An Abstract of the Thesis of


Abstract approved: 

Wayne C. Anderson

During his lifetime C. S. Lewis chose to speak to Christians in plain and simple language that they could understand. Lewis taught and defended truths that he felt were discernible through reason. Morality, free will, and the divinity of Jesus Christ were fundamental to his core beliefs and teachings. His writings have attracted Christian readers from many denominations, including those of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Through references to Lewis by LDS Church leaders and authors, Mormons have been attracted to Lewis’s writings in significant ways. General Authorities have used his thoughts and analogies to illustrate certain gospel principles. Many Latter-day Saints have been impressed by the similarities they perceive between Lewis’s theology and Mormonism. Such appreciation has led to Lewis’s becoming one of the most quoted non-LDS authors in General Conference talks and various Mormon publications.

While Lewis was aware of the Latter-day Saint religion, he chose to worship in the Church of England. Through his writings, however, he entered into a much broader fellowship with millions of Christians around the world. His thoughts on “mere Christianity” have created an enormous common ground on which many have stood. Among those who have set foot upon that soil are the Latter-day Saints.

Given their open-minded approach to theological reflection, Mormons not only read authors like Lewis but also feel comfortable citing his views on human nature and
Christian discipleship. Although they do not agree with everything he says, Mormons
treasure particular Lewisian teachings that have a familiar ring of truth to them.
Something deep inside them (which they call the Holy Ghost) resonates when they read
certain passages of Lewis's writings.

This thesis describes Lewis's theology, the Mormons' discovery of Lewis, and the
spread of his reputation among the LDS membership. Lewis has become a popular author
in the LDS community largely through numerous references to his writings in General
Conference talks and books by leaders like Elder Neal A. Maxwell. While Mormons do
not look to Lewis as an authority on doctrinal matters, many acknowledge his valuable
insights on how to be better Christians. His ideas challenge and enliven their
understanding of Mormon doctrines. They admire Lewis's courage for being a public
intellectual who believed in God and for articulating both the stabs of joy and the
adversities that he experienced. His words comfort those in the process of being
undragoned by Aslan, reminding them that somehow even children can become kings and
queens in Narnia.
Of Dragons, Palaces, and Gods: 
A Mormon Perspective on C. S. Lewis

by
Christopher Edward Garrett

A THESIS
submitted to
Oregon State University

in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the
degree of

Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies

Presented March 19, 2001
Commencement June 2001

APPROVED:

Redacted for Privacy
Major Professor, representing English.

Redacted for Privacy
Committee Member, representing History.

Redacted for Privacy
Committee Member, representing Philosophy.

Redacted for Privacy
Chair of Department of English.

Redacted for Privacy
Dean of the Graduate School.

I understand that my thesis will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my thesis to any reader upon request.

Redacted for Privacy
Christopher Edward Garrett, Author
Acknowledgments

Special thanks to all who helped me during my graduate studies and thesis writing, including: my thesis advisor, Gary Ferngren, for all the time, advice, and encouragement he has given me; Chris Anderson, for taking time for numerous chats about theology and literature; Courtney Campbell, for his insights and wisdom; Jim Folts, for taking time out of his busy schedule to serve on my committee; Robert L. Millet; Tony Kimball; Joe Cannon, for generously financing my trip to Ireland and encouraging me to aim my sights higher; the C.S. Lewis Foundation, for kindly awarding me a tuition scholarship to attend the 1998 C.S. Lewis Summer Institute at Oxford and Cambridge; Marcus Borg, for encouraging me to go to Oxbridge and generously assisting financially for my trip; Bruce Edwards' words of encouragement in Belfast; Tom Sherry and the Corvallis LDS Institute for letting me use their library; Steve Walker, for his Christian Fantasy class at BYU, where I read Screwtape Letters for the first time; Patrick Williams; Duane Grasse; Roxie Bybee; Dale Kirby; Bruce Young and David Ward for all their valuable advice and counsel; Peter Kreeft, for challenging me and causing me to question how and why Mormons connect with Lewis; and of course, to my wife, Brenda, my children, parents, and family who patiently endured my ups and downs during the writing of this thesis. Thanks to those family members who helped me by doing my newspaper route while I was away for conferences in England, Ireland, and Utah.
Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Chapter 1: A Historical Perspective on C. S. Lewis’s Influence on the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints 4

Chapter 2: A Survey of C. S. Lewis’s Theology 32

A Brief History of His Beliefs 32

God 34

Jesus Christ 36

Heaven 38

Hell 39

Man 40

The Problem of Pain 42

An Objective Moral Standard 43

Lewis’s Final Years 44

Practical Theology 46

Chapter 3: C. S. Lewis and Mormonism 48

Differences Between Lewis’s Theology and LDS Doctrine 48

What Can Mormons Learn From Lewis? 50

Why Do Mormons Value Lewis? 55

Similarities Between Lewis’s Theology and LDS Doctrine 66

Conclusion 90

Bibliography 92

Appendices 102
Clive Staples Lewis (1898-1963) was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland. As a youngster he had already become both an active writer and a voracious reader. By the age of ten he had read *Paradise Lost.* After the death of his mother, Jack (as he was called) was sent off to boarding school with his brother, Warnie. Through independent study, boarding schools, and a demanding tutor (named Kirkpatrick or the Great Knock), Lewis’s academic prowess earned him a scholarship from Oxford University. He would stay on at Oxford, serving as a tutor of philosophy and English literature. In 1954 Lewis was offered and accepted the newly-founded Chair of Medieval and Renaissance English at Cambridge University. Two years later he married an American Jewish-Christian poet, Helen Joy Davidman.

During his lifetime Lewis channeled much of his energy into writing, publishing over forty books and numerous articles. His works range from literary criticism to Christian apologetics and from children’s fantasy to adult science-fiction. Lewis has been called one of the greatest Christian writers of the twentieth century.

Those who read Lewis’s entire corpus and study the details of his life and letters may conclude that he was in some ways a paradoxical figure, an enigma. Even one of his closest and life-long friends, Owen Barfield, referred to Lewis as “a mystery.” The astute observer will notice apparent inconsistencies in Lewis’s writings. For example,

---


throughout his career, Lewis wrote extensively of man’s god-like potential. Yet in several passages of his corpus he asserts that immortality is possible, but not godhood.

Lewis openly admits in *Mere Christianity* and *Surprised by Joy* that he distrusted emotions. Instead he favored reason as the foundation of his faith. However, in a memorable passage in *The Screwtape Letters*, Lewis writes of the importance of acting on your feelings and following your heart. In his Christian apologetics, Lewis writes with boldness and confidence. Yet the assurance found in works like *The Problem of Pain* is contrasted with doubts and apparent rebellion in *A Grief Observed*. While he preached submission and obedience, in his journal entries in *A Grief Observed* he lashes out angrily at God. Lewis admits that his certainty has been shattered. Later, however, in his *Letters to Malcolm* (published posthumously), Lewis seems to have regained his confidence in God, declaring his faith in immortality and a heavenly life.

But even during Lewis’s Christian life how certain was he of his faith? His apologetics and musings were often sandwiched between disclaimers, such as “I am not a theologian, just a mere layman” (*Mere Christianity*); “This is only a dream” (*The Great Divorce*); “In the end, guesses, of course, only guesses” (*Letters to Malcolm*). Such admissions of uncertainty, however, have not stopped Lewis from writing hundreds of pages about Christian beliefs and practices. Consequently, his candor, analogies, and insights have captured the hearts and minds of millions, including many members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
Of Dragons, Palaces, and Gods: A Mormon Perspective on C. S. Lewis

Introduction

Most members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints ("the Mormons") recognize the name of C. S. Lewis. In fact, many Mormons admire the writings of C. S. Lewis. Some Latter-day Saints, however, are surprised when they learn that Lewis was not a Mormon. Although various Christian denominations (including the Latter-day Saints) would like to claim him as one of their own, Lewis was a member of the Anglican faith.

Lewis was aware of the LDS faith, but his references to Mormonism do not appear sympathetic to it. It has been reported that he received at least one copy of the Book of Mormon and corresponded with a woman from Utah. Lewis mentions the Book of

---

1 Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have been nicknamed "Mormons" since the early days of the church. This thesis will use the terms Mormons and Latter-day Saints interchangeably to refer to church members. Mormons also often abbreviate the church name to LDS or LDS Church.

2 It is difficult to document just how popular Lewis is among Latter-day Saints. Not all Mormons know of or read C. S. Lewis.

3 One LDS student described how important an authority Lewis was in her household. She assumed as a youth that Lewis was an authoritative Mormon author because of the prominent position his books enjoyed on their family bookshelf. Lewis's Chronicles of Narnia were sandwiched in between the Messiah series by Elder Bruce R. McConkie and Elder B. H. Roberts's church history books. This report came from an interview the author had with Susan Hampshire (a student from Salt Lake City majoring in comparative literature at BYU) at the C. S. Lewis Conference, BYU, Provo, Utah, Dec. 5, 1998.

Mormon in an essay. He most likely frowned upon Mormons for practicing teetotalism.

Lewis was not a Mormon and the purpose of this thesis is not an attempt to portray him as a Latter-day Saint. However, he has become one of the most quoted non-LDS authors in conference talks by General Authorities and in books written by them and other Mormon authors. The goal of this thesis is to explain why so many Mormons value Lewis's writings and how this occurred.

The goal of Chapter 1 is to trace the history of how Lewis has been introduced to Mormons. Lewis's surge in popularity among the Latter-day Saints can be attributed, in part, to numerous references to his books in important talks given by Mormon leaders and books written by them and other LDS authors. This chapter will also review what scholarly work has been done on Lewis and Mormonism.

Chapter 2 will provide a brief survey of Lewis's theological ideas as contained in his various writings. His thoughts on God, Jesus Christ, heaven, hell, man, the problem of pain, and morality will be summarized. This chapter will be especially useful to those readers unfamiliar with Lewis, and it functions as a preliminary introduction to the final chapter of the thesis.

Chapter 3 examines possible reasons why Mormons value Lewis. One of the reasons is because Latter-day Saints see some similarities between Mormonism and Lewis's theology. While differences exist between the two systems, many Mormons tend to focus on those common principles and beliefs that they feel they share with Lewis.

---


7 There are many authors who have attempted to provide a comprehensive analysis of Lewis's theology, and numerous books have been published in such endeavors. However, such a study is not the purpose of this essay.
Since one LDS scholar, Evan Stephenson, has already written and published an essay on the theological differences between Lewis and Mormonism, this thesis will only briefly treat two major points of contention: the nature of God and the Trinity. Chapter 3 also includes a discussion of what Mormons can learn from non-LDS authors like Lewis.
Chapter 1: A Historical Perspective on C. S. Lewis’s Influence on the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Like other Christians throughout the world, many members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have embraced the writings of C. S. Lewis. Although Lewis was not a Mormon, his insights into human nature and religious experience have helped Latter-day Saints come to understand how to be better disciples of Christ. An important indication of Lewis’s influence within the LDS Church is how he has been cited by Mormon leaders.¹ Through conference talks and citations in books and articles by Mormon leaders and authors, Lewis’s popularity has dramatically increased in the LDS Church since his death in 1963.²

During the 1940s and 1950s, Lewis gained worldwide attention and became quite popular. Books like *Screwtape Letters* and *Mere Christianity* attracted millions of readers. A former Oxford student, J. I. Packer, reports that Lewis’s writing style was fascinating because he seemed like “both a fellow schoolboy and a wise old uncle simultaneously.”³ Notwithstanding his scholarly and literary stature, Christians admired

---

¹ Here is a brief description of those who preside over the international membership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (often referred to by Mormons as General Authorities). At the head is the president or prophet with his two counselors, comprising what is known as the First Presidency. Acting under their direction is a group called the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The next level of leadership is known as the Quorums of the Seventy. Those men serving in these positions usually are referred to as Elder. General Authorities gather semiannually in Salt Lake City in a General Conference, addressing the international membership via satellite broadcasts from the tabernacle on Temple Square. These talks are published and distributed in the official monthly church publication, *The Ensign*, and are accepted by Mormons as modern-day revelation useful for doctrine and practice.

² Since this chapter simply summarizes some of the most significant cases, see Appendix A for a more comprehensive list of Lewis’s citation by Mormons.

Lewis for his courage to defend their faith. "He provided a positive exhibition of the force of Christian ideas, morally, imaginatively, and rationally. The strength of his appeal lies in the many-sidedness of his work." His talents were recognized in America as his books gained popularity, and various periodicals featured articles by and about Lewis. In September 1947 Lewis was featured in the cover story in *Time* magazine.

While Mormons may have been reading books like *Screwtape Letters* and were aware of Lewis, it has been hard to find evidence. During the 1940s and 1950s *The Improvement Era* (the previous name of the official monthly periodical of the LDS Church) contained a book-review section. In addition to LDS works there were a number of non-LDS books reviewed, including *The Silver Chalice* (by Thomas B. Costain), *Science, Religion, and the Future* (C. E. Raven), *God and Evil* (C. E. M. Joad), *Looking Backward* (Edward Bellamy), and *The Memoirs of Albert Schweitzer*. Despite his popularity in America, C. S. Lewis's books did not appear in the monthly column. Later during the 1960s, the LDS Church published a five-volume anthology of literature, *Out of the Best Books*. In addition to being bought and read by many Latter-day Saints, these texts were selected and used as study manuals by Mormon women in their Relief Society education classes. While such non-LDS authors as Mortimer J. Adler and E. M. Forster were included, Lewis was not.

---


In 1954 the well-known Mormon scholar Hugh Nibley presented a series of weekly lectures on KSL radio in Salt Lake City under the title, “Time Vindicates the Prophets.” Nibley’s talks aimed to defend the concepts of modern prophecy and revelation as embraced by the Latter-day Saints against attacks by non-LDS critics. The lectures were published in that year and reprinted in 1962 with two additional chapters. In the 1962 edition Nibley observed that religious scholars were discovering that “the Gospel is more than an Ethical Gospel, and the Scriptures more than a beautiful allegory.” He asserts that many in Christianity are asking: “How can we call ourselves Christians if we don’t believe what the original Christians believed?” Nibley then cites Lewis’s trilemma regarding the question of Jesus’s identity: “Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse....But don’t let us come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He hasn’t left that open to us.”

