God in the Dock; Essays on Theology and Ethics Study Guide

God in the Dock; Essays on Theology and Ethics by C. S. Lewis

BOOKRAGS

Contents

Plot Summary

God in the Dock is a series of forty-eight essays written by C. S. Lewis on theology and ethics. These essays, speeches, lectures, interviews and letters were written over a twenty-four year time span and many have not been published elsewhere. The essays range from discussions of particular objections to Christianity, to political questions concerning, for instance, theories of punishment, to the proper method of engaging the common Englishman with regard to Christianity.

The book is divided into four parts. Part I is composed of the twenty-three essays which are most clearly about theological matters. Part II includes the sixteen essays the editor sees as "semi-theological" or related to theological topics but not directly concerning them. Part III contains the nine essays that are directly concerned with ethical questions. Part IV is a brief compilation of twelve of Lewis' letters.

Part I contains twenty-three essays which may be briefly summarized as follows; only ten are mentioned here. "Evil and God" concerns the problems with theological dualism. "Miracles" argues that modern science has not refuted a rational belief in miracles. "Dogma and the Universe" advances the claim that dogma can be rationally maintained even in a scientifically developed world.

"Horrid Red Things" addresses the religion-science conflict, as does "Religion and Science." "Laws of Nature" argues that the laws of nature are not incompatible with the efficacy of prayer. "The Grand Miracle" argues that Christianity cannot survive watering down its core miracles.

"Man or Rabbit" grapples with whether one can be a good person without being a Christian. "Some Thoughts" argues that Christians should aid the sick even if it is God's will that some die. "The Trouble with 'X'" argues that one should still witness to those people one believes will never accept the Gospel. "What Are We to Make of Jesus Christ?" argues that we cannot merely accept Christ as a moral teacher.

Part II contains sixteen essays that may be summarized as follows; only five are mentioned here. "The Dangers of National Repentance" emphasizes the dangers of national repentance. "Two Ways with the Self" outlines how a Christian should conceive of self-love. "Meditation on the Third Commandment" rejects the idea of a Christian political party. "Meditation in a Toolshed" argues that modern science does not reveal the whole of reality. "Scraps" concerns the nature of heaven. "The Decline of Religion" denies equating the decline of Christianity with the decline of its apparent practice.

Part III contains nine essays that may be summarized as follows; only three are mentioned here. "Bulverism" argues that one must always first ask whether a view is true and then ask why people believe in it. "First and Second Things" criticizes the Nazi embrace of a Nordic ethos. "The Humanitarian Theory of Punishment" criticizes the Humanitarian theory of punishment.

Part I, Essays 1 - 5, Evil and God, Miracles, Dogma and the Universe, Answers to Questions on Christianity, Myth Became Fact

Part I, Essays 1 - 5, Evil and God, Miracles, Dogma and the Universe, Answers to Questions on Christianity, Myth Became Fact Summary and Analysis

Essay 1, "Evil and God" is a response to a 1941 article by C.E.M. Joad, "Evil and God." The argument of the piece was that due to the falsity of various philosophical theories of human evolution, rational persons are left with a choice between monotheism and something like a Zoroatrian dualism. Lewis agrees with the rejection of false developmental theories, like materialism. Joad suggests that dualism is preferable given the horrors of World War II.

Lewis emphasizes that the evils of World War II are not unique, as incredible evil extends throughout human history. Dualism is problematic on its own, as well, The good and evil powers cannot explain one another. Nothing explains why they are there together; they are both conditioned and affected by one another and so have not reached "the ground of being."

Further, dualism gives evil a substantive and positive nature, but this makes good only good because we prefer it; we cannot say that the evil god is wrong and the good god correct. Sound value theories demand that evil be a perversion of good.

Essay 2, "Miracles" opens with a case of a woman Lewis knew who thought she saw a ghost but thought it was a hallucination. He notes that miracles seem to have disappeared in correlation with the increasing Western belief in materialism. However, this may only imply that the materialist's philosophy causes him to reinterpret any genuine miraculous experience he has. Experience alone proves nothing.

How we interpret experiences depends on our prior commitments; many argue against miracles on the grounds that supernaturalist pre-commitments are irrational. Lewis notes though that the supernaturalist must accept that there are laws of nature to even know what a miracle consists in, so she must accept the normal stability of nature, despite having to accept a reality beyond nature. If one accepts these two premises, miracles seem to occur from time to time.

Many disbelieve in Christ's resurrection because they see miracles as contrary to their aesthetic and see the laws of nature as equivalent to the laws of thought. However, these are mistakes. Lewis then maintains that most miracles are only normal actions of nature at a different speed and a smaller scale and he gives examples. Other, greater miracles, foreshadow God's actions in the universe; Christ's resurrection foreshadows the recreation of the world.

In "Dogma and the Universe" Lewis addresses the criticism of Christianity that its dogmas do not change, but that human knowledge changes. Christianity is therefore always trying to force new knowledge to be compatible with dogma. Outsiders, he admits, are often put off by this. First, Lewis maintains that modern science in the form of relativity and quantum mechanics is less contradictory to Christianity than classical mechanics. He also suggests that the improbability of man's creation can be explained by the existence of God.

Lewis points out that if the universe were meaningless, we would not tremble at its awe-inspiring power; if we are reacting to the shadow of God, this feeling of awe makes more sense. However, Lewis denies that the universe exists for us to awe at it. Christianity need not fear the massive, terrifying universe, only the materialist. The new knowledge need not frighten the Christian at all.

Now, how can an unchanging system of thought survive in a world of changing and increasing knowledge? One might think that the system of thought is compatible with changing and increasing knowledge, and that new knowledge does not necessarily replace the old. Just because Christians do not change their dogmatic views but try to make them fit with modern science does not mean the doctrines change.

Essay 4, "Answers to Questions on Christianity" records a Q&A between Lewis and various interlocutors. Lewis first emphasizes that he does not know how to solve the problem of repetitive work in the industrial system. He holds that Christianity does not require pacifism. Lewis argues that a factory worker can find God and that Christianity does not require him to simply make do with his lot. He defines a practicing Christian in degrees, according to the degree one imitates the life of Christ. Lewis emphasizes that men who suffer have a special opportunity to know God, despite the fact that the goods of life are real goods.

Lewis denies that man's evolution was random on the grounds that it would undermine the reliability of the senses. He claims that he does not know whether Christianity is a particularly gloomy religion and denies that while Christians must be prepared to accept a life of discomfort that they need not be satisfied with it if it is not in accord with the will of God. Lewis maintains that Christianity has borrowed from other religions but that this makes it more plausible not less. The faith-works controversy is a complex matter for him and Christianity need not slow down the progress of science. These among other questions are addressed.

