point of view²
3. The devil and his followers are master liars. Keep that in mind as you read this book.
4. Each letter reveals how our enemy, the Devil, hopes to render us ineffective in our Christian life, and ultimately to ruin/destroy us.

Read this chapter out loud

Questions from Chapter VIII (8)

Definition of Undulation: "The repeated return to a level from which they repeatedly fall back, a series of troughs and peaks."

¹ C.S. Lewis, The Screwtape Letters, 1982 Edition, Touchstone book: Simon & Schuster, New York.

² On writing The Screwtape Letters, 'Though I had never written more easily, I never wrote with less enjoyment ... though it was easy to twist one's mind into the diabolical attitude, it was not fun, or not for long. The strain produced a sort of spiritual cramp. The work into which I had projected myself while I spoke through Screwtape was all dust, grit, thirst, and itch. Every trace of beauty, freshness, and geniality had to be excluded. It almost smothered me before I was done. It would have smothered my readers if I had prolonged it.'

1. Screwtape states, "Humans are amphibians - half spirit and half animal"
 - Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Explain your answer
 - If you agree, what parts of a human's life are "spirit" and which parts are "animal"?
 - How do you define "spirit" and how do you define "animal"?
 - If you disagree, how would you describe a human's life (all spiritual, all animal, something else)?

2. It is suggested that while there is a part of all humans that is "eternal" the human body inhabits time and is therefore subject to continual change.
 - Does existing in time mean we are subject to continual and constant change? Why do most people resist change? Do we resist change because we long for the permanent? Discuss
 - Do you see constant change evident in your relationships, your work, your thoughts, your passions, your appetite, your faith? Is this a good thing or a bad thing? Discuss
 - Have you ever experienced real "highs" in your relationship with God? Have you ever experienced "lows" (dry times) in your relationship with God? Why do you think you felt great at one particular time but dry and distant another? Are there any predictable patterns which might alert you that either a "high" or "low" time was coming in your relationship with God? (weather, season, location, work pressures, finances, a relationship with a friend or spouse.)

3. Screwtape states, "To decide what the best use of it (dry times) is, you must ask what use the Enemy (God) wants to make of it, and then do the opposite. Now it may surprise you to learn that in His efforts to get permanent possession of a soul He relies on the troughs even more than on the peaks; some of His special favourites have gone through longer and deeper troughs than anyone else."
 - What role has time in the troughs (valleys, low places, hard times ...) played in your understanding of God, and in the development of your faith and soul?
 - Can you think of individuals in the Bible that have gone through difficult times (troughs)? How did these times affected their relationship with God?
 - Consider:
 - Abraham (years wandering in the promised land without a permanent home, receiving a promise from God that he and his wife would have a baby ... and that not happening for 25 years ... when he was 100 years old)
 - Joseph (Genesis 39 - 50) (Joseph sold by his brothers into slavery, accused of a crime he didn't commit, thrown into prison, living far from home)
 - Moses (wandering in the desert for 40 years because of the disobedience of the people he was leading, he would die on a mountain overlooking the promised land but never stepping foot in it)
 - David (chosen by God as the next king of Israel but then pursued by the current king who wanted him dead. Years on the run, hiding in caves. A horrific sin and a family torn apart)
 - Peter (Matthew 26) (Peter denied Jesus three times when Jesus needed his support most)
 - Saul/Paul (Acts 9) (faced with the reality of Jesus and the violence he had inflicted upon the followers of Jesus)

4. How do you respond to the statement, made by Screwtape, "To us a human is primarily food; our aim is the absorption of its will into ours, the increase of our own area of selfhood at its expense."
 - Do you agree that the ultimate intention of the devil and his minions is to consume and destroy us? If not, how would you describe the devil's desires regarding us (humans)? Discuss
 - Read Mark chapter 5.
 - What was this legion of demons doing to the man in whom they inhabited (driving him away from others, causing him to act strangely and live strangely (in inhuman ways), making him uncontrollable for those who wanted to help him, making it so he could not speak for himself, causing self-harm, feasting on/destroying his soul)
 - How did this legion demonstrate for us their ultimate intentions when they were given permission to enter the large herd of pigs? (They destroyed all 2000 pigs by causing them to rush into the lake and drown themselves)
5. And, respond to this passage, "One must face the fact that all the talk about His love for men, and His service being perfect freedom, is not (as one would gladly believe) mere propaganda, but an appalling truth. He really does want to fill the universe with a lot of loathsome little replicas of Himself - creatures whose life, on a miniature scale, will be qualitatively like His own, not because He has absorbed them but because their wills freely conform to His. We want cattle who can finally become food; He wants servants who can finally become sons [and daughters]. We want to suck in, He wants to give out. We are empty and would be filled; He is full and flows over."
 - What is God's desire for us? (Why did God create us?)
 - Read Galatians 5:1-7, and Romans 5:1-8
6. According to Screwtape, why does the "Enemy" (God) not make more use of His power to make Himself known to each patient?
7. Screwtape wrote about the highs many new Christians experience, followed by significant doubts and fears after their initial excitement wears off. Did God intend for Christians to live only on the mountain top? Discuss what a continual spiritual "high" would look. Can a person remain constantly spiritually "high"?
8. The Enemy "is prepared to do a little overriding at the beginning. He will set them off with communications of His presence which, though faint, seem great to them, with emotional sweetness, and easy conquest over temptation. but He never allows this state of affairs to last long. Sooner or later He withdraws, if not in fact, at least from their conscience experience, all those supports and incentives. He leaves the creature to stand up on its own legs - to carry out from the will alone duties which have lost all relish. It is during such trough periods, much more than during the peaks periods, that it is growing into the sort of creature He wants it to be."
 - As a new Christian did you sense the closeness of God?
 - Have you experienced times since when God no longer seemed close? When did that happen and how did that feel?

9. Screwtape states "the prayers offered in the state of dryness are those which please Him best." And, "Our cause is never more in danger than when a human, no longer desiring, but still intending, to do our Enemy's will, looks round upon a universe from which every trace of Him seems to have vanished, and asks why he has been forsaken, and still obeys."
- Do you believe this?
 - Has this been the experience of others? (Read Psalm 22, Psalm 42, Psalm 44, Psalm 71, Psalm 77, Psalm 79 ...)
 - When we go through a hard dry time, when we feel abandoned by God, and still pray, what impact does that have on our relationship with God?