Nibley felt comfortable in quoting Lewis because Mormons believe that Jesus is the Son of God, the Divine Redeemer, and Savior of the world. This doctrine was taught by LDS Church leaders, including David O. McKay during a conference talk that year. McKay, who was serving as the president of the LDS Church, stated, “The gospel teaches that Christ is the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world. No true follower is satisfied to accept him merely as a great teacher, a great reformer, or even as the One Perfect Man. The Man of Galilee is not figuratively, but literally the Son of the Living God.”

The first known LDS Church leader or General Authority publicly to refer to and identify Lewis was Richard L. Evans. Evans not only served as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles but also was the announcer on the weekly radio program, “Music and the Spoken Word.” Featuring the music of the internationally-renowned Mormon

---


9 McKay, David O. Conference Report, April 1962, p. 7
Tabernacle Choir, the program was broadcast from the Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City to a national audience. In addition to the music, each segment included a brief message of encouragement, hope, and optimism. Several of his radio talks included quotations and ideas drawn explicitly from C. S. Lewis, and are recorded in at least two of his books published in 1963 and 1971. Unlike Nibley’s use of Lewis for the argument of Christ’s divinity, Evans cites aphorisms from *Screwtape Letters* and *Letters to Malcolm*.¹⁰

In 1967 Neal A. Maxwell (previously an educator and administrator at the University of Utah) was called to be one of the first 69 Regional Representatives of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. In that same year Maxwell published a book entitled *A More Excellent Way*¹¹ in which he attempted to teach leadership skills through a blend of gospel principles and modern behavioral-science theories. Interspersed throughout the book are numerous references to C. S. Lewis and other non-LDS scholars. An examination of passages cited from Lewis reveals how familiar Maxwell had become with Lewis’s books and ideas. In *A More Excellent Way* there are references to *The Great Divorce*, *The Weight of Glory*, *Letters to Malcolm*, *Mere Christianity*, and *Light of C. S. Lewis*.

Maxwell’s liberal use of non-Mormon authors drew the attention of at least one LDS scholar. In the summer 1968 issue of the *Brigham Young University Studies* (identified as a “voice for the community of LDS scholars”) there appeared a review of *A More Excellent Way*. William G. Dyer, professor of sociology at BYU, observed that Maxwell’s book contained more quotations from Lewis, G. K. Chesterton, John Gardner,

---


J. R. R. Tolkien, and Abraham Maslow than from the writings of Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, or the scriptures.\textsuperscript{12}

It is clear that from 1968 to 1971 the BYU community was beginning to take notice of Lewis's works. In the fall of 1968 BYU Studies obtained permission to reprint an essay by C. S. Lewis, "Modern Theology and Biblical Criticism." Also appearing in the same issue were articles examining Mormon scriptures, including Hugh Nibley's essay on the Book of Abraham (from one of the books of LDS scripture known as The Pearl of Great Price). Lewis was introduced to the readers of BYU Studies in the following manner:

Probably best known throughout the world as an author of The Screwtape Letters or the equally famous Allegory of Love, C. S. Lewis is accepted as an authority in both religious and literary circles. Having served first Oxford and then Cambridge universities as professor of literature and having published over forty books on religious and literary subjects, Professor Lewis is eminently prepared to write an essay like this one commenting on some of the basic assumptions and judgments of manuscript historicity.

The book, Christian Reflections, from which the essay was reprinted, received a high recommendation as "a book well worth reading."\textsuperscript{13} Less than one year later, Maxwell visited BYU and delivered a speech to the staff and student body. In his address he quoted a passage from Lewis's The Weight of Glory about the potential deification of men.


\textsuperscript{13} See footnote in BYU Studies (Autumn 1968), p. 33.
and women. This must have been a favorite of Maxwell’s because he also referred to this same passage of Lewis’s in *A More Excellent Way*.

Subsequently, the 1969 winter issue of *BYU Studies* included a book review of Lewis’s *Christian Reflections*. Eloise Bell, then serving as an instructor of English at BYU, gave the book high marks, commenting on how easy it is to find profitable reading in Lewis’s works. While she acknowledges that Lewis has valuable theological insights, she cautions Mormon readers: “Let no one think I intend to give alarm to the conservatives or license to the liberals. We should not go to Lewis to learn what to believe. [But rather we] should go to him to learn how to be better Christians.” In the same issue J. B. Phillips’s *Ring of Truth: A Translator’s Testimony* was reviewed by respected Mormon scholar Richard Lloyd Anderson. Evidently Lewis gave Phillips much-needed encouragement in his translation of the New Testament. Anderson reports that both Lewis and Phillips “react negatively to the present trend in source criticism which insists confidently that the Gospels are records not about the events they portray but really about the mind of the Church a generation or more later.” This review in the BYU community coupled with a Lewis citation in a new book by General Authority Sterling W. Sill shows how the British author was beginning to gain credibility among Mormons.

---


In 1970 Maxwell was called to serve as Church Commissioner of Education. He returned to BYU in 1970 and 1971 to deliver annual speeches to the faculty and students, exhorting them to act upon their knowledge. Each presentation included the following quotation from The Screwtape Letters: “The more often [a man] feels without acting, the less often he will ever be able to act, and, in the long run, the less he will be able to feel.”\(^{19}\) In his 1970 BYU address and book, For the Power is in Them, Maxwell also included Lewis’s warning about “how history shows both individuals and societies [fall] into the ironical trap of running about anxiously with fire extinguishers in times of flood.”\(^{20}\)

The first reference to Lewis in the official periodical of the Mormon Church, The Ensign, appeared in May 1971. Elliot Landau, professor of child development and children’s literature at the University of Utah, wrote an article encouraging parents to read to their children. “The growth of love and compassion, virtues of the Master, may be cultivated in literature that speaks to the heart. For after all, what the intellect may not quite grasp, the heart can know.” Professor Landau provides his “list of exceptional books for children,” which he hopes will enable young readers to see themselves and their friends in a fresh light. C. S. Lewis’s The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe made Landau’s recommended list for older children, finding company with such works as Gulliver’s Travels, Peter Pan, and The Hobbit.\(^{21}\)

The first known General Authority to cite Lewis during a public sermon in a Mormon conference was Marion D. Hanks. Called to the First Council of the Seventy in


1953, Elder Hanks later became an Assistant to the Twelve Apostles in 1968. During his address in an Area Conference at Manchester, England, in August of 1971, Hanks announced that some of Lewis’s words would act as “a keynote” for his remarks that day. He then quoted from Lewis’s essay, “Is Theology Poetry?” the following: “I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen not only because I see it but because by it I see everything else.”

In response to Lewis’s apparent growing popularity among Mormon readers, William Clayton Kimball, a professor of government at Bentley College (Waltham, Massachusetts), was asked to write an article on Lewis and Mormonism. Neal Maxwell and others were “concerned that as more and more Latter-day Saints quoted and cited Lewis there would be a negative reaction” among the General Authorities. Maxwell had shared excerpts from Lewis’s works with Marion G. Romney, the second counselor in the First Presidency. However, Romney disagreed with Lewis’s views and could not appreciate what Lewis was saying. Maxwell hoped that Kimball’s article would prevent a similar reaction from other Mormon leaders.

---


23 An email letter from William Clayton Kimball to the author, July 16, 1998. In a later correspondence (dated December 30, 1998), Kimball revealed to the author that he and Maxwell have been close friends for years. During the period of 1964-75 they corresponded frequently. Kimball, who did his doctoral studies at Harvard, sent books and articles to Maxwell. In at least two of his publications, Maxwell acknowledges Kimball for his reports back from the intellectual ‘front lines’ and for “keeping [him] close to the world of books” (see acknowledgments in The Smallest Part [Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1973], p. ix; A Time to Choose [Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1972], p. vii). In his address at a C. S. Lewis Conference at BYU, Maxwell cites Kimball’s perspective on Lewis (see “C. S. Lewis: Insights on Discipleship,” in C. S. Lewis: The Man and His Message, ed. by Andrew C. Skinner and Robert L. Millett [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1999], pp. 8-9).
The winter 1968 edition of *BYU Studies* featured Kimball’s essay, “The Christian Commitment: C. S. Lewis and the Defense of Doctrine.” After providing biographical information and excerpts from a variety of Lewis’s works, Kimball declares: “Despite his reliance on traditional Christian doctrines, Lewis remains an author who is without peer in his effective advocacy of many elements of the gospel of Jesus Christ.” Kimball admits that there are doctrinal differences and that those references by Lewis to Mormons do not appear to be “sympathetic.” He speculates that Lewis’s contact with the LDS Church was most likely “casual and unattentive.” Kimball believes that Mormons can learn from Lewis how to be better Christian disciples. Lewis points his readers back to the Bible and offers fresh insights on the gospel. Kimball states: “One of the pleasures of reading non-Mormon writers comes from the sense of intimacy which occurs when our theological outlook is confirmed and well-expressed.” He encourages Mormons to be challenged and instructed by Lewis. “All of his works are touched with the light of Christ and infused with his yearning for God.”

Also appearing during 1972 was a book of essays published by Mormon scholars “on great issues: environment, commitment, love, peace, youth, and man.” Two essays contain quotations from Lewis’s works. Maxwell directed his article “[t]o the Youth of Zion,” and used a passage from Lewis to illustrate the “need to build a deeper personal relationship with our Father in heaven.” Maxwell then cites what has become a familiar passage among Mormons:


26 Ibid., p. 208.

Imagine yourself as a living house. God comes in to rebuild that house. At first, perhaps, you can understand what he is doing. He is getting the drains right and stopping the leaks in the roofs, and so on. You knew that those jobs needed doing and so you are not surprised. But presently, He starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and does not seem to make sense. What on earth is He up to? The explanation is that He is building quite a different house from the one you thought of, throwing out a wing here, putting on an extra floor there, running up new towers, making courtyards. You thought you were going to be made into a decent little cottage, but He is building a palace.28

The other article, by C. Terry Warner, professor of philosophy at BYU, is an essay on “Commitment and Life’s Meaning.”29 Death brings life; sacrifice brings blessings. Warner draws upon Lewis’s comment that these “sacred paradoxes” include the principle that “self-rejection” leads to “self-finding.”30

In the following year (1973) an academic course on C. S. Lewis was offered at BYU. The weekly class was student-operated, and a group of speakers were invited to lecture. Among those who made presentations were BYU professors Arthur Henry King, Truman Madsen, Dennis Rasmussen, and LDS Church leader Neal Maxwell. During his lecture to the class, Maxwell referred students to the BYU Studies essay written the previous year by William Clayton Kimball. Later, Maxwell quoted a Book of Mormon scripture to explain the LDS perspective of Lewis: “For behold, the Lord doth grant unto all nations, of their nation and tongue, to teach his word, yea, in wisdom, all that he seeth

---

28 Mere Christianity, p. 160 (Lewis credits George MacDonald for this parable). This same passage was cited by Maxwell in his article, “The Value of Home Life,” Ensign (February 1972), p. 5.


30 A Mind Awake, p. 111.
fit that they should have.”31 Both students and lecturers frequently discussed the theological similarities and differences between Mormonism and Lewis. One of the sixteen students enrolled in the class was Bruce Young, who would go on for doctoral studies in literature at Harvard. Young, currently a member of BYU’s English faculty, teaches a course on Lewis.32

In 1973 Maxwell published another book, The Smallest Part, in which he acknowledges that he is “indebted to Lewis” for his insights on morality. There are thirteen references to Lewis used in the book on topics such as truth, morality, and time management.33 That same year Hugh Nibley cited Lewis in two of his scholarly essays published in Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought.34 Later in 1974, now serving as a General Authority (Assistant to the Twelve Apostles), Maxwell published an essay entitled “Eternalism vs. Secularism” in the Church’s official periodical, The Ensign. In illustrating the principle that God should be the foundation of our faith, Maxwell quotes Lewis’s Mere Christianity about how civilizations falter because they are running on “the wrong juice.”35

The membership of the LDS Church gather semiannually in General Conference sessions to hear instruction from the General Authorities. The talks given by Mormon

31 Alma 29:8.

32 Information on the 1973 Lewis course at BYU was provided to the author by Bruce Young through frequent correspondence during 1998. He also sent copies of the class notes he took, including those from Maxwell’s presentation on Feb. 22, 1973.


leaders are considered valuable for their insights into the scriptures, doctrines, and Christian discipleship. All addresses given are published in *The Ensign* and distributed internationally to its membership for further study and review. The first reference to Lewis during General Conference occurred in 1977. Paul Dunn of the presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy commented during his talk on the fragile nature of mortality. To put things in perspective he shared a truism from Lewis: “Take care. It is so easy to break eggs without making omelettes.”

Although he obtained this quotation from a secondary source (*Richard Evans’ Quote Book*), Dunn began a trend that has led to Lewis’s becoming one of the most frequently quoted non-LDS authors in LDS General Conference talks.

In the spring of 1978 at a Mormon symposium in Virginia, William Clayton Kimball delivered a paper, “The Process of Living: C. S. Lewis as a Guide of the Perplexed.” In his essay the LDS scholar contrasts Lewis’s confident apologetic with the complexity found in *A Grief Observed*. According to Kimball, Lewis is particularly valuable as a guide because of his openness and candor about his personal struggles. Lewis’s “most penetrating works are those which grow out of his own experience.”

Later that year a speech by Maxwell (then serving in the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy) was published in *The Ensign* about the need for morals and values in society. Not surprisingly, the first author Maxwell quoted was Lewis, cited from one of his letters published in a recent book, *A Severe Mercy*.

---

36 *Letters to Malcolm*, p. 5.