Essay 5, "Myth became Fact" addresses a friend of Lewis', Corineus, who argues that Christianity is so barbaric that no modern "Christian" really is one. Lewis thinks this is

false. Corineus wants Christianity to be treated as mere myth but that keeps it from doing its good. Myth is a solution to men's difficulties in life but he also wants the truth; he needs to believe it. Christianity holds that myth became fact, and so has the best of both myth and fact.

Part I, Essays 6 - 11, 'Horrid Red Things', Religion and Science, The Laws of Nature, The Grand Miracle, Christian Apologetics, Work and Prayer

Part I, Essays 6 - 11, 'Horrid Red Things', Religion and Science, The Laws of Nature, The Grand Miracle, Christian Apologetics, Work and Prayer Summary and Analysis

"Horrid Red Things" addresses the religion-science conflict. Many people still believe in the conflict between science and religion. There is simply a different "atmosphere" between Christianity and science's picture of the universe. The idea of God, and God having a "Son" seems absurd. He wants to interpret the Christian creeds less literally but part of himself will not allow it. To convince the "ordinary" modern man, the Christian must make clear what of the Creed will remain after modern science is accounted for. Shockingly supernatural events will be left over. Further, he must distinguish between thinking and imagining. One can think about something even if one cannot visualize it. We can explain the Creed without explaining it away by making clear what its terms mean but keeping its literal content.

In "Religion and Science," Lewis addresses the argument that science has undermined the idea of miracles. Some claim that the universe is ruled by exceptionless laws, but Lewis denies that science shows they are exceptionless. The essay takes place as a dialogue between Lewis and a friend. Lewis mainly argues that his friend is reading an absolute exceptionlessness into scientific laws that science itself does not warrant. Instead, supernaturalism, for one, is perfectly compatible with the data.

In "Laws of Nature," Lewis addresses a friend who thinks it quaint that a woman believes her son survived a battle because she prayed for him. However, Lewis notes, for all we know, God may have influenced the paths of men's actions in the battle in such a way as to grant the woman's prayer. The laws of nature are compatible with such an event, after all, for God could have set up the universe such that all the events occurred according to the laws of nature and yet the woman's son was saved. The laws of nature are not causes, either; they do not make anything happen. Only God can do that. Events cause events but they must terminate in a creator.

Essay 9, "The Grand Miracle" wonders whether Christianity can survive the removal of its "miraculous elements." You could do this to Buddhism and other religions, Lewis notes, but not to Christianity. Instead, we must grapple with whether the resurrection of Christ occurred. We cannot apply Humean probability to this either, for Christianity must

be judged not according to the probability judgments of modern science but of those of the actions of God, who runs the universe. Lewis suggests that we judge the probability according to the probability that an author would write an event in a story following this or that previous series of events. If we look at a story and see something missing, we might infer a chapter is missing; that would make the existence of the missing chapter probable. Lewis argues that the resurrection of Jesus fits into the history of the world in just this way. The argument is complex and requires careful attention to the text.

Essay 10, "Christian Apologetics" is given to a youth conference of clergy on Easter, 1945. Lewis discusses apologetics, or the rational defense of Christianity. First, Lewis maintains that he is focused on apologetics for "mere" Christianity. Men need apologetics to make doctrine clear to those who do not understand it; they need it to rule out proposed contradictions in their own beliefs. Apologetics can be used to argue against opponents of the faith and to test the truth of Christian ideas against one's own concerns.

The professional apologist must keep up with intellectual challenges to the faith, particularly theological reading, but perhaps scientific reading as well. Lewis encourages the crowd to be careful about mixing religion and politics in the wrong way —religion tells us what the end of human life is and the moral means of pursuing it; politics teaches how, practically, this may be done. Missionary techniques cannot be merely about politics.

Apologetics is needed because the uneducated Englishman knows little about history, distrusts ancient texts, has no sense of sin, and so the clergy must learn the language of their audience. Then Lewis lays out how the average Englishman understands the use of various theological terms. He encourages the use of apologetics to attack false doctrines; he prefers to speak on intellectual, not emotional attacks, as he knows them much better.

Lewis encourages the clergy not to water down Christianity, discusses common objections to Christianity, warns his audience about the difficult intricacies of arguments for God's existence, and discussions concerning the historicity of the gospels. He maintains that Christianity must be defended on the grounds that it is true, not merely good. He argues that the only true religions are few, the ones that are both "Thick" and "Clear." Finally, one should not rest one's faith entirely on the apologetic.

In "Work and Prayer" Lewis addresses the paradox of prayer: why pray when God already knows what is good for you and will do what is good for you already because He is perfectly good? Prayer cannot be just about talking to God; prayer really is about trying to bring about a result. Of course, we can ask God to act, and he can act. We may indeed have the "dignity of causality." Prayer and physical action are both means by which God allows us to have a causal impact on His world. Prayers are not always granted, but if one does not pray, then that may well affect the outcome.

Part I, Essays 12 - 18, Man or Rabbit?, On the Transmission of Christianity, 'Miserable Offenders', The Founding of the Oxford Socratic Club, Religion without Dogma?, Some Thoughts, 'The Trouble with

Part I, Essays 12 - 18, Man or Rabbit?, On the Transmission of Christianity, 'Miserable Offenders', The Founding of the Oxford Socratic Club, Religion without Dogma?, Some Thoughts, 'The Trouble with Summary and Analysis

In "Man or Rabbit" Lewis addresses the question of whether one can lead a good life without being a Christian. First Lewis points out that the question often seems to imply that men care more about leading a good life than whether Christianity is true, but Lewis thinks this is the wrong way to think about it. If you think it is true, then you will immediately realize that Christianity will help you be good. Of course, a secular and Christian man could agree on a lot of morality but they cannot both be right about the universe. In the best world, the materialist will not be a fault for his error.

Lewis next points out that it may be possible for "someone" to be good without Christianity, but each person should ask that about himself; the vast majority will realize that they cannot be good at all. Without a creed or worldview, he will also not even know what "good" means, as worldviews inform morality. Finally, Lewis emphasizes that Christianity will do you good, but it will not be what you wanted. It will make you truly good and transform you; the process will not be easy.

"On the Transmission of Christianity" is an introduction to a book "How Heathen is Britain?" The author argues that most schoolboys are not really taught Christianity and the case for it and if it is taught to them, it is not in a form that will convince them. Christianity, of course, must be transmitted from one generation to another; Christian populations must teach Christianity.

If the State takes education over it will produce conformity and servility but teaching must still be done by individuals and if they are Christians then they should still teach Christianity. The author exposes how education works. Education is not the way to "re-baptize" England; instead, it is about reaching out to your fellow man and community.