If you have any questions or comments, if you need help with this study, with members of your group, or with technology, please call (248-7940 x114) or email (curt@yakimagrace.com)

10-1-2021 CM

Grace of Christ Yakima

Leader Study Guide: Community Life

Part 1: The Screwtape Letters, C.S. Lewis¹

The Fifth Week in our Fall 2021 10-week Grace of Christ Church-wide Community Life Series (*started September 12 and continues through the week of November 14*)

Please use only what you find helpful in this guide.

Week 5 (The Screwtape Letters: Chapter 9)

Get to Know You Questions

1. If you had a three-day weekend to do whatever you wanted to do ... no chores, nothing to fix, no obligations or commitments you had to attend to, and a \$1000 to spend, what would you do?
2. What was the last really good, really enjoyable, book you read (the kind of book you did not want to put down)?

Overview of the Study (We will be studying select chapters in the book)

Week 1: Prefaces and Chapter 1

Week 6: Chapters 10, 11, and 12

Week 2: Chapters 2, 3, and 4

Week 7: Chapter 13 and 14

Week 3: Chapters 5, 6, and 7

Week 8: Chapter 15

Week 4: Chapter 8

Week 9: Chapter 16

Week 5: Chapter 9

Week 10: Chapters 17, 18, and 19

Tips to reading The Screwtape Letters:

1. Each chapter was written as if it were a letter from a senior tempter instructing a junior tempter on how to ruin a person's (Christian) life.
2. Remember as you read that it was intentionally written from a diabolical point of view²
3. The devil and his followers are master liars. Keep that in mind as you read this book.
4. Each letter reveals how our enemy, the Devil, hopes to render us ineffective in our Christian life, and ultimately to ruin/destroy us.

Read this chapter out loud as a group

Questions from Chapter IX (9)

1. Screwtape suggests, "*the trough periods of the human undulation provide excellent opportunity for all sensual temptations, particularly those of sex ... the attack has a much better chance of success when a man's whole inner world is drab and cold and empty.*"

¹ C.S. Lewis, The Screwtape Letters, 1982 Edition, Touchstone book: Simon & Schuster, New York.

² On writing The Screwtape Letters, 'Though I had never written more easily, I never wrote with less enjoyment ... though it was easy to twist one's mind into the diabolical attitude, it was not fun, or not for long. The strain produced a sort of spiritual cramp. The work into which I had projected myself while I spoke through Screwtape was all dust, grit, thirst, and itch. Every trace of beauty, freshness, and geniality had to be excluded. It almost smothered me before I was done. It would have smothered my readers if I had prolonged it.'"

- Do you agree with Screwtape? Do times of spiritual dryness, times when we are at a low point mentally, physically, socially, spiritually, increase our vulnerability to temptations of the physical type? (not only sexual temptations but also temptations to over-indulge with food, with drink, with binge watching TV, over shopping, over sleeping ...)
 - If you agree, why do you think we are more vulnerable at such times?
 - If you disagree, when is a person more vulnerable to sins of the physical type, and why?
- Screwtape also suggests that sexual temptations during the trough periods tend to be different than temptations of that type during peak times. In trough times humans are much more "*easily drawn into perversions*."
 - Why might this be true for some (or most) during low periods in their life? He makes the same case regarding temptations to over-drink in low times as compared to drinking during peak times.
- What can a person do to protect themselves for an increased vulnerability to temptations of the physical type? How do you protect yourself?

- **1 Corinthians 10**

"¹² Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. ¹³ No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it."

- **1 Corinthians 6**

"¹⁸ Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, ²⁰ for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body."

2. Screwtape states, "*never forget that when we are dealing with any pleasure in its healthy and normal and satisfying form, we are, in a sense, on the enemy's ground ... it is His invention, not ours. He made the pleasures: all our research so far has not enabled us to produce one. All we can do is to encourage the humans to take the pleasures which our Enemy has produced, at times, or in ways, or in degrees, which He has forbidden.*"

- Do you agree that God is the author of ALL good pleasures? As a group list all the things you can think of that are pleasurable (a good meal, friendship, humor, sex, competition, material things ...). Are those pleasures good things? Are there any real pleasures that are bad all through (they are not the result of a misuse of something good)? Discuss
- Do you agree that the only possibility the evil one has is to get us to take one of the good pleasures God has given us and get us to twist, distort, misuse that God given pleasure? Discuss
- **James 1**

"¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change."

3. Do you believe God intends for us to enjoy life?

- What has God created and placed in our life that has the potential of bringing us joy?

- Could it be that the bad things we experience are the direct result of a misuse of God's good gifts/pleasures?
 - What is the root cause of hunger and starvation? Can the world produce enough food to feed everyone adequately? If yes, why are there those who go hungry?
 - What is the root cause of war and terrorism? Are they the result of someone (or some group's) desire to have what someone else has?
 - What is the root cause of oppression of others, bullying and belittling others?
4. Screwtape states, *"An ever increasing craving for an ever diminishing pleasure is the formula ...to get the man's soul and give him nothing in return - that is what really gladdens Our Father's heart."*
- Can you think of examples of this (where a person pursues what they think will give them pleasure but the more they pursue it the less pleasure they experience)?
 - To put increasingly more effort into pursuing something that no longer gives you anything in return is my (Curt's) definition of "slavery." Do you agree/disagree with this definition of slavery? Explain
 - **Romans 6**

¹⁶ Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷ But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, ¹⁸ and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. ¹⁹ I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.

²⁰ For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. ²¹ But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. ²² But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."
5. Screwtape states, *"Do not let him suspect the law of undulation. Let him assume that the first ardours of his conversion might have been expected to last, and ought to have lasted, forever, and that his present dryness is an equally permanent condition ... you have only got to keep him out of the way of experienced Christians (an easy task nowadays) ..."*
- If a person is led to believe that the genuineness of their relationship with God depends on always feeling close to God, experiencing a continual spiritual high, having easy victories over temptation, sensing the same excitement that was evident when they first believed in Jesus, what problems might a period of dryness cause them and their faith in God?
 - How are we to understand times of dryness in our spiritual life? (times when praying is harder, we do not feel close to God, we give in to temptations ...)
 - Do times of dryness provide opportunities for spiritual growth leading to greater Christian maturity? Talk together about the positives that can come during and following a season of dryness.
 - Can you think of individuals in the Bible who went through difficult times, dry seasons?

- Consider:
 - Abraham waiting 25 years for God's promise to become a reality
 - Joseph a slave in Egypt locked away in prison for years
 - Elijah depressed, feeling like he was the only one left who loved God
 - Moses on the border of the promised land but not allowed to lead the people in
 - Peter after denying Jesus 3x

- **Romans 5**

"¹ Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ² Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us."