In the following year (October 1979) another General Authority quoted Lewis during a conference talk. This reference is significant because, unlike Dunn's use of a brief aphorism, the quotation is lengthy and is linked directly to a foundational principle in Mormonism, repentance. Speaking about "Progress Through Change," Marvin J. Ashton (a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles), emphasizes the need for individual growth and explains how the gospel helps point the way. He then quotes the lengthy paragraph from Mere Christianity about how God wants to make us into palaces. The structure of Ashton's talk illustrates how many of the General Authorities address the Latter-day Saints. In addition to using scriptures from the Book of Mormon and the Bible, Ashton utilizes non-LDS thinkers like Lewis, Emerson, and William James to teach and illustrate the principle of repentance.

The admiration that some Mormon leaders had come to acquire for Lewis began to be apparent in places other than General Conference talks, Ensign articles, and books. In addition to serving the church as a General Authority and Church Commissioner of Education, Neal A. Maxwell had become known as a prolific writer, having published nine books from 1967 to 1979. On May 2, 1980 the Salt Lake City newspaper The Deseret News featured an interview with Maxwell. The influential Mormon leader was asked to list his favorite books. In addition to the scriptures, Elder Maxwell shared a list of five books (in order of preference) authored by non-Mormons: 1) Democracy in America, by Alexis de Tocqueville; 2) Mere Christianity, by C. S. Lewis; 3) A Gift from the Sea, by Anne Morrow Lindbergh; 4) O Jerusalem! by Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre; and 5) Wellington: The Years of the Sword, by Elizabeth Longford. Describing the appeal of Mere Christianity, he explains that Lewis's book is packed with powerful ideas,
expressions, and insights on morality, faith, hope, and human nature. It is likely that such a recommendation from Maxwell in one of the most widely read newspapers in Utah helped spread Lewis’s reputation among Mormons.

LDS students were also being attracted to Lewis’s fantasy books. Filled with Christian metaphors and symbols, the *Chronicles of Narnia* appealed to both young and old readers alike. The Mormon admiration for Lewis’s work is illustrated by a poem written by Charlotte Teresa Reynolds of Provo, Utah. Published in 1980, Reynolds’s poem praises Lewis and celebrates his fantasy writings and her love for Aslan.

Sometimes you seem as close
As a song down the street--
Until Shadow-Lands
Command me,
And I fall asleep,
With the wonderment
Of waiting for just
One more Lion’s kiss.

Three years later *The Ensign* featured a story about Jeffrey Holland, then president of Brigham Young University. Holland (currently serving in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles) received his doctoral degree from Yale in American Studies. He initially turned down academic positions at Yale and BYU before starting to teach religion classes for the Church in Salt Lake City. He later made his way to BYU as the dean of religious education. In 1976 Holland began serving as the Church Commissioner of Education and four years later was called to be BYU’s president. In the article, Holland admits that of all the types of books he most enjoys reading “substantial expressions of faith from Christians who have had to come to it the hard way.” He then lists authors like St. Augustine,

---


From 1977 to 1996 there have been at least fourteen General Conference talks given by General Authorities that included references to C. S. Lewis. Although one journalist mistakenly declared Lewis the most quoted non-LDS author in General Conference talks, Abraham Lincoln and Ralph Waldo Emerson have both been cited more often. Joining Maxwell and Ashton have been other apostles like James E. Faust and Dallin H. Oaks, who frequently use Lewis's ideas to reinforce their messages. The books of Lewis's most quoted in the conference talks have been *Mere Christianity* and *Screwtape Letters*.

However, the most significant Mormon leader to cite Lewis from the Tabernacle pulpit was Ezra Taft Benson, the thirteenth president of the LDS Church. On April 1, 1989, Mormons gathered in the Tabernacle and in other chapels throughout the world to hear the words of their prophet. President Benson opened the General Conference by addressing the Latter-day Saints on the topic of pride. The sermon he gave that day has become one of the most memorable talks he delivered. He began by asking, "Why did the people in the *Book of Mormon* fall?" The answer was given by the ancient prophet and writer, Mormon: "Behold, the pride of this nation, or the people of the Nephites, hath proven their destruction." President Benson's message was framed as a warning and

---


45 Moroni 8:27.
caution to the Latter-day Saints, because pride in its many forms “is always considered a sin.”

In addition to citing numerous scriptures, President Benson cites two non-LDS writers, Rudyard Kipling and C. S. Lewis. Benson refers to some of Kipling’s words found in the text of a hymn sung by Latter-day Saints, “God of Our Fathers Known of Old.” But even more important is the emphasis which the LDS president gives to Lewis’s words:

The proud make every man their adversary by pitting their intellects, opinions, works, wealth, talents, or any other worldly measuring device against others. In the words of C. S. Lewis: “Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only having more of it than the next man...It is the comparison that makes you proud: the pleasure of being above the rest. Once the element of competition is gone, pride has gone.”

Throughout his talk, President Benson’s comments seem compatible with Lewis’s definitions of pride. For example, both Lewis and Benson believe that pride is competitive in nature; the proud are concerned about being above the rest. Pride can be more easily detected in others than in ourselves. At the core of pride is an attitude of enmity towards God and our neighbors. Satan fell, because he pitted himself against the Eternal Father. Thus, pride is “the universal sin,” “the utmost evil.”

Throughout Maxwell’s published books, articles, and speeches, Lewis continues to be a favorite source of illustration and clarification. Many other General Authorities and

---


47 Hymns (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985), no. 80.

48 Mere Christianity, p. 95; Benson, “Beware of Pride,” p. 4.

49 Mere Christianity, pp. 94-96; Benson, “Beware of Pride,” pp. 4-7.

50 See Appendix B for the list of books by or about C. S. Lewis books which Elder
Mormon scholars and writers have used Lewis in their work. Not only have LDS scholars used Lewis to teach principles to Mormons, but he has also been a source for explaining Mormon doctrine to those outside the LDS Church. Perhaps the most notable examples are *The Encyclopedia of Mormonism* and Stephen Robinson's *Are Mormons Christians?*

Published by Macmillan in 1992, the four volumes of *The Encyclopedia of Mormonism* provide information on LDS doctrines, practices, and history. In the entry "Grace," Bruce C. Hafen (now a General Authority serving in the First Quorum of the Seventy) describes the Mormon view on how salvation is achieved. He explains the dilemma by citing two New Testament scriptures. Paul says that "a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Yet James declares that "faith without works is dead." Hafen then states, "The LDS doctrine that salvation requires both grace and works is a revealed yet common sense reconciliation of these contradictory positions." The Mormon scholar then looks to C. S. Lewis's observation on this controversial issue: the problem "does seem to me like asking which blade in a pair of scissors is most necessary."51 Later, Hafen repeats Lewis's metaphor: "for Latter-day Saints, obedience is but one blade of scissors. All of LDS theology [teaches]...that without grace there is no salvation."52

Stephen Robinson draws on Lewis as an articulate ally in the defense of a seemingly peculiar Mormon doctrine, the deification of man. In *The Encyclopedia of Mormonism* Robinson's article, "LDS Doctrine Compared with Other Christian Doctrine," addresses such topics as the Godhead, authority, spirit and matter, salvation, and revelation. He succinctly explains a simple yet complex LDS belief: "As man now is, God

Maxwell has cited in his sermons and writings.

51 *Mere Christianity*, p. 115.

once was; as God now is, man may be." While Protestants and Catholics do not agree with this formula, Robinson contends that Eastern Orthodox teachings share with Mormons a belief in deification (apotheosis). After citing Irenaeus and Athanasius, Robinson writes, "Latter-day Saints would agree entirely with C. S. Lewis." He then quotes from Mere Christianity the familiar passage for Mormons in which Lewis asserts that Heavenly Father will make men and women into gods and goddesses "if we choose" to let Him.

Robinson expands upon this same discussion in a chapter in Are Mormons Christians? He states in his preface that Mormons have been puzzled why so many other denominations claim that Latter-day Saints are not Christian. The full title bears His name: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Book of Mormon testifies that Jesus Christ is the Savior and Redeemer of the world. Nevertheless, in response to existing contentions by non-Mormons, Robinson attempts to explain how those "arguments used to exclude Latter-day Saints from the 'Christian' world are flawed." In a similar fashion to his essay in The Encyclopedia of Mormonism, Robinson draws on Lewis to demonstrate that Mormons are Christians, using this logic: If Lewis believes in the doctrine of deification and is still considered a Christian, therefore Mormons (who are criticized for believing the same doctrine) should not be considered un-Christian if they agree with Lewis. After citing various New Testament scriptures and early Christian writers, Robinson summarizes his argument:

53 The fifth president of the LDS Church, Lorenzo Snow (1814-1901), is credited with this aphorism. Robinson cites Snow, Eliza R., Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow (Salt Lake City, 1884), p. 46.


Now, if the Christian scriptures teach that we will look like God, receive the inheritance of God, receive the glory of God, be one with God, sit upon the throne of God, and exercise the power and rule with God, then surely it cannot be un-Christian to conclude with C. S. Lewis and others that such beings as these can be called gods, as long as we remember that this use of the term gods does not in any way reduce or limit the sovereignty of God our Father. That is how the early Christians used the term; it is how C. S. Lewis used the term; and it is how the Latter-day Saints use the term and understand the doctrine. 56

Robinson assumes that Lewis’s view of deification is the same as what Mormonism teaches. That assumption has been challenged by both non-Mormons and Mormons. Although the doctrine of deification held by Latter-day Saints is based on claims of revelation and is a doctrine established by LDS prophets and apostles, Lewis is seen by Mormons like Robinson as a credible and dependable Christian ally in their defense of such beliefs.

Since William Clayton Kimball’s 1972 article on Lewis and Mormonism, very little scholarly work has been published on the subject. Steven Michael Wilcox, a former BYU professor currently teaching religion courses at the LDS Institute at the University of Utah, wrote his doctoral dissertation on Lewis. In his paper, which was written in 1982, Wilcox attempts to describe “the totality of Lewis’s philosophy” and construct a Lewis pedagogy. He believes that Lewis’s goal in life was to educate humanity, bringing his readers to Christianity through the use of mythopoeic fantasy and an appeal to Reason. 57 However, Wilcox does not comment on Lewis in his study from a Mormon perspective.


It appears that from 1972 until 1997 there were no essays published on Lewis and Mormonism. In the fall of 1997 Evan Stephenson\textsuperscript{58} wrote an essay that appeared in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*\textsuperscript{59}. His article, "The Last Battle: C. S. Lewis and Mormonism," focuses on the premise that Lewis's theology radically differs from LDS teachings. Stephenson attacks those in the church who claim that "C. S. Lewis was a dry Mormon,"\textsuperscript{60} and he sets out to prove how un-Mormon Lewis really was. While he briefly admits the fact that LDS leaders and members have responded favorably to Lewis's teachings, Stephenson desires to show that "the two systems bear little resemblance to one another." He argues that LDS writers like Robinson have misinterpreted Lewis's views on glory and immortality. Stephenson focuses his paper on the differences regarding the nature of man, good and evil, time, and the character of God.

While some of his observations may be correct, one of the major problems is that Stephenson builds on the faulty assumption that most Latter-day Saints consider Lewis to be an unbaptized Mormon. However, any reader who has a basic understanding of Mormonism would not view Lewis as a dry Mormon.\textsuperscript{61} Stephenson also mistakenly thinks that only Mormons can be considered "inspired." The Book of Mormon does not

\textsuperscript{58} When he wrote the article Stephenson was an undergraduate at George Mason University. As of January 1999, he was serving as a full-time LDS missionary in San Jose, California.


\textsuperscript{60} The term "dry Mormon" refers someone who is not yet baptized but is thought to have Mormon-like characteristics, ideology, and/or practices.

place such limits: “But behold, that which is of God inviteth and enticeth to do good continually; wherefore, every thing which inviteth and enticeth to do good, and to love God, and to serve him, is inspired of God.”\(^{62}\) Furthermore, the logic of Stephenson’s concluding statements seems shaky. While he concludes that Lewis’s Christianity is radically different from Mormonism, Stephenson says that Latter-day Saints “find impressive common ground between themselves and their fellow Christians.”\(^{63}\) How can Stephenson conclude that Mormons can find agreement with the common ground of Christianity but are far removed from Lewis, who is known for his *Mere Christianity*?

Stephenson’s views have been interpreted as rather unorthodox. One BYU professor expressed anger after reading Stephenson’s article. He commented, “When Stephenson claims to prove that Lewis’s views are incompatible with what Mormons believe, what he really succeeds in doing is showing that Lewis’s views are incompatible with what Mormons who agree with Stephenson believe.”\(^{64}\) Furthermore, Stephenson seems to have no qualms about whom he challenges, whether it be past or present Mormon leaders like Brigham Young, George Q. Cannon, Joseph F. Smith, and Neal A. Maxwell.\(^{65}\) In addition, Stephenson criticizes Lewis for his “tortuous logic.”\(^{66}\) Yet elsewhere in praising him he elevates Lewis to incredible heights: “Of all people who have ever lived, nobody has understood this concept [of free will] better than Lewis.”\(^{67}\)

\(^{62}\) Moroni 7:13 (see also Alma 29:8).

\(^{63}\) Stephenson, p. 69.

\(^{64}\) An email letter from Chris Grant (a professor of mathematics at BYU) to the author, September 7, 1998.

\(^{65}\) Stephenson, pp. 63-64 (see also footnote 130).


\(^{67}\) *Ibid.*, footnote 82 on p. 56.
In contrast to Stephenson's critique, Robert L. Millet chooses to focus on the similarities that he perceives between Lewis and Mormonism. As the dean of religious education at Brigham Young University, Millet has published numerous books and articles on various theological topics and Mormon issues, and Lewis has been cited in many of his works. In April of 1998 Professor Millet delivered a paper at the Wheaton (Illinois) College Theology Conference on the topic, "The Theology of C. S. Lewis: A Latter-day Saint Perspective." After acknowledging that Lewis was not a Mormon and that he did not intend to make him into one, Millet explains that Latter-day Saints enjoy Lewis’s breadth and inclusiveness. Millet briefly shared some connections between Mormonism and Lewis’s teachings, including topics like the fall, salvation, and joy. During his discussion on the transformation in Christ, Millet compares Lewis’s thoughts with those written by an early twentieth-century LDS General Authority, B. H. Roberts, regarding making and begetting. At the conclusion of his presentation, he says that Lewis “touches upon doctrinal matters that are at the heart of much of what [Mormons] believe.” Lewis’s insights are valuable to Mormons because they are “both spiritually satisfying and intellectually enlarging.”