"Miserable Offenders" discusses prayer book language. Lewis focuses on the prayers as they are indexed to the church calendar. He notes that the book sometimes uses words that seem harsh when talking about individual feelings, but Lewis thinks this is not the right way to read it. Instead, the prayer book seeks to smash those things bad in us in order to produce a new person. Ultimately, real change occurs on the inside of one's being, not the outside. God looks into the heart and this fact must be made concrete to the individual. This may sound gloomy, but the alternative is worse—being eaten up by sin.

Essay 15 discusses the founding of the Socratic Club; Lewis is its president. The members discuss theological and philosophical matters, following the argument wherever it leads. Lewis is surprised that there are not other such groups. He hopes they can remain neutral, unlike the speaker of the British House of Commons, who must be a member of the party. Some say that the group is pointless because reason cannot advance or harm Christianity; it is too sacred, but members of the club will imagine things differently.

Essay 16, "Religion without Dogma" responds to Professor Price, who argues that modern science has made religion impossible to take seriously. For instance, the idea of a soul is too anti-materialist. Lewis first disagrees with Price's understanding of religion. He also disagrees with Price's understanding of dogma and mythology and rejects the application of the scientific method to all manner of beliefs.

Lewis denies that the only things that can be coherently said about the laws of nature derive from observable entities. Lewis thinks to argue otherwise begs the question against his position. Science cannot show that miraculous events are incredible. Science simply cannot undermine religion.

However, Lewis argues, philosophy can undermine materialism; he argues that if all reasoning is the result of material movements in the brain, then there is no reason to suppose that reasoning tracks the truth rather than following the random path of the universe. He then argues that dogma helps to tie a religion's identity together and that it would fall apart without it. Lewis denies that Christianity is a form of spiritualism and then compares the advantages and disadvantages of paganism compared with secularism, arguing they both are inferior to Christianity. Lewis' argument continues after the peace with famous philosopher G.E.M. Anscombe; Price then has a brief reply recounting Anscombe's proposed refutation.

"Some Thoughts" follows. There are concerns about Christians aiding the sick for it might be God's will that they are sick and it might be better for them if they died and went to be with God. Yet Christians have always helped the sick. It is also odd that helping people be healed is the central part of a religion that emphasizes Christ's violent death. Ultimately, Lewis thinks that we stop the encroachment of death because it really is unnatural and not what God intends. Even if we fail, we should try.

In the next essay, Lewis assesses the person who refuses to reach out to someone they care about on the grounds that they are impervious to being witnessed to. Those who

are hesitant emphasize that they know the person well enough to know what they would accept. Individuals cannot alter the characters of others, only God can.

However God sometimes sees things similarly; we resist Him constantly and yet He continues to try to save us. We should imitate God and love those supposedly impervious people in our lives enough to hope that they will accept Jesus if we speak to them. We should not think about the faults of others as excuses but as opportunities.

Part I, Essays 19 - 23, What Are We to Make of Jesus Christ?, The Pains of Animals, Is Theism Important?, Rejoinder to Dr Pittenger, Must Our Image of God Go?

Part I, Essays 19 - 23, What Are We to Make of Jesus Christ?, The Pains of Animals, Is Theism Important?, Rejoinder to Dr Pittenger, Must Our Image of God Go? Summary and Analysis

Lewis asks us what we are to make of Jesus Christ in Essay 19. It seems odd that his moral teaching would be so sound and yet the claims to miracles, resurrection and the like seem so absurd. If Christ's claims are false, he seems to be a megalomaniac, and far from a great moral teacher. The two ideas go together if He is Lord but perhaps He is a legend; Lewis, as a literary historian, is convinced that the Gospels are not legend, as they are not artistic enough. Not enough of his life is recorded.

In "The Pains of Animals" Lewis worries about the point of the suffering of animals. Dr. Joad, a philosophy professor at the University of London wrote a response to some of Lewis' writings on the subject. He opens by claiming that attempts to explain away evil have a kind of "queasiness" about them. Hhe holds that standard defenses against the problem of human pain make sense, but that they do not make sense for animals.

Lewis denies that animals have a continuous stream of consciousness, but only instances of consciousness. Each stage of animal consciousness is a distinct stage, and so "animals" do not feel pain, only animal stages. However, Joad holds that this does not help matters further it seems false to make such a claim about animals, particularly higher animals. Lewis also claims that higher animals might achieve immortality by becoming part of the family of man. Yet, this does not cover apes and elephants. He then gives a variety of other arguments.

Lewis replies by first admitting that his chapter on animal pain was speculative; his initial goal was only to rebut the "prima facie" case against suffering counting against God's existence. He is pleased that they agree on the problem of human pain. Lewis argues that we may not be supposed to have access to the reasons that beasts feel pain, and then Lewis replies to Joad's detailed arguments, maintaining that wild animals do not have real streams of consciousness and so their pain does not cry out for a justification. He also argues that our very sense that pain is evil calls out for God's existence as the source of our sense that pain is evil.

Essay 21, "Is Theism Important?" discusses the senses in which theistic belief is important to the religious life. Lewis distinguishes between Faith-A, mere intellectual assent, and Faith-B, a religious sort of trust. Getting Faith-A is not enough for Faith-B. Lewis then holds that Faith-B is often associated with a feeling of the holy and that persons have the "seed" of religious experience within them. So Faith does not come from philosophy alone.

In "Rejoinder to Dr. Pittenger" Lewis replies to a critique of his books Mere Christianity, The Problem of Pain, and Miracles. He first corrects some misinterpretations of Dr. Pittenger. Pittenger claims that Lewis's argument against naturalism is an argument against a straw man and argues that Lewis misinterprets the gospels by holding that Jesus claimed He was God. Lewis denies these points. He also clarifies the sense in which he bases faith on authority and that he is callous to animals. He then criticizes Dr. Pittenger from criticizing his books without bearing in mind the audience they were intended for. Lewis wanted to produce books half-way between inaccessible scholarship and vulgar popular writing.

Essay 23, "Must Our Image of God Go?" covers the sense in which Christians anthropomorphize Scripture. It is not so literalist as the Bishop of Woolwich supposes. However, the Bishop of Woolwich also goes much too far in the metaphorical direction, supposing Jesus to be merely a "window" into the divine reality.

Part II, Essays 1 - 10, Dangers of National Repentance, Two Ways with the Self, Meditation on the Third Commandment, On the Reading of Old Books, Two Lectures, Meditation in a Toolshed, Scraps, The Decline of Religion, Vivisection, Modern Translations of

Part II, Essays 1 - 10, Dangers of National Repentance, Two Ways with the Self, Meditation on the Third Commandment, On the Reading of Old Books, Two Lectures, Meditation in a Toolshed, Scraps, The Decline of Religion, Vivisection, Modern Translations of the Bible Summary and Analysis

In Essay 1, Lewis argues that the idea of national repentance, despite seeming like a good idea, is not. Many believe that England bears part of the guilt for the present war, but Lewis finds this hard to determine. Instead, men should focus on repenting for sins they directly caused, which will be more than enough to occupy them. National repentance is often an escape from individual repentance. The Church should preach national repentance when appropriate, but they should focus primarily on individual repentance.