6. Screwtape advises, *"In a week or two you will be making him doubt whether the first days of his Christianity were not, perhaps, a little excessive. Talk to him about 'moderation in all things.' If you can once get him to the point of thinking that 'religion is all very well up to a point,' you can feel quite happy about his soul. A moderated religion is as good for us as no religion at all - and more amusing."*

- What are the dangers of a moderated faith in Jesus?
- Can a person be a casual, moderate Christian? Discuss

- **Matthew 16**

"²⁴ Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ²⁵ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. ²⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?"

- **Revelation 3**

"¹⁵ I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! ¹⁶ So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. ¹⁷ For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked."

If you have any questions or comments, if you need help with this study, with members of your group, or with technology, please call (248-7940 x114) or email (curt@yakimagrace.com)

Grace of Christ Yakima

Leader Study Guide: Community Life

Part 1: The Screwtape Letters, C.S. Lewis¹

The Sixth Week in our Fall 2021 10-week Grace of Christ Church-wide Community Life Series (*started September 12 and continues through the week of November 14*)

Please use only what you find helpful in this guide.

Week 6 (The Screwtape Letters: Chapters 10, 11, and 12)

Get to Know You Questions

1. What is one of your guilty pleasures? Not something wrong ... but you feel a bit guilty as you enjoy it.
2. What were some of the rules you grew up with that are no longer a big deal (dancing, cards ...)? Why were they forbidden when you were a kid?

Overview of the Study (We will be studying select chapters in the book)

Week 1: Prefaces and Chapter 1

Week 6: Chapters 10, 11, and 12

Week 2: Chapters 2, 3, and 4

Week 7: Chapter 13 and 14

Week 3: Chapters 5, 6, and 7

Week 8: Chapter 15

Week 4: Chapter 8

Week 9: Chapter 16

Week 5: Chapter 9

Week 10: Chapters 17, 18, and 19

Tips to reading The Screwtape Letters:

1. Each chapter was written as if it were a letter from a senior tempter instructing a junior tempter on how to ruin a person's (Christian) life.
2. Remember as you read that it was intentionally written from a diabolical point of view²
3. The devil and his followers are master liars. Keep that in mind as you read this book.
4. Each letter reveals how our enemy, the Devil, hopes to render us ineffective in our Christian life, and ultimately to ruin/destroy us.

Read each chapter out loud as a group, after each chapter take time to review and discuss the questions below that relate to that chapter, and other questions that surface from your reading. When the group has completed one chapter move to the next. You may not, likely will not, get through all the chapters or questions. That's OK. Reminder: The goal isn't to complete the questions but to follow the Holy Spirit as He moves and speaks in and through those in your group.

Questions from Chapter X (10)

¹ C.S. Lewis, The Screwtape Letters, 1982 Edition, Touchstone book: Simon & Schuster, New York.

² On writing The Screwtape Letters, 'Though I had never written more easily, I never wrote with less enjoyment ... though it was easy to twist one's mind into the diabolical attitude, it was not fun, or not for long. The strain produced a sort of spiritual cramp. The work into which I had projected myself while I spoke through Screwtape was all dust, grit, thirst, and itch. Every trace of beauty, freshness, and geniality had to be excluded. It almost smothered me before I was done. It would have smothered my readers if I had prolonged it.'

1. Screwtape writes, "I was delighted to hear from Triptweeze (another tempter) that your patient has made some very desirable new acquaintances."
 - Do you believe that Screwtape is right when he counsels Wormwood that certain "friends" can actually cause trouble for a person and harm or ruin their Christian faith?
 - Does this agree with 1 Corinthians 15:33, "Do not be deceived: 'Bad company ruins good morals'"?
2. When we spent most of our time with friends who do not have the same convictions we have is there a temptation to be "silent when we ought to speak and laugh when we should be silent?"
 - Why might this happen? Discuss. If you do not think this happens, give reasons and examples.
 - Screwtape says, "All mortals tend to turn into the thing they are pretending to be." Have you seen this happen in your life or in the lives of others? How can a person keep from turning into what they are pretending to be?
 - Jesus ate meals with, spent time with, people who did not share his understanding of God or how to live a holy God-honoring life. Do you? Is it important for you to spend time with those who do not believe as you believe and live their lives as you try to live your life? Why or why not?
3. Screwtape speaks about the patient becoming comfortable living "two parallel lives; he will not only appear to be, but will actually be, a different man in each of the circles he frequents ... He can be taught to enjoy kneeling besides the grocer on Sunday just because he remembers that the grocer could not possibly understand the urbane and mocking world which he inhabited on Saturday evening; and contrariwise, to enjoy the bawdy and blasphemy over the coffee with these admirable friends all the more because he is aware of a 'deeper,' 'spiritual' world within him which they cannot understand." He becomes one person when with his non-church friends, and a different person with his non-church friends.
 - What kinds of potential problems could this create for a person, for a Christian?
 - How long could you keep this up, and at what cost to your relationships with others, with God, with yourself?
 - Reads **Psalm 119:113-114** "I hate the double-minded, but I love your law. ¹¹⁴ You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in your word."
 - **Read James 1: 6-8** "But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷ For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸ he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."

Questions from Chapter XI (11)

1. Screwtape writes, that all the new friends of the patient "are thoroughly reliable people; steady, consistent scoffers and worldlings who without any spectacular crimes are progressing quietly and comfortably towards Our Father's house."
 - How can a person, without any spectacular sins, be in danger of hell? Is it, at times, easier for someone who is well aware of BIG sins in their life to seek Jesus, or is it easier for someone with modest and manageable sins to seek Jesus?
 - Consider Luke 15, the parable of the Prodigal Sons.

- The younger son knows he has messed up and that he is in a desperate place, he realizes he is at the mercy of his father. He returns home.
 - The older son feels he has worked hard for his Father, given up everything, and gotten very little in return. He remains outside the home and refuses the invitation of his Father.
2. Screwtape writes about the different causes of human laughter. He states, "What that real cause is we do not know. Something like it is expressed in much of that detestable art which the humans call music, and something like it occurs in heaven."
- How would you define the four following causes of human laughter Lewis writes about? Which of these types of humor serve the purposes of God? Are there some that do not?
 - Joy _____
 - Fun _____
 - the Joke Proper: _____
 - Flippancy: _____
3. Why do some, even Christians, laugh less as they grow in years? Is there a remedy for this? Discuss.
4. Are there times when a putdown, a criticism, a mean comment is accepted (although it should not be) because it is turned into a joke?
5. Do you agree with Screwtape that, "mere cowardice is shameful; cowardice boasted of with humorous exaggerations and grotesque gestures can be passed off as funny. Cruelty is shameful - unless the cruel man can represent it as a practical joke."
- What happens to the jokester, and to the object of the jokester's attack, when the jokester uses humor to tear a person down.
 - How should Christians use humor?
 - What is the purpose of humor? Why did God create us with a desire for, and the capacity for, humor?