The year 1998 marked the centenary of Lewis’s birth. Throughout the world the Christian apologist was honored in various ways. Such was also the case among Mormons in Utah. Journalist Jerry Johnston’s column in the Deseret News on March 28 featured an article about Lewis’s popularity among Latter-day Saints. Johnston observed mistakenly that Lewis was the most quoted non-LDS author in General Conference talks. In Johnston’s opinion, Lewis sounds like former LDS leader, Sterling W. Sill. He

---


69 Ibid., p. 21.
describes Lewis as “the one who leans over and speaks into our ear, the friend we can’t help but take into our hearts.”

During the annual Church Education Week at BYU in August, participants found a week-long class offered on C. S. Lewis. Taught by Dean Millet, the lectures provided biographical information and discussion of Lewis’s theological views. Millet spoke of some of the “startling number of similarities” between Mormonism and Lewis’s teachings. In December BYU’s religious education department sponsored a two-day conference, “C. S. Lewis: The Man and His Message.” Chris Mitchell, director of the Wade Center at Wheaton College, and Neal A. Maxwell were the event’s keynote speakers. Over 1200 attended the conference event to hear speakers address various topics relating to Lewis. Maxwell’s lecture, “C. S. Lewis: Insights on Discipleship,” expressed his views on how Lewis is valued by Mormons.

This journey of discipleship and the yoke to be born are rigorous, enough so that every encouragement is to be appreciated and every insight is precious. Hence the regard so many of us have for Lewis. Therefore, while it is not for doctrine that I look to Lewis, I find his depiction of discipleship especially articulate and helpful. And the yield from Lewis in this regard is indeed abundant.

Maxwell, who suffers from cancer and undergoes weekly chemotherapy treatments, has personally experienced adversity. He commented that the trials placed before us are “not random challenges but customized challenges, tutorial challenges from a loving God whose purposes we don’t easily and readily understand.”


72 Ibid.
At the close of 1998 a new book appeared in Utah entitled *The Restored Gospel According to C. S. Lewis*. Authored by Nathan Jensen, a financial services specialist, the book attempts to explain to Latter-day Saint readers how remarkably spiritually inspired Lewis was from a Mormon perspective. Jensen declares that Lewis’s writings are filled “with precepts and doctrines that are not only true, but most wholly unique” to Mormonism.73 He connects Mormonism with Lewis on a variety of subjects such as love and marriage, agency, happiness, heaven, and hell. Although he boldly declares in his opening statements that Lewis was spiritually inspired, Jensen later seems hesitant regarding the means by which Lewis obtained his knowledge: Was it “on his own” or “through the help of the Spirit”?74 In any case, Jensen describes Lewis as “a humble follower of Christ” who “knew the Lord in his own way.”75

A selection of papers presented at the December 1998 Lewis conference at BYU was later published and distributed by Bookcraft in 1999 under the title *C. S. Lewis: The Man and His Message*. Elder Maxwell’s “Insights on Discipleship” represents the book’s opening chapter. Other essays selected cover a variety of topics including sin, temptation, salvation, family, psychology, Romanticism, the problem of pain, and the transformation of human nature. In their preface to the book, editors Millet and Andrew C. Skinner state:

> Because Lewis was such a brilliant scholar, writer, poet, and literary critic, we cannot ignore these aspects of his life, nor have we in this present collection. However, from 1931 on, all such matters for Lewis seem to have taken second place behind the central message of Christianity--Jesus Christ and His Atonement. Lewis worked tirelessly to help others


74 Ibid., p. 103.

75 Ibid., pp. 178-179.
understand what it means to be a Christian and to live as a Christian. Ultimately, Lewis came to be regarded as everyone’s preacher, every thinking Christian’s supreme apologist.76

Such an endorsement is just one reason why the book is already in its third printing in just less than a year. In his essay, “God’s Megaphone to a Deaf World: C. S. Lewis’s Personal Sojourn to Understanding the Problem of Pain,” BYU religion professor Brent Top commented on why Lewis appeals to Mormons. It is not because Lewis teaches anything new, but rather it is that “he simplifies the complex with common sense and illustrates the philosophical explanations with understandable and relevant metaphors, which in turn helps us to understand our own doctrines and scriptures better.”77

In February 2000 Random House published Standing for Something: 10 Neglected Virtues That Will Heal Our Hearts and Homes, written by Gordon B. Hinckley, president of the LDS Church. In the book President Hinckley attempts to reach out to a broad readership of Americans, teaching morality and virtue through anecdotes and observations. References are drawn from a variety of sources: the Bible, Lincoln, Emerson, Churchill, Dickens, Shakespeare, et al. Hinckley quotes a passage from Lewis regarding education (“We have lived to see the second death of ancient learning”) and then comments: “Our world needs straightening up. It needs leadership. It needs enlightenment....None of us can assume that we have learned enough.”78


77 Top, Brent L. “God’s Megaphone to a Deaf World: C. S. Lewis’s Personal Sojourn to Understanding the Problem of Pain,” C. S. Lewis: The Man and His Message (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1999), p. 121.

In his chapter on marriage, Hinckley declares his views on the importance of the family in society. Borrowing an aphorism from former LDS president Harold B. Lee, Hinckley believes that “no success in life can compensate for failure in the home.” But building strong family relationships is a challenging task.

It is one thing to talk about the importance and sanctity of marriage, and another thing entirely to create such a marriage, day in and day out. It is as C. S. Lewis said:

[God] allows...disappointment to occur on the threshold of every human endeavor. It occurs when the boy who has been enchanted in the nursery by *Stories from the Odyssey* buckles down to really learning Greek. It occurs when lovers have got married and begin the real task of learning to live together. In every department of life it marks the transition from dreaming aspiration to laborious doing.

Hinckley’s book illustrates how Lewis has become a popular resource for Latter-day Saint leaders, authors, and readers. Citing non-LDS writers like Lewis is not a new trend. In their efforts to remedy misconceptions about their beliefs, the LDS Church has made concerted efforts to emphasize their foundational faith in Jesus Christ. In 1982, for example, a subtitle was added to cover of the Book of Mormon: “Another Testament of Jesus Christ.” Also, the official letterhead of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was enhanced in 1995 so that the words Jesus Christ were enlarged for added emphasis.

---


80 An example of how liberally LDS leaders have used non-Mormon sources is illustrated by Elder Sterling W. Sill. During his conference address delivered to a general priesthood session on October 5, 1963, Elder Sill (then serving as an Assistant to the Twelve Apostles) cited seven scriptures and Joseph Smith. He also referred to St. Augustine, Sir Walter Raleigh, William James (three times), Theodore Roosevelt, George Bernard Shaw, Abraham Lincoln, professional baseball player Carl Erskine, and Edward Everett Hale (“To Have Dominion,” *Improvement Era* [November 1963]).
Such efforts signify how important it has become for Mormons in recent decades to be recognized as Christians. In his opening address at General Conference in October 1999, Hinckley articulated the desire of the LDS Church: “[The world] will no longer regard us as a non-Christian people. They must know that the central figure in all of our worship is the Lord Jesus Christ.” President Hinckley has been using every tool possible to clear misconceptions about Mormons and teach what Latter-day Saints actually believe. Since his ordination as LDS president in 1995, Hinckley has accepted numerous offers to appear before the international media. He was interviewed in the cover story on the LDS Church published by Time magazine in August 1997. President Hinckley has appeared on CNN’s Larry King Show and 60 Minutes on CBS. Mike Wallace of 60 Minutes wrote the foreword for Hinckley’s Standing for Something.

Have General Authorities of the LDS Church like Maxwell, Benson, and Hinckley made a conscientious effort to incorporate Lewis’s teachings into their sermons to appear to be more like orthodox, mainstream Christian denominations? While Mormons would like to be recognized for their faith in Jesus, Latter-day Saints do not rely on Lewis for their respective individual testimonies of Christ. Granted, some LDS scholars like Robinson view Lewis as an articulate ally in the defense of certain doctrines. However, most LDS Church leaders admire Lewis for his insightful analogies and draw upon his metaphors to illustrate gospel principles.

In the 1960s Mormon writers and leaders like Nibley, Evans, and Maxwell began to introduce Latter-day Saints to Lewis by citing him in their books and speeches. Largely owing to Elder Maxwell’s influence, Lewis gradually became a popular source among Mormon church leaders for illustrating gospel concepts in General Conference talks. The acceptance of Lewis by LDS leadership climaxed in 1989 when President


Benson cited *Mere Christianity* in his conference talk on pride. Numerous books authored by Mormons now frequently quote Lewis. Such acceptance has extended to the LDS-operated Ricks College (Rexburg, Idaho) and Brigham Young University (Provo, Utah), where students can take academic courses on C. S. Lewis. Ironically, the most popular C. S. Lewis website on the Internet is operated by a Mormon.  

---

83 As of January 1999, the site webmaster is John Visser, who reports that “Into the Wardrobe” gets roughly 16,000 visitors a month. That’s over 250,000 “hits.” The website address is: http://cslewis.DrZeus.net
Chapter 2: A Survey of C. S. Lewis’s Theology

After examining how C. S. Lewis has become such a popular writer and resource among Mormons, we shall now prepare to ask why he has been so influential in the LDS Church. However, before moving into a discussion of Lewis and Mormon theology (as we shall do in Chapter 3), this chapter will outline Lewis’s personal spiritual journey—-from his early childhood faith and subsequent atheism to his conversion to Christianity. The intention of this chapter is not to provide a description of Lewis’s entire theology but rather a brief survey of some of Lewis’s religious beliefs.¹

A Brief History of His Beliefs

C. S. Lewis’s early life was greatly affected by the death of his mother. He was determined that through his prayers God would heal his mother. Young Lewis viewed God “as a magician; and when He had done what was required of Him...[God] would simply go away.”² When God did not miraculously heal his mother, his boyhood Protestantism was shaken. During his early teenage years, Lewis realized that he had ceased to be a Christian.³ His pessimism gradually grew into apostasy and atheism, and the schoolboy felt the strength of Lucretius’s words:

¹ This chapter was presented to a conference of Lewis scholars in Belfast, Northern Ireland in August of 1998. The paper was not offered as a Mormon perspective of Lewis or as an exhaustive examination of Lewis’s theology. The critical reader of Lewis may note that several themes are not emphasized in this chapter, which a more lengthy treatment would necessitate. Although topics like faith, repentance, and sanctification are not isolated in separate, subtitled sections, these subjects are found within this discussion of Lewis’s theological views.


Had God designed the world, it would not be
A world so frail and faulty as we see.\(^4\)

Through his undergraduate years at Oxford, Lewis remained an atheist. By the summer of 1929, however, things had changed. His discussions with Christian friends, including Hugo Dyson and J. R. R. Tolkien,\(^5\) and the reading of certain books (especially G. K. Chesterton’s *The Everlasting Man*) led Lewis to believe in the existence of Something Else. He experienced an intellectual, unemotional illumination while riding a bus up Headington Hill, realizing there was an important choice before him. He knew that

> God was Reason itself. Total surrender, the absolute leap in the dark, were demanded. I gave in, and admitted that God was God, and knelt and prayed: perhaps, that night, the most dejected and reluctant convert in all England.\(^6\)

He now had a simple conviction that an Absolute Being existed. For two years after his conversion to theism, Lewis searched for a religion that had “reached its true maturity.”\(^7\) He determined that it was to be found either in Hinduism or in Christianity. The historical claims in the Gospels and his belief in the Incarnation assisted him in accepting Christianity. The “final step” came in 1931 during a motorcycle ride with his brother, Warnie. While traveling to the Whipsnade Zoo, Lewis realized that he believed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God.\(^8\)

---


\(^4\) *Surprised by Joy*, p. 65.


\(^6\) *Surprised by Joy*, pp. 228-229.


It is important to note that Lewis's conversion was based primarily on reason or intellect. According to his autobiography, his progression of beliefs was connected with books and discussions. The two experiences mentioned above (both occurred outdoors en route to Headington Hill and Whipsnade) are described as unemotional. Indeed Lewis, from an early age, learned to "distrust or dislike emotion as something uncomfortable and embarrassing and even dangerous." He saw a war "between faith and reason on one side and emotion and imagination on the other." His conversion to Christianity was simply a realization that he believed in Jesus. There is no report of feeling a spiritual connection, warmth, or assurance of love from God. It is presented in terms of freedom and choice.

God

After his conversion to Christianity in 1931, Lewis produced a literary flow. "From then on, works of scholarship, fantasy, literary appreciation, and apologetics poured from his ever-fertile brain." The Pilgrim's Regress, The Screwtape Letters, Miracles, Mere Christianity, and The Chronicles of Narnia are just a few of the books Lewis authored during the last thirty years of his life. It is from this era (1933-1963) that we shall examine Lewis's theology. While many books have been written about Lewis's

---

9 In Jack: A Life of C. S. Lewis, Sayer notes that Lewis's "conversion was largely an intellectual one" (p. xix).

10 Surprised by Joy, p. 4.


13 For additional perspectives on Lewis's theology see John Randolph Willis, Pleasures Forevermore: The Theology of C. S. Lewis (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1983); Peter Milward, A Challenge to C. S. Lewis (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1995), pp. 59-63; Paul L. Holmer, C. S. Lewis: The Shape of His Faith and
theology, this chapter will not attempt an exhaustive, detailed examination. Instead it will serve as a brief introduction to a few theological subjects found in Lewis’s corpus. A more detailed examination will follow in Chapter 3 regarding those similarities Mormons perceive between their theology and some of Lewis’s articulations.