Essay 2 discusses the Christian attitude towards the self, which seems to have two sides, a love of self as one would love others and a hatred of self. However, in fact, Christianity emphasizes self-love up to a point and discourages it beyond that point. We should see ourselves as God's creature but in a hateful condition and in need of healing. However, we should not prefer ourselves to others, and instead war against the ego.

In Essay 3, Lewis rejects the idea of a Christian political party. He argues that political parties tend to agree on ends but not means, and they often all agree on security, a living wage and balancing order and freedom. We debate about what sort of state to have. Lewis then lists three examples of Christians with opposing political views about

how to protect Christianity, suggesting that their disagreements would rip the party apart. Then these groups will have no theological authority to speak for Christianity. God has not spoken to men about politics. Instead, Christians should have an interest group that all parties must take into account. One should pester politicians with letters, combining the dove and the serpent. Christians might also become a majority through conversion.

Essay 4 combats the idea that only experts should read old books. Lewis finds this inclination popular in theology; one should read contemporaries. Lewis thinks the opposite is so, because one should try to get perspective on the peculiarities of one's time. He then cites some of his influences from far back in Christian history; he laments their deep disagreements but notes that from outside of the church these disagreements look rather small.

"Two Lectures" opens with a lecture about how evolution is continuous progress. The ethics and philosophy of modern man is simply an elaboration of early taboos. Lewis had heard these claims and then imagined them going in the opposite direction, with the more complex leading to the simple, and he thought that the first story could not explain absolute beginnings, only the second. The natural universe had to come from something greater.

In Essay 6, Lewis draws an analogy between looking at the sun from the cracks in the roof of a toolshed and looking at it head-on, seeing the sun directly. Some claim that observing a thing indirectly is the best way to understand it, such as when we ask a psychologist about the nature of love rather than drawing from our own experience. We see things only inaccurately if we look at them from "the inside."

Then Lewis argues this is the modern worldview; reality comes from an outside-in perspective. However, this view has flaws. First, we always begin from the inside perspective and cannot escape it. Further, the very thing we are trying to explain—reality, true love—will evaporate in the explanation. Instead, the thing that we experience must be the truest and the indirect explanation a supplement.

Essay 7 is a series of "Scraps" or conversations between Lewis and a friend about the nature of heaven.

Essay 8, "The Decline of Religion" Lewis notes that the decline of religion in England looks fast but that it only became apparent when church attendance stopped being mandatory; then the non-believers did not show up. The practice of Christianity is less visible but the true decline of religion becomes more complex. At least without compulsion, the truth is available about what state the church is in. He then notes that the apparent "interest" in Christianity may be something of a fad and urges others not to put much hope in it.

"Vivisection" discusses whether vivisection is a bad thing for animals; Lewis says the judgment depends on how one understands the evil of pain. Sometimes the pain of vivisection is justified because it improves the lives of humans; others deny that animals

have souls. The Christian must maintain, at the least, that Man is superior to beasts and sacrificing beast to man is the logical consequence. However, most vivisectors are not Christians and the cruelty of vivisection is to be criticized.

Essay 10, "Modern Translations of the Bible," asks whether the King James Version of the Bible is the best. Many shudder at modern translations, but the KJV itself was once a modern translation. As language evolves, the KJV gradually becomes a worse translation, yet it is true that the KJV is beautiful and solemn. However, we should still welcome sound translations of the Bible. Lewis maintains that the Bible should not be "watered-down" in translation, however.

Part II, Essays 11 - 16, Priestesses in the Church?, God in the Dock, Behind the Scenes, Revival or Decay?, Before We Can Communicate, Cross-Examination

Part II, Essays 11 - 16, Priestesses in the Church?, God in the Dock, Behind the Scenes, Revival or Decay?, Before We Can Communicate, Cross-Examination Summary and Analysis

In "Priestesses in the Church?" Lewis addresses the question of whether women should be allowed to be priests. Lewis worries that this step will be too great a break from tradition and increase divisions with other churches. It also would threaten the unity of the Church of England itself. Lewis respects women who want to serve God as priests and thinks them sincere and rationality looks to be on their side, as there is a shortage of priests. Women certainly seem capable.

He notes however that the women spiritual leaders in the Old Testament were prophets, not priests. So it is true that they can preach, but why not all the rest? A priest, in Lewis's view, represents us to God and God to us. Why can a woman not represent God? Lewis thinks she cannot do so as effectively because she symbolizes God as a woman. The character of Christianity suggests a masculine role for God, and God has taught us to speak of Him as a man. The imagery of Christianity is masculine and the sex of a person is not irrelevant to the spiritual life. The State can treat persons as "neuters" but the Church must not; the Church is a mystical body and must represent a mystical reality.

Just because a man can be a bad priest, does not imply that women should be priests, just as a man being a bad husband does not imply that the woman should be a husband. The Church is really more like a Ball than a factory or political party. Both stylize something natural and which represents courtship between human beings.

Essay 12, "God in the Dock" addresses problems that the Christian faces in response to modern unbelievers. Lewis denies that materialism is a major modern adversary; there are others, such as Spiritualism and Marxism. Engaging the average Englishman has other challenges, as the Englishman is typically skeptical of history, and there are linguistic differences between the Englishman and the Church. Christian preachers must learn the common English language. Further, the preacher must be able to forcefully communicate the idea of sin, which Lewis has found is unfamiliar to the average Englishman. Men do not judge God, but God judges man.

Essay 13, "Behind the Scenes" discusses the distinction between the scene and going "behind the scenes" and how unreal going behind the scenes often is. Many phenomena have a distinct appearance but a starkly different reality. Love "behind the scenes" may appeal to be merely biological. We should not denigrate mere appearance though; much in life we cannot "go behind" and see its inner workings; off-stage viewing is a myth.

Essay 14, "Revival or Decay?" addresses a supposed increase in interest in religion in England that Lewis confronts. However, Lewis does not think that an increase in interest is important, only conversion is. Lots of Christians receive respect, but conversions do not often occur. It is not enough to merely embrace Christian morality but it is inextricably linked with Christian doctrine. This is so despite the fact that anti-Christian doctrines are being discredited. However, there are other dangers, such as sex worship and a brewing science fiction religion.

Essay 15, "Before We Can Communicate" discusses the problem of communication between Christians and the outside world. His observations are empirical. Some language in the old prayer book should be explained more effectively. In some cases, the language should also be changed to make communication easier. Brevity will also be effective.

Essay 16, "Cross-Examination" is an interview with C.S. Lewis about Christian literature. Lewis makes various suggestions for reading and study but cautions against a single program of study for all Christians. He does condemn forced jocularity but solemnity need not always be the rule. Much Christian writing is quite bad. Lewis also denies that one can bring on an experience of God through will and writing; God must be involved. He also gives writing advice and daily discipline advice for Christians.