Questions from Chapter XII (12)

1. Screwtape writes about the benefit (for devils) of a person retaining the external habits of Christian life even after they are living in a way that is taking them farther and farther from God. Do you think this is possible? Why would devils encourage this type of approach to Christian faith?
2. Why do some people "hate every idea that suggests Him (God), just as men in financial embarrassment hate the very sight of a bankbook"?
 - Respond to this quote, "A few weeks ago you had to tempt him to unreality and inattention in his prayers: but now you will find him opening his arms to you and almost begging you to distract his purpose and benumb his heart. He will want his prayers to be unreal, for he will dread nothing so much as effective contact with the Enemy (God)."
 - Why does this happen?

- What is the remedy when this begins to happen?
3. Screwtape writes, "You will say that these are very small sins; and doubtless, like all young tempters, you are anxious to be able to report spectacular wickedness. But do remember, the only thing that matters is the extent to which you separate the man from the Enemy (God). It does not matter how small the sins are, provided that their cumulative effect is to edge the man away from the Light and out into the Nothing. Murder is no better than cards if cards can do the trick. Indeed, the safest road to Hell is the gradual one - the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts."
- Do you agree that small sins can be as deadly as big sins? (Frog in the Kettle)
 - How have you seen this lived out in your life and the life of others?

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10-15-2021 CM

Grace of Christ Yakima

Leader Study Guide: Community Life

Part 1: The Screwtape Letters, C.S. Lewis¹

The Seventh Week in our Fall 2021 10-week Grace of Christ Church-wide Community Life Series (*started September 12 and continues through the week of November 14*)

Please use only what you find helpful in this guide.

Week 7 (The Screwtape Letters: Chapters 13 and 14)

Get to Know You Questions

1. Share a time when you felt proud of a personal accomplishment.
2. Recall, if you can, a promise someone made to you that they did not keep? How did that make you feel?

Overview of the Study (We will be studying select chapters in the book)

Week 1: Prefaces and Chapter 1

Week 6: Chapters 10, 11, and 12

Week 2: Chapters 2, 3, and 4

Week 7: Chapter 13 and 14

Week 3: Chapters 5, 6, and 7

Week 8: Chapter 15

Week 4: Chapter 8

Week 9: Chapter 16

Week 5: Chapter 9

Week 10: Chapters 17, 18, and 19

Tips to reading The Screwtape Letters:

1. Each chapter was written as if it were a letter from a senior tempter instructing a junior tempter on how to ruin a person's (Christian) life.
2. Remember as you read that it was intentionally written from a diabolical point of view²
3. The devil and his followers are master liars. Keep that in mind as you read this book.
4. Each letter reveals how our enemy, the Devil, hopes to render us ineffective in our Christian life, and ultimately to ruin/destroy us.

Read each chapter out loud as a group, after each chapter take time to review and discuss the questions below that relate to that chapter, and other questions that surface from your reading. When the group has completed one chapter move to the next. You may not, likely will not, get through all of the chapters or questions. That's OK. Reminder: The goal isn't to complete the questions but to follow the Holy Spirit as He moves and speaks in and through those in your group.

Questions from Chapter XIII (13)

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1. Screwtape writes, "It seems to me that you take a great many pages to tell a very simple story. The long and short of it is that you have let the man slip through your fingers. The situation is very grave ... a repentance and renewal of what the other side call "grace" on the scale which you describe is a defeat of the first order."
 - Do you believe most Christians experience a second and more in-depth encounter with Jesus sometime after their initial experience of faith (conversion)? (A time in which the reality, love and power of God becomes even more meaningful). Have you had this type of experience? Discuss

2. Have there been times in your life when God has been undeniably present, when you were protected from doubts and temptations, when you felt very close to God (Sometimes called a mountaintop experience).
 - If yes, where were you when you had this experience? How long did it last? What impact did it have on your life and faith?
 - These times do not last, at some point doubts and temptations return and we do not sense God as close as we once did. Why does this happen to us? What helps us trust God when we are not on the "mountaintop"? Re-read chapter 8 in this book ... the law of undulations.
 - Consider: God promised Abraham that he would have a child, but the actual birth of that child came more than 25 years later.
 - Moses led the people of God out of slavery and then for 40 years in the desert but he was not allowed to lead the people of God into the promised land. Moses died on a mountain overlooking the promised land but never stepping into the land.
 - God gave Joseph vivid dreams and then Joseph spent years as a slave far from home, including years in prison for a crime he did not commit.
 - God selected David to be king and then David spent decades running for his life as the current king hunted for him and sought to kill him.
 - Jesus spent time with each of the disciples and then they lived the rest of their lives without the direct presence, physical closeness, of Jesus.
 - Jesus met Paul on the Damascus road but then Paul lived out his days facing abuse, rejection, and eventually death.

3. Screwtape talks about the blunders leading to the renewal of faith for Wormwood's patient.
 - How might "reading a good book" be a blunder that could lead to a deeper experience of faith?
 - How might a "walk down to the old mill" be a blunder that could lead to a deeper experience of faith?
 - Can you recall a simple pleasure (such as reading a good book, taking a walk on the beach, sitting and thinking about nothing in particular, watching a good movie, spending time with a friend, laying on the lawn and looking up at the clouds, feeling drops of rain on your skin, hearing a beautiful piece of music, gazing at a colorful sunset ...) that made you more aware of the presence and goodness of God?
 - **Read Psalm 8:3-4** "When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, ⁴ what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?"

4. Screwtape states, “you allowed him two real positive Pleasures. Were you so ignorant as not to see the danger in this? The characteristic of Pains and Pleasures is that they are unmistakably real, and therefore, as far as they go, give the man who feels them a touchstone of reality ... you would try to protect him at all costs from any real pain; because, of course, five minutes’ genuine toothache would reveal the romantic sorrows for the nonsense they were.”
 - What are “romantic sorrows”? How do “romantic sorrows” differ from real sorrows? Compare with “romantic love” (fairy tales and happy endings) and how that compares with real love.
 - How does a real pain serve a purpose in helping us in our relationship with God?