Lewis’s theology is rooted in his personal experience. Man pursues joy, but there is Something Else always being pointed to, something beyond reach. That Something Else is God. God is a supernatural, individual being, who stands outside creation. God is the Creator of this world and many others. The Eternal Being watches over and cares for man, and He loves us in spite of what He sees. Notwithstanding man’s weaknesses, God’s “grand enterprise” is to help humanity become immortal creatures. His love is a tough love—spiritual, pure, and ferocious. God is like a hunter, a pursuer, a lion; it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God.

---


18 *Surprised by Joy*, chapter 14.
Lewis sees the Absolute as a three-personal God, who is one Being. In God's dimension, so to speak, you find a being who is three Persons while remaining one Being, just as a cube is six squares while remaining one cube. Of course we cannot fully conceive a Being like that....But we can get a sort of faint notion of it. And when we do, we are then, for the first time in our lives, getting some positive idea, however faint, of something super-personal--something more than a person.

When a Christian kneels to pray, he speaks to the Father. Standing beside him is the Son, who teaches him about the Father. There is also the Spirit inside of him, motivating him to pray. Thus the three-personal God works together, bringing man to a higher kind of life, which Lewis calls Zoe or spiritual life.

Jesus Christ

The Second Person in the Godhead, the Son, became human Himself. Lewis sees the Incarnation as an essential doctrine of Christianity. God the Son was born into the world as a man with height, weight, hair color, and language. Although this Being created the whole universe, He chose to descend to earth as a mortal, suffering Himself to be sacrificed for the sins of mankind. According to Lewis, the good news of Christianity is that Jesus rose again and that through His death and resurrection humanity has been

---

19 *Mere Christianity*, p. 125, 127.

20 Ibid., p. 126.

21 Ibid., pp. 123, 127.
Christ’s mission was to redeem mankind and point men to the Father. “The Son of God became a man to enable men to become the sons of God.”23

Lewis strongly defends the divine nature of Christ.24 He argues that Jesus of Nazareth must not be accepted as merely a man or a great moral teacher. While other religions and philosophies have had significant moral teachers (e.g., Buddha, Mohammed, Confucius, Socrates), Christianity relies on the Messiah who claimed to be God, forgave sins, and later rose from the dead.

I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: “I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept His claim to be God.” That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronising nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.25

This reasoning seemed perfectly clear and obvious to Lewis. From his perspective, Christ’s claim of divinity set Him apart from other religious figures. Lewis notes that

22 Mere Christianity, pp. 140-141. Lewis wrote that there were no secrets about his own beliefs for they are found in The Common Book of Prayer (Ibid., pp. vii-viii).

23 Ibid., p. 139.

24 Walsh, Chad. C. S. Lewis: Apostle to the Skeptics, pp. 78-80.

25 Mere Christianity, pp. 40-41.
perhaps the most shocking words ever uttered by a mortal were Christ’s claim to forgive sins. Unless Jesus was in fact God, this would seem preposterous.26

**Heaven**

Lewis describes heaven in his book *The Great Divorce*, where a group of tourists from hell take a field trip to heaven on a bus. Once they arrive in heaven, the travelers are invited to stay, but they feel uncomfortable and are anxious to return to hell. Heaven is a solid place. “Heaven is reality itself. All that is fully real is Heavenly. For all that can be shaken will be shaken and only the unshakable remains.”27 It is a land “not of questions but of answers, and you shall see the face of God.”28

According to Lewis’s writings in *The Great Divorce*, there are some things one must be willing to do to accept heaven: repent and believe, forsake your occupation, admit your mistakes and sins, laugh at yourself, and be humble once again like a little child.29 Humility is the antithesis of pride, and pride is the obstacle to heaven.

There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, ‘Thy will be done,’ and those to whom God says, in the end, ‘Thy will be done.’30

Lewis doubts whether man has (deep down) ever desired anything other than heaven. Within us there is a yearning or longing (Lewis calls it *sehnsucht*) for Something Else.31 We cannot adequately articulate this longing just as we cannot describe heaven or

---

26 *Mere Christianity*, p. 40.


31 *Surprised by Joy*, pp. 7, 16-17; Preface to *Pilgrim's Regress*, p. 7. For detailed
God. However, heaven is the thing we long for. In contrast to the pains and trials of life, Christians believe in the joys of heaven. While some may scoff at such an idea, Lewis contends that either there is a heaven or there is not. "If not then Christianity is false for this doctrine is woven into its whole fabric."33

Hell

Like Milton in Paradise Lost, Lewis defines hell as a state of mind. Unlike heaven, which is a state of self-giving or unselfishness, hell is "that fierce imprisonment in the self."35 Those in hell choose not to repent and believe but decide to grumble forever.

'A damned soul is nearly nothing: it is shrunk, shut up in itself. Good beats upon the damned incessantly as sound waves beat on the ears of the deaf, but they cannot receive it. Their fists are clenched, their teeth are clenched, their eyes fast shut. First they will not, in the end they cannot, open their hands for gifts, or their mouths for food, or their eyes to see."36

It has been argued that if God were merciful He would not allow hell to exist and that a loving God would not allow His creatures to disobey and choose evil. To illustrate


32 Problem of Pain, pp. 130-134.

33 Ibid., p. 130.

34 Great Divorce, Ch. 9; Mind Awake, p. 186.

35 Problem of Pain, p. 137.

36 Great Divorce, p. 123.
the necessity of hell, Lewis likens life to a game: “If a game is to be played, it must be possible to lose it.”

Lewis focuses on man’s free will to choose for himself his individual destiny. Although God has offered salvation to all humanity, some choose to reject His offer. God does not turn away those who wish to come to Him; heaven’s gates are open to those who choose to enter.

**Man**

Choices determine who one is and where one is going. Each choice makes the individual a little different, either better or worse. One can choose to be God-like (which will bring peace, joy, knowledge, and power) or be miserable. God may be pleased but not satisfied with each individual’s progress, like a father with his baby’s first attempts to walk. God has plans for His children; He wants to guide them to absolute perfection.

The command *Be ye perfect* is not idealistic gas. Nor is it the command to do the impossible. He is going to make us into creatures that can obey that command. He said (in the Bible) that we were “gods” and He is going to make good His words. If we let Him--for we can prevent Him, if we choose--He will make the feeblest and filthiest of us into a god or goddess, a dazzling, radiant, immortal creature, pulsating all through with such energy and joy and wisdom and love as we cannot now imagine....

---

37 *Problem of Pain*, p. 105.

38 *Mere Christianity*, p. 72.


40 *Mere Christianity*, p. 158.

This message is the heart of Christianity: God’s work and the purpose of His Church is to “draw men unto Christ, to make them little Christs.”\(^42\) The process of becoming God-like will not be completed in this life, and it promises to be a long and painful journey. As Lewis points out, the choice is an individual one; God is willing to work with man, but He does not force man to obey.

The first step towards the goal of becoming “little Christs” is developing the “habit of Faith.” Lewis defines faith as “the art of holding on to things your reason has once accepted, in spite of your changing moods.”\(^43\) Faith is more than just a “settled intellectual assent;” it is a “trust, or confidence, in the God whose existence is thus assented to.”\(^44\) There are times when a Christian may feel abandoned by God, and this is perhaps the ultimate test of faith: to look “upon a universe from which every trace of Him seems to have vanished, and asks why he has been forsaken, and still obeys.”\(^45\) Such faith is developed by daily prayer, scripture reading, and church attendance.\(^46\)

Out of this faith should come good actions. Intellectual acceptance of Christ is not enough. The true believer will act upon his faith, attempt to obey God’s commandments, and exercise trust in the Almighty. The question of whether salvation comes by faith or works seems to Lewis “like asking which blade in a pair of scissors is most necessary.”\(^47\)

Man is indebted to Christ for paying the penalty of sin. Through the Atonement, the Savior provides the gift of repentance, which grants the opportunity for a fresh start.

\(^{42}\) *Mere Christianity*, p. 155.


\(^{46}\) *Mere Christianity*, p. 109.

with our slates wiped clean. The process of repentance requires humility, recognizing that one has been traveling on the wrong track and that changes need to be made.\textsuperscript{48} Humility comes when man understands his proper relationship with God. "To love [God] we must know Him: and if we know Him, we shall in fact fall on our faces."\textsuperscript{49} Man should realize that he is in debt to God and can never pay Him back.\textsuperscript{50}

The Problem of Pain

Lewis explores the question of suffering in \textit{The Problem of Pain}. God uses pain as a tool to get humanity back on track. "God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world."\textsuperscript{51} God would rather not use it, but man often makes choices that bring painful consequences. God would like it if humanity had chosen not to get into a situation that necessitated punishment.\textsuperscript{52} God gave men free will, knowing that men could choose evil. According to Lewis, God apparently "thought it worth the risk."\textsuperscript{53} It is the misuse of man's agency that causes most of the pain and suffering in this world.

When souls become wicked they will certainly use this possibility to hurt one another; and this, perhaps, accounts for four-fifths of the sufferings of men. It is men, not God, who have produced racks, whips, prisons, slavery, guns, bayonets, and bombs; it is by human avarice or human

\textsuperscript{48} \textit{Mere Christianity}, pp. 42-46.

\textsuperscript{49} \textit{Problem of Pain}, p. 47.

\textsuperscript{50} \textit{Mere Christianity}, p. 110.

\textsuperscript{51} \textit{Problem of Pain}, p. 83.

\textsuperscript{52} \textit{A Mind Awake}, p. 175.

\textsuperscript{53} \textit{Mere Christianity}, p. 38.
stupidity, not by the churlishness of nature, we have poverty and overwork.\textsuperscript{54}

Over twenty years after writing \textit{The Problem of Pain} (1940), Lewis would again raise similar questions about the nature of suffering in \textit{A Grief Observed} (1961). While trying to cope with the death of his wife, Lewis expresses his emotions, doubts, and discoveries. He asks, "Is pain necessary?" There are three choices: a) Yes, and God is good; b) No, and God is bad; or c) No, and there is no god.\textsuperscript{55} Lewis comes to see sorrow as a learning process. Trials are for each individual to learn for himself what God already knew about them.\textsuperscript{56}

\textbf{An Objective Moral Standard}

In his apologetic writings, Lewis bases his arguments on the idea that objective reality exists. He claims that until the modern era "no thinker of the first rank ever doubted that our judgements of value were rational judgements or that what they discovered was objective."\textsuperscript{57} The modern view does not tolerate the belief that value judgments are based on objective values but interprets them to be expressions of attitudes and feelings produced by social conditioning. Like it or not, counters Lewis, we use terms such as "good" and "better" because there is an objective standard of good.

\textit{The Abolition of Man} (1943) is Lewis's attack on the idea that all moral and aesthetic values are subjective. By examining many differing cultures, Lewis argues that an objective moral standard has been recognized throughout the ages—a Tao or Way. This moral standard is something perceived instinctively and is universal. One of his most

\textsuperscript{54} \textit{Problem of Pain}, p. 79.

\textsuperscript{55} \textit{Grief Observed}, pp. 55-56.

\textsuperscript{56} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 65, 71.

\textsuperscript{57} \textit{Seeing Eye}, p. 100.
popular books, *Mere Christianity* (1952), uses the idea of a moral objective standard as the basis of his argument for the existence of God. Because some ideas are better than others and there is a certain way we ought to behave, we must admit there is a standard by which we measure things. This Law of Human Nature, or of Right and Wrong, is “a real law which we did not invent and which we know we ought to obey.”\(^{58}\) This reasoning leads Lewis to believe in “a Something [God] which is directing the universe, and which appears in me as a law urging me to do right and making me feel responsible and uncomfortable when I do wrong.”\(^{59}\)

**Lewis's Final Years**

Lewis has been heralded as one of the great Christian authors and apologists of the twentieth century.\(^{60}\) His faith was challenged, however, when his brief marriage to Joy Davidman ended with her painful death. After experiencing her love and friendship, Lewis was tormented by the loss of Joy. *A Grief Observed* (1961) reveals Lewis's struggle during this period of intense suffering. His wife’s death challenged his faith in God. His condition seems to be a prophetic fulfillment of a description he wrote in *Screwtape Letters* two decades earlier. Lewis experiences for himself a universe in which every trace of God seems to have vanished and asks why he has been forsaken.\(^{61}\) He likens his faith to a house of cards, questioning whether his faith has merely been imagination.\(^{62}\) “You never know how much you really believe anything until its truth or falsehood becomes a

---

58 *Mere Christianity*, p. 17.


60 Wilson, chapter 20.

61 *Screwtape Letters*, p. 39.

Unaccustomed to dealing with his emotions, Lewis now is forced to confront the feelings troubling his soul. Smarting from his wounds, he cries: "Where is God?" "What proof is there that God is 'good'?" In the process, Lewis humbly admits that what he claimed to know before about God, with such certainty, is not an absolute, sure knowledge.

My idea of god is not a divine idea. It has to be shattered time after time. He shatters it Himself. He is the great iconoclast. All reality is iconoclastic.

Calling out to God for help, his prayers appear to go unanswered. But then Lewis reports having an experience with his wife's spirit or soul. He describes the encounter as an unemotional one, "like getting a telephone call or a wire from her about some practical arrangement. Not that there was any 'message'—just intelligence and attention. There was an extreme and cheerful intimacy."

Despite the painful trials of his faith, Lewis did not give up his Christian convictions. In what was to be his last book, *Letters to Malcolm* (published posthumously in 1964), Lewis explores the subject of prayer. He also reaffirms his faith in Christianity, emphasizing supernatural doctrines like the reality of Heaven and the resurrection of the body. Lewis argues that everything that happens is providential and every act of God a special providence.