Part III, Essays 1 - 9, 'Bulverism', First and Second Things, The Sermon and the Lunch, The Humanitarian Theory of Punishment, Xmas and Christmas, Delinquents in the Snow, Is Progress Possible?, We Have No 'Right to Happiness'

Part III, Essays 1 - 9, 'Bulverism', First and Second Things, The Sermon and the Lunch, The Humanitarian Theory of Punishment, Xmas and Christmas, Delinquents in the Snow, Is Progress Possible?, We Have No 'Right to Happiness' Summary and Analysis

Essay 1, "Bulverism" opens with a discussion of how Freudianism and Marxism have encouraged the inquiring mind to look not at what most men regard as true, but why they regard it as true, whether it be due to complex or economic interest. They cannot say, though, that all thoughts are tainted by these mechanisms else they undercut their own positions. Some of what we believe must be true, after all. Further, you must explain that a man is wrong before explaining why he is wrong.

Bulverism is the modern philosophy of first assuming your opponent is wrong and then explaining his error; you can ignore who is wrong or right. People approach Christianity with a Bulverist attitude. Bulverism must be stopped to allow reason to prevail. Theism may be the only view that sustains the idea that reason can reach truth, for materialism cannot do this.

Either reasoning is the result of causes or a cause known as "a reason." Mindless causes will not produce true reasoning, only random reasoning, whereas the sort of thing that can be moved by "a reason" is not a mere machine, but has a sort of soul. So the will which chooses and reason itself cannot be a product of mere nature; instead it points to supernature. As a result, we may need a supernaturalist perspective to accept the supremacy of reason.

Essay 2, "First and Second Things" opens with Lewis declaring that the Nazi embrace of the Nordic ethos seems to him absurd. German mythology consists of heroic men fighting against hopeless odds. The humorous courage of Thor and the wisdom of Odin

will be smashed by evil and misshapen forces. The only European people trying to revive its pre-Christian theology are those who understand their pre-Christian theology least.

However, it may not be such a paradox. In the 19th century, Europe took art seriously as an end in itself (and not merely as means) for the first time; the Nazis have tried to do this with their mythology; they have put their mythology first, but not second. Lewis believes the world will always misunderstand itself if it does not put the transcendent and true first and these other matters second.

In "The Sermon and the Lunch" Lewis reflects on a sermon he heard on the importance of family by a man he knew had an awful family. However, one must not discount good advice just because the one giving it does not follow it. No natural organization has a tendency to go right since the fall. Love within the family is not enough to make it go right. Home life is not enough, only the life of Christ is. Further, men must not be "themselves" at home for at home they must change. They cannot relax in their depravity ever. If the home is to have grace it must have rules in the first place.

"The Humanitarian Theory of Punishment" discusses the idea of punishment as reformatory in contrast with Capital Punishment. Lewis thinks the death penalty is a deterrent and does not know whether murderers will repent with time. However, the idea of "humanity" in the humanitarian theory of punishment is not the true idea of humanity. The idea of crime as mere pathology will lead to the view that the proper response to it is therapy.

Lewis argues that once one breaks the law, he is deprived of his rights as a human being. The Humanitarian destroys the concept of Desert but it is the only link between punishment and justice. The Humanitarian also removes punishment from the people and their sentiment and places it in the hands of technocrats. It is really the "therapy" that is tyranny; it does not treat the wrongdoer with the dignity of his evil and it does not hold him responsible. Instead, it subjects him to torment he does not deserve. Further, you should never punish a man as a means to help others primarily, as a deterrent theory does.

Lewis attributes no evil motive to the Humanitarian; but tyrannies rarely develop from any other motive; those who act as therapists inevitably become tyrants. The Humanitarian will also develop many bad rules, besides tyrannically enforcing the good ones. As Christians, we must understand that rulers are not always wise and good; others will be very evil and very foolish. Do not put the Humanitarian theory in their hands. One must oppose the Humanitarian theory of punishment "root and branch." Its putative mercy is false.

In a reply to philosopher J.J.C. Smart, Lewis takes up Smart's distinction between the question of what is just and whether a particular institution of moral rules is a good idea. Lewis thinks that the distinction is old but that Smart innovates by applying the question of moral rightness and wrongness only to the first question. Lewis stridently denies Smart's utilitarianism, arguing that it is incompatible with human dignity.

Lewis then addresses two critics, a lawyer and a psychiatrist. They say that he says too little about the protection of community but he maintains that this is real but merely "subsidiary" to genuine desert-based punishment. Yes, criminal children should have some rehabilitation. However, this does not hold for adults. Further, judges are far from incorruptible and will be given too much power if they are to decide on therapy too often. He maintains at the end that the pleas for the "useful" and the "necessary" are the pleas of the tyrant.

In Essay 5, "Xmas and Christmas" Lewis discusses the increasing use of "Xmas" with an analogy. The lesson of the tale is that "Xmas" covers up the core idea of Christmas, which is the mystery of the birth of Christ. In Essay 6, "What Christmas Means to Me" Lewis argues that for him, the core idea of Christmas is the birth of Jesus and secondarily of merry-making. However, he also wants others to mind their own business and does not want to preach to anyone else. Yet the "commercial racket" surrounding Christmas is everyone's business.

Lewis's problems with Christmas commercialism are not the typical ones. He argues that much of the commercialism causes more pain than pleasure. It is also mostly involuntary; people feel forced to give gifts. People also give absurd and awful presents, which waste money and the racket of Christmas shopping disrupts ordinary shopping practices. He does not think arbitrary consumption stimulates the economy; instead, he sees the British people as obsessed with convincing each other to buy things.

In Essay 7, "Delinquents in the Snow" Lewis takes up the idea of carolers. He thinks they are often the same young hoodlums that harass him with trespassing and screams at other points in the year. Lewis complains that the hoodlums were unjustly punished by a female judge who merely fined their parents. The law, he argues, too often protects the criminal and not the victim. The whole legitimacy of the State, though, rests on its protecting those that cannot protect themselves. We should obey the State because it does for us that which we cannot better do for ourselves. He worries that the consequence of doing otherwise will lead to social chaos.

In Essay 8, "Is Progress Possible?" Lewis notes that progress is not inevitable. Instead, one worries whether it is possible. This question need not focus merely on the question of the use of the atomic bomb. He notes that the advance of science is neutral because it can be used for good or ill. He rejects that progress is made in moving from a system of law based on justice to one based on treatment. He also complains about the loss of economic liberty due to the two world wars. Intellectuals first surrendered to Hegel, then Marx and then the "linguistic analysts." Classical political theory has died. We have "leaders" instead of "rulers" and we can never say "Mind your own business" to anyone.