5. Respond to this quote, “... the Enemy also wants to detach men from themselves, but in a different way. Remember, always, that He really likes the little vermin, and sets an absurd value on the distinctiveness of every one of them. When He talks of them losing their selves, He means only abandoning the clamour of self-will; once they have done that, He really gives them back all their personality, and boasts (I am afraid, sincerely) that when they are wholly His they will be more themselves than ever.”
 - How does a person become more fully themselves once they give themselves fully to God?
 - Why does the writer Paul begin some of his letters, “Paul, a servant (slave) of Christ”? (see **Romans 1:1, Philipians 1:1, Titus 1:1**). How does being a “servant” (same Greek word as “slave”) make a Christian “free”?
 - Refer to **Romans 6** “Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷ But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, ¹⁸ and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness”
 - Read **Luke 9** “And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. ²⁴ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. ²⁵ For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?”

6. How can something trivial (not a sin) such as “a fondness for county cricket or collecting stamps or drinking cocoa” be used to separate us from God? “The man who truly and disinterestedly enjoys any one thing in the world, for its own sake, and without caring twopence what other people say about it, is by that very fact forearmed against some of our most subtlest modes of attack. You should always try to make the patient abandon the people or food or books he really likes in favour of the ‘best’ people, the ‘right’ food, the ‘important’ books.”
 - Trivial things can be turned into serious and deadly things when our intentions are to use them to impress or influence or gain control rather than to simply appreciate and enjoy. Do you agree with this? Any examples?

7. Screwtape suggests that, “The great thing is to prevent his doing anything. As long as he does not convert it into action, it does not matter how much he thinks about this new repentance ... let Him do

anything but act. No amount of piety in his imagination and affections will harm us if we can keep it out of his will.”

- Can a person be a Christian if they say they believe in Jesus but they don’t put their faith into action to help others?
 - Read **Matthew 12**, “Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit.”
 - Read **Matthew 25:31-46** (Parable of the Sheep and the Goats) “Then He will say to those on His left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’”
 - Read **James 2** “What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and filled,’ without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? ¹⁷ So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”
 - Read **John 14** “Jesus answered him, ‘If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.’”
- It is essential to understand that doing good to others does not make a person a Christian. Doing good to others is always the direct result of receiving the love and grace of God. “We love BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US.” 1 John 4

Questions from Chapter XIV (14)

1. Screwtape writes that Wormwood’s patient is no longer making big sweeping promises but instead only hopes for “the daily and hourly pittance to meet the daily and hourly temptation! This is very bad.”
 - Why are great pronouncements and promises of victory over sin, and faithfulness to God (I will read and pray for two hours every day and I will not sin like others) dangerous?
 - Why does Screwtape believe that a Christian who makes an hourly and daily petition to God to help them with temptations, and to help them pray, a bad thing?
2. Screwtape writes “Your patient has become humble; have you drawn his attention to the fact? All virtues are less formidable to us once the man is aware that he has them, but this is specially true of humility. Catch him at the moment when he is really poor in spirit and smuggle into his mind the gratifying reflection, ‘By Jove! I’m being humble,’ and almost immediately pride – pride at his own humility – will appear. If he awakes to the danger and tries to smother this new form of pride, make him proud of his attempt – and so on, through as many stages as you please. But don’t try this too long, for fear you awake his sense of humour and proportion, in which case he will merely laugh at you and go to bed.”
 - How is it possible for a Christian to become proud of their humility? Have you ever experienced this? What is the best remedy? Have you ever reached a point where you simply “laugh ... and go to bed.”?

3. Screwtape advises, “You must therefore conceal from the patient the true end of Humility. Let him think of it, not as self-forgetfulness, but as a certain type of opinion (namely, a low opinion) of his own talents and character ... By this method thousands of humans have been brought to think that humility means pretty women trying to believe they are ugly and clever men trying to believe they are fools ... The Enemy wants to bring the man to a state of mind in which he could design the best cathedral in the world, and know it to be the best, and rejoice in the fact, without being any more (or less) or otherwise glad at having done it than he would if it had been done by another ... He wants each man, in the long run, to be able to recognize all creatures (even himself) as glorious and excellent things ... it is His long-term policy, I fear, to restore to them a new kind of self-love – a charity and gratitude for all selves, including their own ... He really loves the hairless bipeds He has created, and always gives back to them with His right hand what He has taken away with His left.”
- How would you define “humility”? How would you define “pride”? Would most people outside the Christian faith agree with your definitions or would they offer different definitions?
 - What role does humility play in a Christian’s life? Why does the Bible talk so often about having a humble heart? Why is being humble so hard for us?
 - Who is the most humble person you know? What aspects of their life express humility?
 - Would those closest to you describe you as a “humble” person?
 - What steps can you take to increase your level of humility?
 - Read **Mark 10** “And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said to him, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” ³⁶ And he said to them, “What do you want me to do for you?” ³⁷ And they said to him, “Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.” ³⁸ Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” ³⁹ And they said to him, “We are able.” And Jesus said to them, “The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized, ⁴⁰ but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.” ⁴¹ And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. ⁴² And Jesus called them to him and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. ⁴³ But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”
 - **James 4** “But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, ‘God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’ ⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹ Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.”

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Grace of Christ Yakima

Leader Study Guide: Community Life

Part 1: The Screwtape Letters, C.S. Lewis¹

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Week 8 (The Screwtape Letters: Chapter 15)

Get to Know You Questions

1. Describe a time when time seemed to stand still, or move real slow. Describe a time when time seemed to go by really fast. How do you normally find out what time it is? Has the way you tell time changed over the years?
2. What do you think the world will look like (travel, environment, nations, food, technology) in 20 years (2041)?

Overview of the Study (We will be studying select chapters in the book)

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Week 2: Chapters 2, 3, and 4

Week 7: Chapter 13 and 14

Week 3: Chapters 5, 6, and 7

Week 8: Chapter 15

Week 4: Chapter 8

Week 9: Chapter 16

Week 5: Chapter 9

Week 10: Chapters 17, 18, and 19

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1. Each chapter was written as if it were a letter from a senior tempter instructing a junior tempter on how to ruin a person's (Christian) life.
2. Remember as you read that it was intentionally written from a diabolical point of view²
3. The devil and his followers are master liars. Keep that in mind as you read this book.
4. Each letter reveals how our enemy, the Devil, hopes to render us ineffective in our Christian life, and ultimately to ruin/destroy us.

Read this chapter out loud as a group, take time to review and discuss the questions below that relate to this chapter, and any other questions that surface from your reading. You may not, likely will not, get through all of the questions. That's OK. Reminder: The goal isn't to complete the questions but to follow the Holy Spirit as He moves and speaks in and through those in your group.