One of the purposes for which God instituted prayer may have been to bear witness that the course of events is not governed like a state but created like a work of art to which every being makes its contribution and (in prayer) a

63 *Grief Observed*, p. 34.


conscious contribution, and in which every being is both an end and a means.\(^67\)

**Practical Theology**

The strong, decisive apologetic voice of Lewis has appealed to millions of Christians of various denominations. Yet his popularity as a spokesman for orthodox Christianity was frowned upon by many of his peers at Oxford.\(^68\) Throughout his career, Lewis focused much of his literary energy on the fantasy genre to express his Christian faith.\(^69\) In the seven volumes of *The Chronicles of Narnia* and in other works, like *Till We Have Faces*, Lewis displays his imagination and intellect through tales of myth permeated with symbolism. *A Grief Observed*, while expressing his doubts about his faith, is appealing precisely because it reveals an emotional side of Lewis. Because it is written from the heart and contains “burning truths,” there are some who would choose *A Grief Observed* above all his other books.\(^70\)

For Lewis, theology is practical or practice-able.\(^71\) While the doctrines of orthodox Christianity are essential, there is work to do; part of it is internal. For example, the first step to humility is to realize that one is proud. “If you think you are not conceited, it means you are very conceited indeed.”\(^72\) During the life-long process of repentance, Lewis encourages the believer to give up and leave it to God. Yet one must


\(^68\) Wilson, pp. 245-246. In Wilson’s view, Lewis’s *Mere Christianity* and *Screwtape Letters* were the reasons why he was denied an Oxford chair. Finally, in 1954, Lewis left Oxford for a position at Cambridge.


\(^70\) Wilson, p. 286.

\(^71\) *Mere Christianity*, pp. 120, 126, 146-147.

still keep trying to do all that God says, but do it in “a less worried way.” Another important step is to try to forget yourself by looking to God.  

Lewis attempted to practice his beliefs through service to others. Kilby writes that Lewis “acted on his conviction of Christian duty to sit at bedside of the sick and personally serve the poor. He gave away two-thirds of his income and would have given more had it not been for income taxes. He was a man of unceasing personal cheerfulness. A man of massive intellect, he was at the same time a true mystic in the sense of believing absolutely in God.”

In summary, Lewis’s conversion to Christianity was based primarily on reason or intellect. Lewis believed that God is a supernatural being who created the world. Through the atonement of Jesus Christ, God has provided the opportunity for mankind to overcome sin and become immortal creatures. According to Lewis, there is a yearning within man for heaven. While faith is essential, there is also work to do. Thus, for Lewis, theology must be practice-able.

---

73 *Mere Christianity*, p. 114.


75 *A Mind Awake*, p. 9.
Chapter 3: C. S. Lewis and Mormonism

In this chapter I will attempt to answer four questions: 1) What are the major differences between Lewis and LDS theology? 2) What can Mormons learn by studying non-LDS authors like Lewis? 3) Why do Mormons value C. S. Lewis? 4) In what ways do Lewis’s theological ideas intersect with LDS doctrine?

Before beginning this discussion, we must consider what defines Mormon doctrine. While each individual member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is entitled to his or her own opinions, there is, nevertheless, an established set of doctrines. The doctrines of the LDS Church are to be found in the standard works, official declarations or statements made by the First Presidency, and in the semi-annual conference addresses. The official scriptures of the LDS Church include the King James Version of the Holy Bible (Old and New Testaments), the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. There are also official church publications such as the monthly periodical, The Ensign, and authorized books like Jesus the Christ, by Elder James E. Talmage. However, many Church leaders and scholars publish articles and books through private companies. These works are usually prefaced with a disclaimer such as, “This is not a Church publication, and the opinions expressed herein are solely the responsibility of the author.”

Differences Between Lewis’s Theology and LDS Doctrine

With the exception of Lewis’s ideas on the Trinity and the nature of God (which will be explored below), Latter-day Saints readily agree with many of Lewis’s theological principles outlined in Chapter 2. That is not to say that Mormons agree with everything

---

1 For a good discussion of what constitutes official doctrine in the Mormon Church, see Robinson, Stephen R. Are Mormons Christians? (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1991), pp. 13-16.
else in Lewis's corpus. Nor would Lewis agree with distinctive LDS doctrines such as
temple work, baptism for the dead, the Book of Mormon, and abstinence from tobacco
and alcohol. As Millet notes, almost anyone can detect the differences between Lewis and
Mormonism.2 I shall briefly address two major theological differences: the nature of God
and the Trinity.3

While Lewis declared that it is a heresy to say that God is corporeal in nature,4
Mormons believe that God the Father has a glorified "body of flesh and bones as tangible
as man's."5 According to Joseph Smith, "If the veil were rent today, and the great God
who holds this world in its orbit, and who upholds all worlds and all things by his power,
was to make himself visible--I say, if you were to see him today, you would see him like a
man in form."6 While Lewis admits that God wears the "form of a man," we may assume
that he is referring to God the Son, who is a resurrected and glorified being.7

Lewis is reluctant to define God's powers. He says that no Christian has ever been
required to define "the mode of God's omnipresence."8 Mormon theology teaches that
God is omnipresent through the influence of the third member of the Godhead, the Holy
Ghost. Although the Holy Ghost can only be in one place at a time, "his influence can be

---

2 Millet, Robert L. "C. S. Lewis: From Atheist to Apologist," lecture notes delivered
during Church Education Week at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, in Aug. 1998.


5 Doctrine and Covenants 130:22. See also Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,
p. 181; Gospel Principles, pp. 8-10; Andrus, Hyrum L. God, Man, and the Universe

6 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 345.

7 Screwtape Letters, p. 148.

8 A Preface to Paradise Lost, p. 86.
everywhere at the same time.\textsuperscript{9} Furthermore, God the Father is an immanent Being,
because the light of Christ shines forth from Him to fill the immensity of space.\textsuperscript{10}

While Mormons agree with Lewis that God is a supernatural being, they do not
believe that God is “three Persons while remaining one Being, just as a cube is six squares
while remaining one cube.”\textsuperscript{11} Latter-day Saints believe that the Godhead is comprised of
three separate and distinct individuals.\textsuperscript{12} Former LDS church president Brigham Young
wrote, “Not one person in three, nor three persons in one; but the Father, Son, and Holy
Ghost are one in essence, as the hearts of three men who are united in all things.”\textsuperscript{13}
Therefore, when Lewis describes God as being trans-personal and trans-corporeal,\textsuperscript{14}
Mormons tend to feel uncomfortable with such terminology. However, they would agree
with Lewis if he meant that both God the Father and Jesus Christ have heavenly bodies or
natures that transcend what we presently possess as mortals.

\textbf{What Can Mormons Learn From Lewis?}

If Lewis’s concept of the nature of God and the Godhead is incompatible with
Mormon beliefs, why should Latter-day Saints trust him on other matters? Joseph Smith

\textsuperscript{9} \textit{Gospel Principles}, p. 37; McConkie, \textit{A New Witness for the Articles of Faith}, p. 53.

\textsuperscript{10} Doctrine and Covenants 88:12-13; \textit{Mormon Doctrine}, pp. 446-447; 544-545.

\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Mere Christianity}, p. 126.

\textsuperscript{12} Doctrine and Covenants 130:22-23; McConkie, \textit{A New Witness for the Articles of
Faith}, pp. 58-59; Smith, Joseph. \textit{Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith}, p. 312;
Richards, LeGrand. \textit{A Marvelous Work and a Wonder} (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1976),
pp. 22-23.

\textsuperscript{13} Young, Brigham. \textit{Discourses of Brigham Young}, p. 30.

\textsuperscript{14} \textit{Miracles}, p. 121; \textit{Mere Christianity}, pp. 125-129; \textit{Letters to Malcolm}, p. 86.
emphasized the importance of knowing for a certainty the character of God. Elder McConkie declared that there is no salvation in believing any false doctrine, particularly any false or unwise view about the Godhead or any of its members. Another Mormon scholar has written:

False gods beget false religions. The primary reason temporary Christianity is riddled with misconceptions about the gospel of Jesus Christ is that it is blind to the essential truth about the God it purports to worship. The gospel is an extension of God's nature. It is precisely what it is because God is what he is. How can we understand the gospel if we do not understand who authored it?

If Lewis does not understand who God is, how can he, from a Mormon point of view, offer reliable insights about the gospel?

Notwithstanding such important disagreements, Mormons are quick to forgive Lewis. Dean Millet chooses to focus on those similarities between Lewis and Mormonism; he has noted that although Mormons take issue with Lewis on such things as the nature of God, ex nihilo creation, and doctrinal formulations like the Nicene Creed, Lewis is still an important figure for many Latter-day Saints. “Despite the doctrinal differences between Mormons and Lewis,” writes William Clayton Kimball, “he still has many things to say which Mormons need to hear. He calls attention to many problems which all religious people encounter.”

15 *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 343, 345.


Mormons believe that they have a liberal approach to knowledge and the search for truth. Joseph Smith set the example, declaring that, "One of the fundamental principles of Mormonism is to receive truth, let it come from whence it may." Mormons "should gather all the good and true principles in the world and treasure them up." Smith adds, "We believe that we have the right to embrace all, and every item of truth,...when that truth is clearly demonstrated to our minds, and we have the highest degree of evidence of the same." This attitude has been confirmed in the Latter-day Saints’ scriptures. Church members are encouraged to search diligently "out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith." Likewise Brigham Young exhorted Latter-day Saints to search for knowledge:

"Mormonism," so-called, embraces every principle pertaining to life and salvation, for time and eternity. No matter who has it. If the infidel has got truth, it belongs to this Church.... All that is good, lovely, praiseworthy belongs to this Church and Kingdom. “Mormonism” includes all truth.

Young further explains:

The revelations of the Lord Jesus Christ to the human family are all the learning we can ever possess. Much of this knowledge is obtained from books which have been written by men who have contemplated deeply on various


20 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 313.

21 Ibid., p. 316.

22 The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith, p. 420.


24 Discourses of Brigham Young, p. 3.
subjects, and the revelations of Jesus have opened their minds whether they knew it or acknowledged it or not.  

In 1978 the First Presidency issued a statement to its membership regarding the church’s position on how God spiritually inspires and directs people of other faiths.

The great religious leaders of the world such as Mohammed, Confucius, and the Reformers, as well as philosophers including Socrates, Plato, and others, received a portion of God’s light. Moral truths were given to them by God to enlighten whole nations and to bring a higher level of understanding to individuals. Consistent with these truths, we believe that God has given and will give all people sufficient knowledge to help them on their way to eternal salvation, either in this life or in the life to come.

It is in this perspective that Mormons value Lewis. Elder Maxwell says that he admires writers like Lewis and George MacDonald because they maximized “the light they have received” and have “used their talent and courage to write so effectively of the stark beauty of the truths they too found.” Thus, while the Latter-day Saints claim to have the fulness of the gospel, they are reminded that God can use non-Mormons to instruct and enlighten His children. In 1921 Elder Orson F. Whitney taught this broad vision: “[God] is using not only his covenant people, but other peoples as well, to consummate a work, stupendous, magnificent, and altogether too arduous for this little handful of Saints to accomplish by and of themselves.” As Professor Kimball observes, this perspective is not readily seen in the LDS Church. “Too many Mormons are unaware that not all pearls of great price are produced in our own oyster beds.”

25 Discourses of Brigham Young, pp. 257-258.


27 Maxwell, Neal A. Things As They Really Are (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1980), p. ix.


While Lewis is not acknowledged as a theological authority among Mormons, many label him an inspired writer. Bill Burnett, a Mormon religious-education instructor at Princeton, commented, “I think we connect with Lewis’s writings because he was an inspired man and taught many truths that correspond with Gospel truths.”30 While some like Evan Stephenson31 would disagree, other Mormon readers sense that Lewis was a man who had been “touched by the Spirit.”32 Perhaps Lewis himself could help us settle the matter. “If every good and perfect gift comes from the Father of lights then all true and edifying writings, whether in Scripture or not, must be in some sense inspired.”33 This test of how to determine what is inspired has also been established in the Book of Mormon: “But behold, that which is of God inviteth and enticeth to do good continually; wherefore, every thing which inviteth and enticeth to do good, and to love God, and to serve him, is inspired of God.”34

Mormons should not be afraid of new ideas. Reading extensively is an opportunity to exercise and develop discernment. One LDS educator has written that “a central function of intelligence is to be able to discern truth from error and to make choices. Understanding is enlarged by ventures of intellectual exploration.”35 Although reading

Doctrine,” p. 205.


33 In a letter from Lewis to Clyde Kilby, May 7, 1959, as cited in Christensen, Michael J. C. S. Lewis on Scripture (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1979), p. 98.

34 Moroni 7:13.

Lewis is “neither necessary nor sufficient for our salvation,”\(^\text{36}\) reading non-Mormon authors can strengthen and enlighten Latter-day Saints. Mormons have been told to “seek...out of the best books words of wisdom.”\(^\text{37}\) Perhaps LDS journalist Marba Josephson best summarized the task of Mormon students:

> With the belief held by Latter-day Saints in eternal progression, we certainly should try to establish the habit of study in mortality so that we may continue with it throughout our lives here as well as hereafter. It is important that we preserve this open-minded attitude to learning, but it is not merely a matter of being able to learn that is important: it is choosing what to learn. Life is largely a selection, a choice, and it behooves all of us to learn to choose those things that we shall be proud to know eternally. *We must learn to choose the best from all the world has to offer—and we shall need to study diligently and endlessly to find what that best is.*\(^\text{38}\)

### Why Do Mormons Value Lewis?

C. S. Lewis sought to find commonalities rather than differences among Christians. As Walter Hooper observed, Lewis “knew that discussions (or more likely, arguments) about differences in doctrine or ritual were seldom edifying. At least he considered it far too dangerous a luxury for himself—far better stick to that ‘enormous common ground.’”\(^\text{39}\) While some may attempt to judge who is and is not a “Christian,” Lewis argues that really no one but God can know the answer to that question. “It is not for us

---

36 Interview the author had with Professor Bruce Young, Brigham Young University, Dec. 4, 1998.


39 *Seeing Eye*, p. xiii.
to say, who, in the deepest sense, is or is not close to the spirit of Christ. We do not see into men's hearts. We cannot judge, and are indeed forbidden to judge. It would be wicked arrogance for us to say that any man is, or is not, a Christian in this refined sense.”