Lewis strongly prefers what he calls "the freeborn mind," which we cannot have without economic independence, which British society is destroying. Education should not be controlled by government, which can control what people learn. A new oligarchy arises. A planned society will always result in technocracy and rule by specialist. Government should not have divine aspirations or rule by science. We must remember those ruled

wholly by "science" are half-starved in the East. It is not clear whether what many call "progress" is even desirable.

In Essay 9, "We Have No 'Right to Happiness'" Lewis denies that we have a right to be happy. It is odd to have a right to something beyond our control, though. Instead, people have a right to pursue their own happiness. Further, people differ on what happiness consists in, and some get it completely wrong. Sexual morality is often degraded in the name of "happiness." For one thing, a society that does not enforce sexual morality will be unfriendly to women because they are most protected by it. Eventually a libertine "right to happiness" will result in a carte blanche morality where people will treat each other however they see fit.

Part IV, Letters

Part IV, Letters Summary and Analysis

The final part contains a brief compilation of some of Lewis's letters. They are as follows: "The Conditions for a Just War," "The Conflict In Anglican Theology," "Miracles," "Mr. C. S. Lewis on Christianity," "A Village Experience," "Correspondence with an Anglican Who Dislikes Hymns," "The Church's Liturgy, Invocation and Invocation of Saints," "The Holy Name," "Mere Christians," "Canonization," "Pittenger-Lewis and Version Vernacular" and "Capital Punishment and Death Penalty." Each discusses very briefly that issues that are reflected in their titles.

Characters

C. S. Lewis

Clive Staples Lewis was a famous Christian apologist, lay theologian, novelist, children's book writer, academic, literary critic and essay writer who lives from 1898 to 1963. He is known most well for his famous children's book series The Chronicles of Narnia, some of which have recently become movies and are full of Christian allegories.

Lewis was baptized a Christian but left the church when he was a young man. During his early twenties, he fought for the British in World War I. Due to the influence of his friends, including J. R. R. Tolkien, Lewis converted to Christianity in 1928, at age 30. He returned to the Church of England and became famous due to his radio broadcasts about Christianity during World War II. He wrote a wide variety of fiction books thereafter, including the The Chronicles of Narnia, the Space Trilogy, and the Screwtape Letters.

Lewis also wrote over a dozen non-fiction books, many of which were attempts to defend the Christianity faith. These books are well-known, the most famous of which include Mere Christianity, The Problem of Pain and Miracles. Many if not most of the arguments and ideas in God in the Dock are expressed at great length in these non-fiction works, along with frequent expressions in his fiction work. Lewis's ideas about the nature of Christian transformation, the arguments for a theistic universe, the answer to the problem of evil, and so on, are all contained in microcosm in the essays in God in the Dock.

Jesus Christ

God in the Dock is a series of essays that engage a variety of individuals on a variety of topics. As such, it has no true "characters" to speak of. However, besides Lewis, the next most mentioned individual is Jesus Christ, the founder of Christianity and the man believed by many to be God Himself and the Son of God. The primary historical information concerning Jesus Christ comes from the four canonical Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Jesus is believed by Christians to have been born the son of the Virgin Mary and the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Holy Trinity. Jesus is also thought to have performed miracles, engaged in widespread moral teaching, founded a church, been persecuted, imprisoned, and crucified, after which Christians believe he rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. They also expect that he will return to earth at some point in the future to end the world, separate believers and non-believers and exact justice in the world.

Lewis defends the orthodox Christian view of Jesus throughout nearly all of the essays in God in the Dock. He is careful to walk a fine line between excessively literalist and

excessively metaphorical understandings of Jesus. He rejects the view that Jesus can legitimately be accepted as a moral teacher without either being regarded as a liar or a lunatic given all the extreme theological claims he made about himself. Lewis also believes that Jesus is not only interested in saving men in a single act of faith but of using faith to transform individual humans from sinners into true sons of God.

The Materialist

A materialist is one who believes that all that exists is part of physical nature; Lewis thinks this position is ultimately incoherent.

The Modern Englishman

The modern Englishman is skeptical of history and has his own vernacular; Christians must understand his peculiarities to witness to him.

The Church of England

The traditional Church of England, also known as the Anglican Church, it is the primary church body in England and Lewis' preferred church.

The Oxford Socratic Club

A philosophical club that Lewis helped to found; he served as its first president.

Christian Clergy

Much of Lewis' writing is aimed at Christian clergy, advising them on how to reach the common man.

The Christian Church

The Christian church contains all baptized Christians; Lewis' primary audience is the Christian church and those considering membership.

Scientists

Lewis is very suspicious of the philosophical and theological views of scientists, which he believes are overly influenced by their professional methods.

Animals

Lewis is often concerned with the problem of animal pain, or of why God has allowed animals to suffer for billions of years.

Humanitarians

Humanitarians are those who defend the Humanitarian theory of punishment, which holds that punishment should be therapeutic not punitive. Lewis stridently rejects the Humanitarian view as undermining the principle of desert as a principle of justice, and violating the dignity of both victim and criminal.

Delinquents

Young children who vandalized Lewis' property and were not appropriately punished by the court.

Technocrats

Lewis fears being ruled by technocrats, instead preferring rule by "robber barons," if those are the choices.

Libertines

Individuals who believe that morality permits them to behave however they please.

Objects/Places

England

The country where Lewis lives and works and where his primary audience is.

London

The major city near Oxford, where Lewis is employed.

Oxford

The ancient English university. Lewis is a professor of literature at Oxford.

Miracles

Lewis tries to justify rational belief in miracles throughout the book.

Dogma

Lewis maintains that Christian dogma can be reasonably affirmed in an age of modern science.

Monotheism

Lewis defends monotheism, the view that there is one God, in various essays in God in the Dock.

Christianity

Lewis's primary aim in the theological essays in God in the Dock is to defend the truth of Christianity.

The Laws of Nature

The laws of nature are not incompatible with Christian dogma, the efficacy of prayer or miracles in Lewis's view.

Modern Science

Many believe that religion and modern science are incompatible; Lewis denies this.

Apologetics

Attempts to defend the Christian faith; Lewis is one of the 20th century's premier Christian apologists.

Spiritual Transformation

Lewis believes that Christ is not only interested in saving the individual from sin, death and hell but in transforming him spiritually from an ordinary sinner to a true child of God.

Animal Pain

Lewis often worries about how animal pain fits into God's plan for the world.

Liberal Theology

Liberal theology tends to move away from Christian orthodoxy and concedes much to modern science and materialism; accordingly, Lewis resists liberal theology.

Bulverism

Bulverism is the view that one need not inquire into the truth of a view before inquiring into why someone believes it. Instead, one should look only to why someone believes what she believes, be it due to economic interest (like Marxism) or psychological complex (like Freudianism). Lewis believes Bulverism is dangerous because it distracts from an honest discussion about the truth of things.