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Questions from Chapter XV (15)

1. Screwtape writes, "Tortured fear and stupid confidence are both desirable states of mind ... The humans live in time, but the enemy destines them to eternity."
 - What do you think Screwtape meant by "tortured fear"? Did he mean excessive fear?
 - Read **Matthew 6:25-34**, especially the last verse, "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."
 - Do you agree or disagree with this?
 - Read **1 John 4:18**, "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love."
 - What are the potential problems when a person is consumed by fear, tortured fear, unreasonable fear?
 - What do you think Screwtape meant by "stupid confidence"?
 - Read **Philippians 3:1-11** "Put no confidence in the flesh."
 - **Hebrews 4:14-16** "Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need"
 - Living in time, does our inability to see into the future increase or decrease our fears and our ability to trust God? Explain. What if we could look into the future? Would that help? Discuss?
2. "Our business is to get them away from the eternal and from the present. With this in view, we sometimes tempt a human (say a widow or scholar) to live in the past. But this is of limited value, for they have some real knowledge of the Past ... it is far better to make them live in the future ... future inflames hope and fear."
 - Why would it be an advantage to the devil to keep us from thinking seriously about the present or to have us focus on the future?
 - What happens when we think seriously about our present circumstances?
 - How might having a good grasp of our future (when we are aware of where we are headed and who holds our future) affect our present choices and relationships?
3. Do you agree with this statement, "Gratitude looks to the past and love to the Present; fear, avarice, lust, and ambition look ahead. Do not think Lust an exception. When the present pleasure arrives, the sin (which alone interests us) is already over." Discuss your answer
4. Screwtape states, "He (God) does not want men to give the Future their hearts, to place their treasure in it. We do. His ideal is a man who, having worked all day for the good of posterity (if that is His vocation, washes his mind of the whole subject, commits the issue to heaven, and returns at once to the patience or gratitude demanded by the moment that is passing over him. But we want a man hagridden by the Future - haunted by visions of an imminent heaven or hell upon the earth - ready to break the Enemy's (God's) commands int he Present if by doing so we will make him think he can attain the one or advert the other - dependent for his faith on the success or failure of schemes whose end he will not live to see."
 - What is the possible danger for us in giving our heart to the future (not heaven ... the future)?
 - Read and reflect on Luke 12:13-21 "Building bigger barns"

- Why would we be tempted to violate God's commands for a good future cause or reason? Can you think of examples of this?
 - Read Luke 4:5-8 "If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours."
 - How does the sentence, "ready to break the Enemy's (God's) commands into the Present if by doing so we will make him think he can attain the one or avert the other" fit with the saying, "The ends justify the means?" What is the Christian response to this saying?
 - What does it mean to be "hagridden" by the future?
5. Screwtape states, "We want a whole race perpetually in pursuit of the rainbow's end, never honest, not kind, nor happy now, but always using as mere fuel wherewith to heap the altar of the future every real gift which is offered them in the present."
- What does it mean to be forever in pursuit of the rainbow's end? What do we think is at the end of the rainbow? How might, in some instances, playing the lottery, gambling, changing jobs, spouses, families, fit with the pursuit of the rainbow's end?
 - What does Screwtape state we are willing to sacrifice today in our constant pursuit of an empty promise (Pot of Gold) we will never obtain?

If you have any questions or comments, if you need help with this study, with members of your group, or with technology, please call (248-7940 x114) or email (curt@yakimagrace.com)

10-28-2021 CM

Grace of Christ Yakima

Leader Study Guide: Community Life

Part 1: The Screwtape Letters, C.S. Lewis¹

The Ninth Week in our Fall 2021 10-week Grace of Christ Church-wide Community Life Series (*started September 12 and continues through the week of November 14*)

Please use only what you find helpful in this guide.

Week 9 (The Screwtape Letters: Chapter 16)

Get to Know You Questions

1. What is something that's not that important that you really really like but someone in your family, or circle of friends, really doesn't like (type of music, a particular movie, kind of food, TV show ...)? How does that disagreement affect your relationship?
2. What is the longest you've ever gone without talking, saying a single word? How hard would it be for you to remain silent for an entire day (including no use of cell phone or computer to communicate with anyone)?

Overview of the Study (We will be studying select chapters in the book)

Week 1: Prefaces and Chapter 1

Week 6: Chapters 10, 11, and 12

Week 2: Chapters 2, 3, and 4

Week 7: Chapter 13 and 14

Week 3: Chapters 5, 6, and 7

Week 8: Chapter 15

Week 4: Chapter 8

Week 9: Chapter 16

Week 5: Chapter 9

Week 10: Chapters 17, 18, and 19

Tips to reading The Screwtape Letters:

1. Each chapter was written as if it were a letter from a senior tempter instructing a junior tempter on how to ruin a person's (Christian) life.
2. Remember as you read that it was intentionally written from a diabolical point of view²
3. The devil and his followers are master liars. Keep that in mind as you read this book.
4. Each letter reveals how our enemy, the Devil, hopes to render us ineffective in our Christian life, and ultimately to ruin/destroy us.

Read this chapter out loud as a group, take time to review and discuss the questions below that relate to this chapter, and any other questions that surface from your reading. You may not, likely will not, get through all of the questions. That's OK. Reminder: The goal isn't to complete the questions but to follow the Holy Spirit as He moves and speaks in and through those in your group.

¹ C.S. Lewis, The Screwtape Letters, 1982 Edition, Touchstone book: Simon & Schuster, New York.

² On writing The Screwtape Letters, 'Though I had never written more easily, I never wrote with less enjoyment ... though it was easy to twist one's mind into the diabolical attitude, it was not fun, or not for long. The strain produced a sort of spiritual cramp. The work into which I had projected myself while I spoke through Screwtape was all dust, grit, thirst, and itch. Every trace of beauty, freshness, and geniality had to be excluded. It almost smothered me before I was done. It would have smothered my readers if I had prolonged it.'