Lewis prefers to focus on the old, simple truths that most Christians agree upon and believe in.

The Golden Rule of the New Testament (Do as you would be done by) is a summing up of what everyone, at bottom, had always known to be right. Really great moral teachers never do introduce new moralities: it is quacks and cranks who do that. As Dr. Johnson said, ‘People need to be reminded more often than they need to be instructed.’ The real job of every moral teacher is to keep on bringing us back, time after time, to the old simple principles which we are all so anxious not to see.

Nephi, an ancient prophet who wrote in the Book of Mormon, declared, “I glory in plainness; I glory in truth; I glory in my Jesus, for he hath redeemed my soul from hell.”

This perspective of truth as being plain and simple was shared by Lewis: “The process of living seems to consist in coming to realize truths so ancient and simple, that, if stated, they sound like barren platitudes. They cannot sound otherwise to those who have not had the relevant experience.” Likewise, LDS Church leaders and religious educators have been encouraged by Harold B. Lee to focus on teaching “the old truths, the simple

______________________________

40 Mere Christianity, p. x.

41 Ibid., p. 64.


truths, the foundation teachings of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and not be concerned about new speculations that are startling and intriguing, whether true or not."44

Mormons admire Lewis because he not only searches for truth by asking deep and probing questions, but he also believes there are answers.45 For Lewis there is such a thing as truth and objective reality.46 In an article entitled, “The Poison of Subjectivism,” Lewis argues for objective truth, declaring that “a philosophy which does not accept value as eternal and objective can lead us only to ruin.”47

According to LDS theology, knowledge that is both eternal and objective can be found by turning to the Creator and believing in Jesus Christ. While such statements are condemned by secular humanists,48 Lewis believed that Christianity held answers to many

44 Lee, Harold B. “The Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Pursuit of Truth,” Improvement Era (May 1964), p. 388. In this address to seminary and institute of religion faculties during their summer convention of 1953, Elder Harold B. Lee (then serving as an apostle) stated that it was their duty to teach in this way so that “students [would] not be misled by purveyors of false doctrines, vain speculations of faulty interpretations.” Elder Lee later served as president of the LDS Church from 1972-1973.


46 Lewis argues for objective reality and truth in Mere Christianity and Abolition of Man. Lewis was a seeker of truth: “I am trying to find out truth” (Mere Christianity, p. 13). Mormon readers may be intrigued by that statement because Joseph Smith, the founder of the LDS Church, likewise declared: “All I want is to get the simple, naked truth, and the whole truth” (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 372).

47 The Seeing Eye, p. 111.

48 The creed of secular humanists has been described as follows: “As secular humanists...we find that traditional views of the existence of God either are meaningless, have not yet been demonstrated to be true, or are tyrannically exploitative. Secular humanists...find insufficient evidence for the claim that some divine purpose exists for the universe. They reject the idea that God has intervened miraculously in history or revealed himself to a chosen few, or that he can save or redeem sinners. they believe that men and women are free and are responsible for their own destinies and that they cannot look toward some transcendent Being for salvation. We reject the divinity of Jesus, the divine mission of Moses, Mohammed, and other latter-day prophets and saints of the various sects and denominations.” (Kurtz, Paul. A Secular Humanist Declaration, 1980, as cited
of life's perplexing questions. He saw life through the gospel perspective: "I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen not only because I see it but because by it I see everything else." Thus, in an era where many view truth as constantly evolving, Lewis argued for a type of knowledge which did not change. As LDS scholar William Clayton Kimball commented, "In this disposable age of paper plates and paper philosophies which are good for one use only, Lewis insisted that all things had to be tested spiritually, rationally, and experientially before an honest man could give allegiance to them. He believed that Christianity met every test." Whereas Screwtape desires man to do anything but ask whether a thing is true or not, the Apostle Paul declares, "Prove all things, hold fast to that which is good."

In a similar fashion Mormons view truth as being more than just theories or concepts but actually a way of living. Latter-day Saints believe that truth is not just a matter of language or knowledge, but that it should be applied by obedience to those true principles. They maintain that the world would be a better place if everyone would strive to follow God's commandments. LDS leader Ezra Taft Benson declared that the gospel of Jesus Christ is "the perfect prescription for all human problems and social ills."

Mormons believe that there are certain absolute truths which exist. Some of the absolute truths Latter-day Saints believe in include the following: 1. There is a loving

---

in *The Lectures on Faith in Historical Perspective* [Provo, Utah: BYU, 1990], p. 205.)


51 1 Thessalonians 5:21; *Screwtape Letters*, p. 127-28.


Father in Heaven, and His Son is the Savior of mankind. 2. There is an adversary, Satan. 3. Man has been given the gift of moral agency, to choose his own course. 4. Man can overcome the temptations of Satan through increased faith and exercising that faith unto repentance.54 Because Satan exists and is trying to lure man away from God, it is important to recognize his temptations. Brigham Young said that is imperative to “study...evil, and its consequences.”55 One should not be ignorant of Satan’s devices.56 Yet there are some who are unaware of being led astray, believing that they can serve two masters. Elder Marion G. Romney observed, “There are those among us who are trying to serve the Lord without offending the devil.”57 According to James E. Faust (currently second counselor to the president of the LDS Church), “C. S. Lewis gave us keen insight into devilish tactics” through the *Screwtape Letters*.58

Lewis’s apologetics are straight-forward and understandable. As LDS journalist Jerry Johnston observed, some Mormons may find Lewis’s writings appealing because he is dry-eyed and sane. The tone and the way he writes is very similar to Latter-day Saints. Part of it is that he is

---


55 *Discourses of Brigham Young*, p. 257.

56 2 Corinthians 2:11.


non-threatening. He just seems to be a man who wants to make valuable observations and not do a lot of proselyting of his own. What [Mormons] like is his slow, easy, warm, gentle style. He is not out to persuade but to enlighten. So [Mormons] can take or leave what he has to say.\(^{59}\)

Although Johnston believes otherwise, Lewis’s objective was to persuade readers to believe in Christianity. However, Lewis’s approach to apologetics seems palatable to Latter-day Saints. In some ways, Lewis may remind them of Hugh Nibley, a scholar of ancient history and languages who is prominent among Mormon readers. For example, in *Mere Christianity* Lewis’s historical perspective sounds similar to Nibley’s:

That is the key to history. Terrific energy is expended—civilizations are built up—excellent institutions devised; but each time something goes wrong. Some fatal flaw always brings the selfish and cruel people to the top and it all slides back into misery and ruin. In fact, the machine conks. It seems to start up all right and runs a few yards, and then it breaks down. They are trying to run it on the wrong juice.\(^{60}\)

Compare it with Nibley’s commentary on the fall of the Roman empire: “Rome died not with a bang, but with a whisper. All such civilizations do. They just sort of fade out, when the Lord has withdrawn His spirit.”\(^{61}\) Both Lewis’s and Nibley’s statements on the cycle of civilizations resonate with what past and present Mormon leaders have said.\(^{62}\)

Perhaps Latter-day Saints are easily impressed with those scholars who can speak to the masses in understandable language. Mormons respect them and are often awed

\(^{59}\) From a telephone interview the author had with Jerry Johnston, a *Deseret News* (Salt Lake City, Utah) journalist, on August 27, 1998.

\(^{60}\) *Mere Christianity*, p. 39.


by their intellectual gifts. Nibley, who received his doctorate from the University of California at Berkeley, taught at Claremont Colleges, and speaks fourteen languages, has a gift for communicating to the Mormon populace. Lewis, the Oxford don and Cambridge professor, utilized his ability to explain complicated things in simple terms, becoming one of the twentieth century’s greatest Christian writers and apologists. Perhaps even more impressive is that both Lewis and Nibley are intellectuals who are humble and faithful. They have both zeal and knowledge.

Some LDS readers perceive Lewis’s apologetics as authoritative, forceful, and persuasive. In fact, Lewis at times sounds like an LDS apostle, which may explain why so many Mormon leaders have felt comfortable citing Lewis so frequently. On the topic of miracles, for example, Lewis’s ideas appear similar to those of the Mormon apostle James E. Talmage. In *Jesus the Christ*, Elder Talmage wrote:

> In the contemplation of the miracles wrought by Christ, we must of necessity recognize the operation of a power transcending our present human understanding. To deny the actuality of miracles on the ground that, because we cannot comprehend the means, the reported results are fictitious, is to arrogate to the human mind the attribute of omniscience, by implying that what man cannot comprehend cannot be, and that therefore he is able to comprehend all that is. The miracles of record in the Gospels are as fully

63 Andrew C. Skinner, chair of the Department of Ancient Scripture at BYU, stated that “part of Lewis’s genius was his ability to reduce the complex to the understandable” (*C. S. Lewis: The Man and His Message*, p. 158).

64 In addition to scholars like Nibley and Lewis, Mormons also admire the intellectual gifts and poetic orations of Elder Neal A. Maxwell, currently serving in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of the LDS Church. Maxwell has read Lewis extensively, often quoting Lewis in his talks and books.

supported by evidence as are many of the historical events which call forth neither protest nor demand for further proof. To the believer in the divinity of Christ, the miracles are sufficiently attested; to the unbeliever they appear but as myths and fables.\textsuperscript{66}

Lewis firmly believed in the reality of miracles.\textsuperscript{67} While modernists and secular humanists criticize any claims of supernatural intervention, Lewis refused to regard “any narrative as unhistorical simply on the ground that it includes the miraculous.” He explains, “The real reason why I can accept as historical a story in which a miracle occurs is that I have never found any philosophical grounds for the universal negative proposition that miracles do not happen. I have to decide on quite other grounds (if I decide at all) whether a given narrative is historical or not.”\textsuperscript{68}

\textsuperscript{66} Talmage, James E. \textit{Jesus the Christ} (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1976), p. 149. The first copyright was granted in 1915. The text cited above is the 42nd edition. See also by Talmage, \textit{A Study of the Articles of Faith} (Salt Lake City: LDS Church, 1977), p. 220. The first copyright was granted in 1913.


\textsuperscript{68} \textit{Reflections on the Psalms}, p. 92. Lewis was upset with the direction the Anglican Church was heading. As a layman, he felt he needed to write books that others (like paid clergymen) were unwilling to write. What’s more, he believed his church was proceeding along dangerous paths. “Once the layman was anxious to hide the fact that he believed so much less than the Vicar; he now tends to hide the fact that he believes so much more. Missionary to the priests of one’s own church is an embarrassing role; though I have a horrid feeling that if such mission work is not soon undertaken the future history of the Church of England is likely to be short” (see “Modern Theology and Biblical Criticism,” \textit{The Seeing Eye}, p. 223). Ironically, while Lewis was trying to save the faith, Anglican priests were watering it down: “Lewis’s defense of miracles [in \textit{Miracles}] coincided almost exactly with the late Bishop of Birmingham’s \textit{Rise of Christianity} in which he tried to explain away the miraculous” (see Green and Hooper, \textit{C. S. Lewis: A Biography}, p. 227).
Although Lewis was neither a prophet nor a Mormon, his apologetics can be useful for Latter-day Saints in raising questions about the gospel of Jesus Christ. While Mormons believe that individuals are ultimately converted after receiving a witness of the truth through the Holy Ghost, the seed of a testimony grows through asking questions and searching for answers. They would agree with Lewis's friend, Austin Farrer, who observed:

> It is commonly said that if rational argument is so seldom the cause of conviction, philosophical apologists must largely be wasting their shot. The premise is true, but the conclusion does not follow. For though argument does not create conviction, the lack of it destroys belief. What seems to be proved may not be embraced; but what no one shows the ability to defend is quickly abandoned. Rational argument does not create belief, but it maintains a climate in which belief may flourish. So the apologist who does nothing but defend may play a useful, though preparatory part."69

Mormon educator Robert L. Millet believes that "few people have played that [preparatory] part quite as well as [Lewis] has."70 Lewis's apologetics aim to bring readers to the "hall" of Christianity where the reader then is left to choose which door (or Christian denomination) to enter. As the individual makes this important choice, he stresses two keys: to pray for light and to keep asking which door [or church] is the true one.71

Lewis appeals to Mormons because they believe that he opens up conversations that can help lead inquirers to knock on that door in the hall labeled, "The Church of Jesus


70 Millet, Robert L. "C. S. Lewis: The Man and His Message," a paper delivered on Dec. 4, 1998, at the C. S. Lewis Conference, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

71 Mere Christianity, p. xi.
Christ of Latter-day Saints.” When he states in *Mere Christianity* that “God can show himself to man,”72 Lewis opens a door that might lead to a discussion about Joseph Smith’s first vision of God the Father and His Son. Perhaps the most attractive passages for Mormons are Lewis’s thoughts on glory and the deification of man. They are readily embraced by Latter-day Saints, and in their opinion, if one reads Lewis and agrees with *him*, then why not believe in LDS doctrine which appears (to them) to be very similar?73

Because Lewis was not an LDS apostle or prophet (in the LDS understanding of those terms), his words are not taken to be scripture, and therefore Mormons do not measure doctrinal truths by his words alone. Nevertheless, he offers Mormons insights into what they already believe. According to Millet, Lewis “took difficult theological concepts and reduced them to metaphors and images that are memorable and impactful.”74 Mormon apostle Elder Maxwell has admitted that although he does not look to writers like Lewis and George MacDonald on matters of theology, he “openly acknowledge[s] the catalytic impact of their writings.”75 Another LDS leader, Elder Alexander B. Morrison, observed that Lewis “had such unusual insight into ‘things as they really are’ (Jacob 4:13).”76 At the LDS-owned Ricks College in Rexburg, Idaho, David

72 *Mere Christianity*, p. 128.

73 This connection between Lewis and the Mormon doctrine of deification will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.