National Repentance

Lewis believes that national repentance is often dangerous, particularly because it distracts from the most important form of repentance, individual repentance.

Self-Love

Lewis believes that the love of self is not in itself wrong, but only the love of self that elevates the self over the other in importance.

Punishment

For Lewis, punishment must be based primarily on the principle of desert, not of utility or rehabilitation.

Liberty

Towards the end of God in the Dock, Lewis defends economic liberty and the right of individuals to demand that the state leave them alone.

The Right to Happiness

Lewis believes that there is only a right to pursue happiness, not a right to happiness.

Themes

The Compatibility of Science and Religion

Numerous essays in God in the Dock try to show that science and religion are compatible. Specifically, many believe that modern science renders belief in Christianity irrational, but Lewis denies this. In "Miracles" he argues that modern science does not teach that miracles are impossible; at best, it shows that they are rare. In "Dogma and the Universe" Lewis maintains that there is no problem holding to Christian dogma in a world where science is always developing.

In "Horrid Red Things" Lewis tries to get at the worldview he believes drives the view that science and religion are in tension; he then argues against the worldview. He does the same in "Religion and Science" and "The Laws of Nature." A similar matter is addressed in "Religion without Dogma?"

In general, Lewis emphasizes that the philosophical claims of materialists and atheists are not drawn from science but are instead an ideological gloss on science. Science only explains general phenomena with general rules and does not rule out the existence of God or God's action in the world.

Lewis is not content to show that the two are compatible, however. In his essay, "Meditation in a Toolshed" Lewis distinguishes between the view of reality which holds that direct experience is the truest representation of reality and the view of reality that holds we must go "behind the scenes" (the title of an essay with a similar point). He argues that modern materialism is motivated by the latter view and should be rejected, yet not by rejecting the view that going "behind the scenes" often has much to teach us.

The Truth of Christianity

Perhaps Lewis's most important goal across the vast majority of the essays contained within God in the Dock is to defend the truth of Christianity. He tries to take most of the major challenges to Christianity head on, although he focuses on a small number of issues. First, while he gives an argument or two for God's existence, he generally argues instead that monotheism is superior to other general classes of worldview such as dualism, paganism and materialism.

For instance, Lewis argues that dualism fails to explain how the two Gods in the universe came to be opposed to one another and what the ultimate ground of their being is. It also has trouble explaining how it makes sense to call the bad god bad. He argues against paganism on the grounds that it is too much like myth and not enough like fact.

Lewis argues against materialism in much more detail, holding that assuming that materialism is true will require that thinking itself be a material process. However, if

thinking is a material process, then it cannot be rational because it is driven by outside and random forces.

Lewis is also interested in tackling other major objections. For instance, he argues that one can responsibly embrace dogma in the modern world. He defends Christian ethical ideas against various objections, and he spends a great deal of time arguing that Christian doctrine is not incompatible with modern science.

Christianity's Relationship to the Public

C. S. Lewis is not merely concerned about defending the compatibility of science and religion or of defending the truth of Christianity generally. He is also interested in figuring out the best way to communicate the truth of Christianity to the modern English public.

Lewis wrote most of his books as a way to make Christian ideas accessible to the layman, to bridge the gap between academic theology and the spiritual practices of the ordinary person. He rose to prominence in part due to his wartime radio broadcasts defending Christianity and so thought about this issue in some detail.

In his "Answers to Questions on Christianity" Lewis addresses an educated audience of English laypeople about Christian doctrine. In "Christian Apologetics" Lewis defends the proper use of Christian apologetics, or Christian attempts to defend the faith. In "The Transmission of Christianity" Lewis argues that Christianity must be transmitted from generation to generation through education and in "The Trouble with 'X'" Lewis defends reaching out to people in one's life that you may typically think of as unreachable.

In "On the Reading of Old Books" Lewis argues that laypeople should not be afraid to read old texts by Christians from other ages and in "The Decline of Religion" Lewis discusses the dangers of Christians becoming satisfied with an increased interest in religion that does not lead to conversion. In "Before We Can Communicate" Lewis informs his listener about his general impressions about the attitudes of the average Englishman and encourages his audience to learn these lessons before trying to communicate with them.

Again, all in all, it is not enough for Lewis to argue that Christianity is true; he believes that one must take the idea to the streets.

Style

Perspective

The perspective of God in the Dock is that of C. S. Lewis. Named Clive Staples Lewis, Lewis was widely-known during his life as a Christian apologist, lay theologian, novelist, children's book writer, academic, literary critic and essay writer, living through the entire first half of the twentieth century. His most well-known books are The Chronicles of Narnia which have been translated into many different formats, including recent films.

Lewis was baptized a Christian but spent his young life a non-believer; he fought in World War I and afterwards his friends, such as J. R. R. Tolkien, led Lewis to Christianity when he was thirty. Lewis quickly rejoined the Church of England and began to defend Christianity in an intellectual but accessible form that reached millions of people and continues to do so to this day. He wrote a wide variety of fiction books thereafter, including the Chronicles of Narnia, the Space Trilogy, and the Screwtape Letters.

Lewis also wrote over a dozen non-fiction books, many of which were attempts to defend the Christianity faith. These books are well-known, the most famous of which include Mere Christianity, The Problem of Pain and Miracles. Many if not most of the arguments and ideas in God in the Dock are expressed at great length in these non-fiction works, along with frequent expressions in his non-fiction work. Lewis' ideas about the nature of Christian transformation, the arguments for a theistic universe, the answer to the problem of evil, and so on, are all contained in microcosm in the essays in God in the Dock.

Lewis' perspective is that of an intelligent, thoughtful Anglican Christian in early 20th century England. He believes that faith and reason are compatible and holds to a very orthodox version of Christianity. He is concerned with defending the faith and converting others to Christianity; he also defends traditional Christian ethical doctrines, such as sexual chastity, a priesthood restricted to men, a strong defense of individual responsibility, sin and an inability to become good on one's own.

He also has something approaching a Christian classical liberal perspective in politics that is hostile to government intervention in the economy and social life, believes that men have a right to be left alone, and revolts at the idea of technocratic rule, the therapeutic use of the criminal law, and egalitarian approaches to education.

Tone

The tone of God in the Dock is that of a level-headed, professorial, deeply committed Christian apologist. It is important to remember that Lewis was a professor of literature at Oxford and lived his professional life in a highly academic atmosphere. One can see from reading the book that Lewis often interacted with the greatest English philosophers

of his day, such as J. J. C. Smart and Elizabeth Anscombe. As a result, he often discusses deep philosophical ideas and gives philosophical arguments.