Questions from Chapter XVI (16)

1. Screwtape writes, "You mentioned casually in your last letter that the patient has continued to attend one church, and one only, since he was converted, and that he is not wholly pleased with it. May I ask what you are about? Why have I no report on the causes of his fidelity to the parish church? Do you realise that unless it is due to indifference it is a very bad thing? Surely you know that if a man can't be cured of churchgoing, the next best thing is to send him all over the neighbourhood looking for the church that 'suits' him until he becomes a taster or connoisseur of churches."³
 - What does Screwtape mean by "attending a church due to indifference"? Define indifference.
 - What is more common today: attending the same church one's whole life, or moving from church to church hoping to find one that fits? Are there benefits to both approaches? Discuss.
 - Screwtape reminded Wormwood, "surely you know that if a man can't be cured of churchgoing, the next best thing is to send him all over the neighbourhood looking for the church that 'suits' him."
 - What are the spiritual dangers of continually "shopping" for a church that suits you?
 - What would make a church the "right" church for you? What needs to be present/offered?
 - Are there valid reasons one might leave a particular church and attend another?
 - What would have to happen to make you leave the church you currently attend?
 - Do you believe there is a perfect church somewhere? Explain your answer.
 - What does Screwtape mean by a person becoming "a taster or connoisseur of churches"? What would that look like?
 - How does commitment to a particular church help a person grow in (mature) their Christian faith?
 - The church is often described as a family. Are you more likely to grow personally, and faith-wise, by working through problems in your family, or by walking away?
2. Screwtape writes, "The two churches nearest to him, I have looked up in the office. Both have certain claims. At the first of these the Vicar is a man who has been so long engaged in watering down the faith to make it easier for a supposedly incredulous and hard-headed congregation that it is now he who shocks his parishioners with his unbelief, not vice versa. He has undermined many a soul's Christianity. His conduct of the services is also admirable. In order to spare the laity all 'difficulties' he has deserted both the lectionary and the appointed psalms and now, without noticing it, revolves endlessly round the little treadmill of his fifteen favourite psalms and twenty favourite lessons. We are thus safe from the danger that any truth not already familiar to him and to his flock should ever reach them through Scripture. But perhaps your patient is not quite silly enough for this church—or not yet?"
 - What does Screwtape mean by the Vicar "watering down" the faith? How have some churches "watered down" the Christian message to make it less offensive and more acceptable?
 - What is the "lectionary"? What is the value of a lectionary? What are the possible drawbacks when a pastor preaches using the lectionary? Why is it important for pastors and teachers to teach/preach from more than their favorite passages?
3. Screwtape continues, "At the other church we have Fr Spike. The humans are often puzzled to understand the range of his opinions — why he is one day almost a Communist and the next not far from some kind of theocratic Fascism — one day a scholastic, and the next prepared to deny human

³ This and all quotes From: C. S. Lewis. "The Screwtape Letters." Apple Books. <https://books.apple.com/us/book/the-screwtape-letters/id360640935>."

reason altogether—one day immersed in politics, and, the day after, declaring that all states of this world are equally ‘under judgment’. We, of course, see the connecting link, which is Hatred. The man cannot bring himself to preach anything which is not calculated to shock, grieve, puzzle, or humiliate his parents and their friends.”

- Why might some preachers, like Father Spike, be tempted to preach things that shock those listening? (Some pastors and teachers are so intent on discovering something new (some idea about Jesus or the Christian faith that no one has thought of before) and preaching about that, or writing a book about that, in order to cause a stir and make a name for themselves.) What problems can this cause? Is it more important to preach and teach something new, or, as the hymn states, “Tell me the Old Old Story ...”?
 - Is it wrong for a pastor to make politics, or a particular hot button issue of the day, the focus of their sermons? Why or why not?
 - Did Jesus teach and preach about political issues? Did He preach and teach about hot button issues? Consider John 18:33-40 (Jesus before Pilate). Consider Luke 11:37-54 (Jesus confronts the Pharisees and Lawyers)
 - What should be the main message of the Church, and of each sermon?
4. Screwtape states, "if your patient can't be kept out of the Church, he ought at least to be violently attached to some party within it. I don't mean on really doctrinal issues; about those the more lukewarm he is, the better ... the real fun is working up hatred between those who say 'mass' and those who say 'holy communion when neither party could possibly state the difference ... and all the purely indifferent things – candles and clothes and what not."
- Why do divisions happen in church? Are most divisions over serious theological issues or trivial and non-essential issues? Discuss.
 - Why are we often tempted to attach ourselves to a particular group within the church that is opposed to others (on issues such as: whether coffee should be allowed in the sanctuary, whether people should be dressed in their best clothes when they come to church, the style of music in the service ...)?
 - What is the impact (in the lives of church members, new Christians, those visiting the church, those observing from outside the church) of quarrels and arguments that take place in the church over non-essential matters?
 - How should Christians treat those who disagree with them?
 - Read Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8:7-13

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11-3-2021 CM

Grace of Christ Yakima

Leader Study Guide: Community Life

Part 1: The Screwtape Letters, C.S. Lewis¹

The Tenth and Final Week in our Fall 2021 10-week Grace of Christ Church-wide Community Life Series
(started September 12 and continues through the week of November 14)

Please use only what you find helpful in this guide.

Week 10 (The Screwtape Letters: Chapters, 17, 18, and 19)

Get to Know You Questions

1. Share a time when you had a particularly bad experience at a restaurant. Was it the food, the service, the cost, the setting, the company you shared the meal with? What did you do? Do you still visit that restaurant today?
2. What was your first experience of being in love (or so you thought at that time)?

Overview of the Study (We will be studying select chapters in the book)

Week 1: Prefaces and Chapter 1

Week 6: Chapters 10, 11, and 12

Week 2: Chapters 2, 3, and 4

Week 7: Chapter 13 and 14

Week 3: Chapters 5, 6, and 7

Week 8: Chapter 15

Week 4: Chapter 8

Week 9: Chapter 16

Week 5: Chapter 9

Week 10: Chapters 17, 18, and 19

Tips to reading The Screwtape Letters:

1. Each chapter was written as if it were a letter from a senior tempter instructing a junior tempter on how to ruin a person's (Christian) life.
2. Remember as you read that it was intentionally written from a diabolical point of view²
3. The devil and his followers are master liars. Keep that in mind as you read this book.
4. Each letter reveals how our enemy, the Devil, hopes to render us ineffective in our Christian life, and ultimately to ruin/destroy us.

Read each chapter out loud as a group, take time to review and discuss the questions below that relate to the chapter, and any other questions that surface from your reading. You may not, likely will not, get through all of the questions. That's OK. Move on to the second and then third chapter, reading each and discussing each before moving on to the next. Reminder: The goal isn't to complete the questions but to follow the Holy Spirit as He moves and speaks in and through those in your group.

¹ C.S. Lewis, The Screwtape Letters, 1982 Edition, Touchstone book: Simon & Schuster, New York.

² On writing The Screwtape Letters, 'Though I had never written more easily, I never wrote with less enjoyment ... though it was easy to twist one's mind into the diabolical attitude, it was not fun, or not for long. The strain produced a sort of spiritual cramp. The work into which I had projected myself while I spoke through Screwtape was all dust, grit, thirst, and itch. Every trace of beauty, freshness, and geniality had to be excluded. It almost smothered me before I was done. It would have smothered my readers if I had prolonged it.'"