However, he always writes in an accessible way; he is more than able to do this, particularly due to his ability to write for children. His tone is never dry or stilted but always contains a deeply personal element. The essays often begin with dialogues or stories to draw the reader in.

Lewis rarely becomes bombastic in his tone despite his deep Christian commitments. He usually makes measured claims in a calm manner and is gracious to his critics, often taking responsibility for his errors. The closest he comes to bombast is in "The Humanitarian Theory of Punishment" where Lewis argues that the Humanitarian theory of punishment must be opposed fiercely by all Christians.

Of course, Lewis is a deeply committed Christian apologist. He tows a standard orthodox Christian line on nearly all theological, historical, textual and ethical matters, deviating rarely from a high Anglican perspective that attempts to remain neutral between denominational disputes. His passion comes off as running deep and wide despite the fact that his advocacy of his positions is written in calm prose. It is clear from his arguments and his zeal that he is a serious apologist.

Structure

God in the Dock is a compilation of forty-eight of C. S. Lewis' essays, interviews, lectures and papers, along with twelve of his letters. The book is divided into four parts. Part I is composed of the twenty-three essays which are most clearly about theological matters. Part II includes the sixteen essays the editor sees as "semi-theological" or related to theological topics but not directly concerning them. Part III contains the nine essays that are directly concerned with ethical questions. Part IV is a brief compilation of twelve of Lewis's letters.

Part I contains twenty-three essays which may be briefly summarized as follows; only ten are mentioned here. "Evil and God" concerns the problems with theological dualism. "Miracles" argues that modern science has not refuted a rational belief in miracles. "Dogma and the Universe" advances the claim that dogma can be rationally maintained even in a scientifically developed world.

"Horrid Red Things" addresses the religion-science conflict, as does "Religion and Science." "Laws of Nature" argues that the laws of nature are not incompatible with the efficacy of prayer. "The Grand Miracle" argues that Christianity cannot survive watering down its core miracles.

"Man or Rabbit" grapples with whether one can be a good person without being a Christian. "Some Thoughts" argues that Christians should aid the sick even if it is God's will that some die. "The Trouble with 'X'" argues that one should still witness to those people one believes will never accept the Gospel. "What Are We to Make of Jesus Christ?" argues that we cannot merely accept Christ as a moral teacher.

Part II contains sixteen essays that may be summarized as follows; only five are mentioned here. "The Dangers of National Repentance" emphasizes the dangers of national repentance. "Two Ways with the Self" outlines how a Christian should conceive of self-love. "Meditation on the Third Commandment" rejects the idea of a Christian political party. "Meditation in a Toolshed" argues that modern science does not reveal the whole of reality. "Scraps" concerns the nature of heaven. "The Decline of Religion" denies equating the decline of Christianity with the decline of its apparent practice.

Part III contains nine essays that may be summarized as follows; only three are mentioned here. "Bulverism" argues that one must always first ask whether a view is true and then ask why people believe in it. "First and Second Things" criticizes the Nazi embrace of a Nordic ethos. "The Humanitarian Theory of Punishment" criticizes the Humanitarian theory of punishment.

The pieces are typically short, rarely exceeding ten pages. The essays usually contain some brief explanation by the editor of the context of the piece, where it appeared or when it was given.

Quotes

"If thought is the undersigned and irrelevant product of cerebral motions, what reason have we to trust it?" (Part I, Evil and God, 21)

"... if the modern materialist saw with his own eyes the heavens rolled up and the great white throne appearing ... he would continue forever ... to regard his experience as an illusion and to find the explanation of it in psycho-analysis, or cerebral pathology. Experience by itself proves nothing." (Part I, Miracles, 25)

"Man's reason is in such deep insolvency to sense." (Part I, Horrid Red Things, 71)

"The real problem is this. The enormous size of the universe and the insignificance of the earth were known for centuries, and no one ever dreamed that they had any bearing on the religious question. Then, less than a hundred years ago, they are suddenly trotted out as an argument against Christianity. And the people who trot them out carefully hush up the fact that they were known long ago. Don't you think that all you atheists are strangely unsuspicious people?" (Part I, Religion and Science, 75)

"In the whole history of the universe the laws of Nature have never produced a single event." (Part I, The Laws of Nature, 77)

"All the rabbit in us is to disappear—the worried, conscientious, ethical rabbit as well as the cowardly and sensual rabbit. We shall bleed and squeal as the handfuls of fur come out; and then, surprisingly, we shall find underneath it all a thing we have never yet imagined: a real Man, an ageless god, a son of God, strong, radiant, wise, beautiful and drenched in joy." (Part 1, Man or Rabbit?, 112)

"In each of us there is something growing up which will of itself be Hell unless it is nipped in the bud. The matter is serious: let us put ourselves in His hands at once—this very day, this hour." (Part I, The Trouble with "X" ..., 155)

"For the real question is not what are we to make of Christ, but what is He to make of us?" (Part I, What Are We to Make of Jesus Christ?, 156)

"Now, the self can be regarded in two ways. On the one hand, it is God's creature, an occasion of love and rejoicing; now, indeed, hateful in condition, but to be pitied and healed." (Part II, Two Ways with the Self, 194)

"But the important thing is that Man is on the Bench and God in the Dock." (Part II, God in the Dock, 244)

"... you must show that a man is wrong before you start explaining why he is wrong." (Part III, Bulverism, 273)

"Finally, must we not teach that if the home is to be a means of grace it must be a place of rules?" (Part III, The Sermon and the Lunch, 286)

"It may be better to live under robber barons than under omnipotent moral busybodies." (Part III, The Humanitarian Theory of Punishment, 292)

"Mercy, detached from Justice, grows unmerciful." (Part III, The Humanitarian Theory of Punishment, 294)

"Two wars necessitated vast curtailments of liberty, and we have grown, though grumblingly, accustomed to our chains." (Part III, Is Progress Possible?, 313)

"There is nothing left of which we can say to them, 'Mind your own business.' Our whole lives are their business." (Part III, Is Progress Possible?, 314)

"Is there any possibility of getting the super Welfare State's honey and avoiding the sting?" (Part III, Is Progress Possible?, 316)

Topics for Discussion

Why doesn't Lewis think modern science is incompatible with Christianity?

How does Lewis think the Laws of Nature and miracles are compatible? How does he think the Laws of Nature and prayer are compatible?

What is Lewis' argument against modern materialism? Why does Lewis think that reasoning cannot be a material process?

What is Bulverism? What is wrong with it, in Lewis' view?

What is the Humanitarian Theory of Punishment? What is Lewis' problem with it?

What does Lewis mean when he uses the phrase "God in the Dock"? What lesson is he trying to teach?

How does Lewis conceive of God making men good?

Why can Christianity not survive without dogma and miracles?

What does Lewis think justifies the pains of animals?

What is Lewis' problem with liberal theology?

What is Lewis' complaint about the modern state?