Questions from Chapter XVII (17)

1. On the subject of gluttony Screwtape writes, "This has largely been effected by concentrating all our efforts on gluttony of Delicacy, not gluttony of Excess. Your patient's mother, as I learn from the dossier and you might have learned from Glucose, is a good example. She would be astonished—one day, I hope, will be—to learn that her whole life is enslaved to this kind of sensuality, which is quite concealed from her by the fact that the quantities involved are small. But what do quantities matter, provided we can use a human belly and palate to produce querulousness, impatience, uncharitableness, and self-concern? Glucose has this old woman well in hand. She is a positive terror to hostesses and servants. She is always turning from what has been offered her to say with a demure little sigh and a smile 'Oh please, please . . . all I want is a cup of tea, weak but not too weak, and the teeniest weeni-est bit of really crisp toast.' You see? Because what she wants is smaller and less costly than what has been set before her, she never recognises as gluttony her determination to get what she wants, however troublesome it may be to others."³
 - How would you define "gluttony"?
 - Have you ever considered gluttony the way it is described here by Screwtape, "... her whole life is enslaved to this kind of sensuality, which is quite concealed from her by the fact that the quantities involved are small."
 - Have you ever been with someone (or maybe this describes you) so particular about the food they (you) order that most restaurants never get it "right" and they (you) either complain or send the food back?
 - How compassionate are you towards those who work in the food service industry? Have you ever been employed as a cook, a dishwasher, or waiter/waitress? What do you do to try and make their life and work easier? How should a Christian respond to those who serve in restaurants? How should Christians tip those who serve them?
2. Screwtape continues, "The real value of the quiet, unobtrusive work which Glucose has been doing for years on this old woman can be gauged by the way in which her belly now dominates her whole life. The woman is in what may be called the 'All-I-want' state of mind. All she wants is a cup of tea properly made, or an egg properly boiled, or a slice of bread properly toasted. But she never finds any servant or any friend who can do these simple things 'properly'—because her 'properly' conceals an insatiable demand for the exact, and almost impossible"
 - Do you think it is possible for something so simple as food dominate a person's entire life? Discuss.
 - What other pleasures, hobbies, personal preferences can take over a person's life and cause great harm to the person's soul? Can something like golf, fishing, cooking, winetasting, quilting, volunteering, dominate a person's life and put their soul in jeopardy? Explain.
 - What is a "All-I-Want" state of mind?
3. Screwtape states, "But, however you approach it, the great thing is to bring him into the state in which the denial of any one indulgence—it matters not which, champagne or tea, sole colbert or cigarettes—'puts him out', for then his charity, justice, and obedience are all at your mercy. Mere excess in food is much less valuable than delicacy."

³ This and all quotes From: C. S. Lewis. "The Screwtape Letters." Apple Books. <https://books.apple.com/us/book/the-screwtape-letters/id360640935>."

- How might a person's charity, justice and obedience be forgotten when they feel "put out" by being denied some indulgence they feel they deserve?
- How might a person be tempted to treat others when they feel they are being disrespected, mistreated, not appreciated, that their rights are being taken from them?

Questions from Chapter XVIII (18)

1. What message do we (and our children/grandchildren) receive about marriage from music, movies, books, tv shows?
 - Is that message about marriage accurate compared to real marriage? Discuss.
 - Are couples typically well prepared to face the realities and challenges of marriage?
 - How should those of us in the Christian Church talk about marriage in ways that are honest and yet also provide hope to those who want a strong and good marriage? Discuss
 - Screwtape adds, " "We have done this through the poets and novelists by persuading the humans that a curious, and usually short-lived, experience which they call 'being in love' is the only respectable ground for marriage; that marriage can, and ought to, render this excitement permanent; and that a marriage which does not do so is no longer binding"
 - Does the message we receive about marriage help or harm real marriages?
 - How can the desire to permanently "be in love" ruin a marriage?
2. Screwtape writes, "He has also made the offspring dependent on the parents and given the parents an impulse to support it—thus producing the Family, which is like the organism, only worse; for the members are more distinct, yet also united in a more conscious and responsible way. The whole thing, in fact, turns out to be simply one more device for dragging in Love. ... In other words, the humans are to be encouraged to regard as the basis for marriage a highly coloured and distorted version of something the Enemy really promises as its result."
 - How might being a part of a family help a person find hope, Christian faith, and their place in this world?
 - How might being a part of a family create difficulties for a person's Christian faith?

Questions from Chapter XIX (19)

1. What message do we (and our children/grandchildren) receive about marriage from music, movies, books, tv shows?
 - Is that message about marriage accurate compared to a real marriage? Discuss.
 - Screwtape adds, " "We have done this through the poets and novelists by persuading the humans that a curious, and usually short-lived, experience which they call 'being in love' is the only respectable ground for marriage; that marriage can, and ought to, render this excitement permanent; and that a marriage which does not do so is no longer binding"
 - Does the message we receive about marriage help or harm real marriages?
 - How can the desire to permanently "be in love" ruin a marriage?
 - More and more couples now "try marriage" before they actually get married. What are the positive aspects of this approach? What are possible damages and dangers for those who have chosen to live together before marriage?
 - Why do Christians still believe that marriage is important? What will marriage in our society look like in another 15-20 years?
2. Screwtape clarifies, "The truth is I slipped by mere carelessness into saying that the Enemy really loves the humans. That, of course, is an impossibility. He is one being, they are distinct from Him. Their good

cannot be His. All His talk about Love must be a disguise for something else—He must have some real motive for creating them and taking so much trouble about them.”

- Why do you believe God created the world? Why did God create us? Discuss.
- Why does God care about us and love us? Why does he love you, care about you? What is God's intention for you?
 - Read **Galatians 4:1-7**
 - "I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything, ² but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father. ³ In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. ⁴ But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!' ⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God."

3. Screwtape continues, "You complain that my last letter does not make it clear whether I regard being in love as a desirable state for a human or not. But really, Wormwood, that is the sort of question one expects them to ask! Leave them to discuss whether 'Love', or patriotism, or celibacy, or candles on altars, or teetotalism, or education are 'good' or 'bad'. Can't you see there's no answer? Nothing matters at all except the tendency of a given state of mind, in given circumstances, to move a particular patient at a particular moment nearer to the Enemy or nearer to us."

- Screwtape infers here that any aspect of our life has the potential to either draw us closer to God, or move us farther away from Him. Do you agree? What would this look like in your everyday life?

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11-11-2021 CM