75 Maxwell, Neal A. *Things As They Really Are* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1980), p. ix.

76 Morrison, Alexander B. “I Am the Resurrection and the Life,” *Ensign* (April 1995), p. 42. It is worth noting that: 1) As in many other cases, Lewis is quoted in the official periodical of the LDS Church, the *Ensign*, which reaches out to its entire international membership; 2) in this citation, Lewis is credited with offering insights on truth, as defined by a passage in the Book of Mormon; 3) Elder Morrison initially delivered this to a group of prominent Church leaders (The Quorum of the Seventy); and 4) this citation is
Ward teaches an honors course that explores the theological philosophy of C. S. Lewis. According to Ward, Lewis is valuable because he helps students “learn to ask faithful questions about the gospel of Jesus Christ. Lewis enlivens our understanding of the doctrine of Christ, particularly that Christ is a Being of power who can transform natural men and women into beings like Himself.”

Although Latter-day Saints do not go to Lewis to learn what to believe doctrinally, there are many things he has to say that Mormons find helpful. Perhaps most importantly Lewis can teach Mormons how to be better Christians. His books like Screwtape Letters and The Great Divorce give extraordinary insights into the foibles of human nature, and they are presented in a non-threatening, often humorous way. As BYU Academic Vice-President Cheryl Brown declared before a large audience of students, “I love Lewis because he makes me laugh at our human weaknesses.” Of all our mortal flaws, Ezra Taft Benson (thirteenth president of the LDS Church) agreed with Lewis that “pride is the universal sin, the great vice.” Lewis and Benson agree that a key element in pride is enmity towards God and others. The proud usually put themselves first, in the spirit of “my will and not thine be done.” Pride is essentially competitive in nature; the

followed in the article by a quotation from Lewis’s Mere Christianity about the deification of man (“The command Be ye perfect is not idealistic gas...,” p. 160).

77 From a telephone interview with the author on August 27, 1998 and an email letter dated May 27, 1999.


temptation is to elevate oneself above another. President Benson asserted that humility is the remedy for pride—a broken heart and a contrite spirit.  

**Similarities Between Lewis's Theology and LDS Doctrine**

One of the reasons why Lewis has become such a popular author among Mormons is that LDS readers perceive certain similarities between Lewis's theology and their own. Perhaps Lewis's greatest appeal to Mormons is how he articulates his faith in Christ's power to transform man into new creatures. While Lewis obviously did not believe in Mormon doctrines, there are elements of Lewis's faith that Latter-day Saints find attractively similar.

**Faith in Christ.** Both Mormons and Lewis believe that Jesus Christ has the power to save and perfect humanity. "The fundamental principle of our religion is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ," declares Ezra Taft Benson. The Articles of Faith, a brief outline of the basic beliefs of the LDS Church, states that the first principle of the Gospel is "faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." BYU religion professor Andrew Skinner asserted that Mormons "endorse the faith which C. S. Lewis possessed in the Lord Jesus Christ." Mormons admire Lewis’s strength for defending the divinity of Jesus Christ. Often cited by Mormon leaders and scholars is Lewis’s *trilemma*, in which he argues that believing that Jesus was merely a great moral teacher is not an option. Either Jesus was who He claimed to be (the Divine Son of God with power to forgive sins), or He was a

---


82 Article of Faith No. 4.

lunatic (because sane people do not claim what Jesus claimed to be), or He was a devil.\textsuperscript{84}

Likewise, Latter-day Saints affirm that the divinity of Christ is a foundational doctrine. The Book of Mormon testifies that man's faith should be placed in Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God,\textsuperscript{85} who atoned for the sins of humanity,\textsuperscript{86} and who was resurrected.\textsuperscript{87} As President David O. McKay affirmed in 1962, the Divine Sonship of Jesus Christ is a "cornerstone" of the Mormon religion. "The gospel teaches that Christ is the Son of God the Redeemer of the world. No true follower is satisfied to accept him merely as a great teacher, a great reformer, or even as the One Perfect Man. The Man of Galilee is not figuratively, but literally the Son of the Living God."\textsuperscript{88} Elder Neal Maxwell further clarifies the LDS position on this topic in a speech delivered to students and faculty at BYU in 1977:

To deny the resurrection and the validity of [Christ's] atonement...is to deny the very Lord. But such is the case with so much of existential Christianity. Diluted Christianity is not Christianity, it is a feeble attempt to have Christianity without Christ, for it denies the central service of Jesus' life--the Atonement. Those who call themselves Christians but deny the divinity of Jesus cannot seem to tolerate those of us who accept and proclaim the divinity of Christ. Without acknowledging the reality of the Resurrection and the Atonement, believing in the ministry of Jesus would mean slumping into the very Saduceeism which Jesus himself denounced.\textsuperscript{89}

\textsuperscript{84} \textit{Mere Christianity}, pp. 40-41. For an excellent discussion on Lewis's trilemma, see Kreeft, Peter. \textit{Between Heaven and Hell} (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press).

\textsuperscript{85} 1 Nephi 10:17; 11:7, 18, 21, 24; Mosiah 15:2, 3; Alma 6:8; 11:38; 33:17; 34:2.

\textsuperscript{86} 1 Nephi 11:33; 2 Nephi 2:7; 9:7; Jacob 4:11; Alma 7:11; 34:8; Helaman 5:9, 12.

\textsuperscript{87} 1 Nephi 10:11; 2 Nephi 2:8; 26:1; Mosiah 16:7; Alma 33:22; 3 Nephi 11-27.

\textsuperscript{88} McKay, David O. \textit{Conference Report}, April 1962, p. 7.

\textsuperscript{89} Maxwell. "All Hell is Moved," \textit{BYU Speeches of the Year} (Nov. 8, 1977), p. 177.
Lewis, too, rejected a watered-down version of Christianity.⁹⁰ In *Mere Christianity* he calls the simplified view “Christianity-and-water,” which says: “there is a good God in Heaven and everything is all right--leaving out all the difficult and terrible doctrines about sin and hell and the devil, and the redemption.”⁹¹ As Screwtape declared, “A moderated religion is as good...as no religion at all.”⁹²

The imagery of Christ as Aslan in Narnia has attracted many Mormon readers, both young and old. Michael Wilcox, an LDS religion instructor in Salt Lake City, declared that Lewis’s *Chronicles of Narnia* have helped enlighten and expand his understanding about the Savior, Jesus Christ.⁹³ As Lewis teaches in the *Narnia* books that Aslan is the great Bridge Builder,⁹⁴ the Book of Mormon likewise testifies that Christ is the keeper of the gate.⁹⁵ Both attempt by metaphor to symbolize what Jesus said in the New Testament: “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but

---

⁹⁰ *God in the Dock*, p. 99.

⁹¹ *Mere Christianity*, p. 32.


⁹⁵ 2 Nephi 9:41.
by me.”\textsuperscript{96} Aslan is the highest of all High Kings\textsuperscript{97} even as Jesus Christ is the Lord of lords and King of kings.

\textbf{The Concept of Faith.} Latter-day Saints find Lewis’s definitions of faith consistent with their own. For example, Lewis is cited in an article entitled, “Learning Faith,” which was published in the official LDS periodical, \textit{The Ensign}.\textsuperscript{98} Lewis observes that faith can mean either “a settled intellectual assent” or “a trust or confidence” in God.\textsuperscript{99}

Mormonism teaches that faith is a combination of both. Alma instructed that “faith is not to have a perfect knowledge of things; therefore if ye have faith ye hope for things which are not seen, which are true.”\textsuperscript{100} When one has “a seed” of belief, if he will “awake and arouse [his] faculties, even to experiment upon” and “exercise” that faith, the seed will grow (if it is a good seed). Even as seeds must be planted, nourished, and maintained, so it is with faith; effort and work are demanded.\textsuperscript{101}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{96} John 14:6. Aslan tells a thirsty Jill in \textit{The Silver Chair} (pp. 16-18) that there is no other stream to drink from; cf. John 7:37 (“If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink”) and John 4:14; 6:35.
\textsuperscript{98} Sorensen, Mollie H. “Learning Faith,” \textit{Ensign} (March 1985), p. 27.
\textsuperscript{100} Alma 32:21. Compare also with Hebrews 11:1; John 20:29.
\textsuperscript{101} See Alma 32:27-43.
\end{flushleft}
This belief finds confirmation in Lewis’s assertion that “one must train the habit of faith” through prayer, study, and church attendance. Lewis defines faith as “the art of holding on to things your reason has once accepted, in spite of your changing moods.”

Mormons recognize that sometimes a believer will feel completely alone, even abandoned. This is a test or trial of faith that may come during one’s darkest hour. Hence they appreciate such observations as Screwtape’s lament that, “[Satan’s] cause is never more in danger than when a human, no longer desiring, but still intending, to do [God’s] will, looks round upon a universe from which every trace of [God] seems to have vanished, and asks why he has been forsaken, and still obeys.”

Repentance. In Mormon theology repentance is the second principle of the Gospel. Because all humanity has fallen from grace through sin, everyone needs to repent. God granted mortals the ability to choose for themselves. Mormon belief in free will finds confirmation in Lewis’s argument that evil exists because man has the freedom to choose to disobey God’s commands. If no one could have been lost, no one could have been saved. As Lewis observes, apparently God thought it was worth the risk for us to have our moral agency to choose.

Mormons agree with Lewis that the basic formula of becoming a Christian is that mankind can be saved through repentance, which is made possible only through the

---

102 *Mere Christianity*, p. 109.


104 Ether 12:6; Doctrine and Covenants 122.

105 *Screwtape Letters*, p. 39.

106 Articles of Faith, No. 4.

107 *Mere Christianity*, p. 37, 38. (Compare with 2 Nephi 2:11-13, 23-25.)
atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ.\textsuperscript{108} They find their own assessment of human nature confirmed by Lewis's statement, "No man knows how bad he is till he has tried very hard to be good."\textsuperscript{109} An essential step is recognizing one's sins and shortcomings and having a desire to repent or change.

According to Lewis, the steps of repentance include 1) recognizing you have been on the wrong path; 2) preparing to begin a new life; 3) surrendering to God; 4) unlearning bad habits; 5) killing a part of yourself.\textsuperscript{110} Man's salvation or "rescue [depends on] being put back on the right road."\textsuperscript{111} Because of sin, all mortals find themselves in debt, or in a hole.\textsuperscript{112} Mormon leaders often refer to similar metaphors.\textsuperscript{113}

According to Lewis, the process of repentance is rigorous, demanding, and painful. In \textit{The Voyage of the Dawn Treader}, a young boy, Eustace, because of his greed and selfishness, becomes a dragon. He attempts to scratch off his scaly, monstrous skin by himself, but it is impossible. Finally he is undragoned, but only through the help of Aslan, who tears off Eustace's dragon skin, washes him, and gives him new clothes.\textsuperscript{114} Similarly, in \textit{The Great Divorce}, Lewis describes a ghost who was being tormented by a red lizard on his shoulder. After much deliberation, the ghost finally gives in, admits that he wants the lizard killed, and asks for God's help. An agonizing transformation takes

\textsuperscript{108} \textit{Mere Christianity}, p. 44.

\textsuperscript{109} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 109.

\textsuperscript{110} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 44-45.

\textsuperscript{111} \textit{Great Divorce}, p. 6.

\textsuperscript{112} \textit{Mere Christianity}, p. 44.


\textsuperscript{114} \textit{Voyage of Dawn Treader}, pp. 75, 87-91.
place: the ghost becomes a “new-made man,” and the lizard turns into a shining stallion.115

These images are appealing to the Latter-day Saints’ perspective of becoming a spiritual creature through the atonement of Christ. So long as man desires to repent, exercise faith and humility, he can realize the goal of returning to live with God. When he chooses Christ, he chooses to be changed.116 The process of putting off the natural man is made possible “only through the grace and atonement of Christ.”117 According to Millet, “The greatest contribution [of Lewis’s writings is] his treatment of Christ and of [Christ’s] power to change us, not just superficially but from the inside out.”118 Such an approach differs from modern views of human psychology and public policy. President Benson explained:

The Lord works from the inside out. The world works from the outside in. The world would take people out of the slums. Christ takes the slums out of people, and then they take themselves out of the slums. The world would mold men by changing their environment. Christ changes men, who then change their environment. The world would shape human behavior, but Christ can change human nature.119

115 Great Divorce, pp. 98-105.


Lewis speaks of a “new self,” “a new kind of man” available through Christ.\textsuperscript{120} In order to become a new creature, we need to be ploughed up and planted with new seeds.\textsuperscript{121} Mormon readers find this attractive because LDS theology teaches that when man surrenders his whole natural self and repents of his sins, then God promises to give him a new self. He experiences a change of heart, he is born again, and he becomes a new creature.\textsuperscript{122}

Mormons agree with Lewis that the process of repentance will be “long and in parts very painful.”\textsuperscript{123} In reference to repentance, Lewis writes of “the power of always trying again.”\textsuperscript{124} Similarly Elder Bruce R. McConkie explains that being born again “doesn’t happen in an instant, suddenly.” But rather, it is “a gradual thing, except in a few isolated instances that are so miraculous they get written up in the scriptures.”\textsuperscript{125} President Benson cautioned: “We must be careful, as we seek to become more and more godlike, that we do not become discouraged and lose hope. Becoming Christ-like is a lifetime pursuit and very often involves growth and change that is slow, almost imperceptible.”\textsuperscript{126} Thus patience, hope, and enduring to the end are required.\textsuperscript{127}

\textsuperscript{120} Mere Christianity, p. 167.


\textsuperscript{122} Alma 5:14, 26; Mosiah 27:25-26.

\textsuperscript{123} Mere Christianity, p. 160; Kimball, Spencer W. Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982), p. 29.

\textsuperscript{124} Mere Christianity, p. 79.

\textsuperscript{125} McConkie, Bruce R. “Jesus Christ and Him Crucified,” BYU Devotional Speeches of the Year (Provo, Utah: BYU, 1976), pp. 399-401.


\textsuperscript{127} 1 Nephi 13:37; 2 Nephi 31:20; Alma 5:13; 3 Nephi 15:9; Moroni 3:3; Doctrine and
This progression towards perfection will continue after mortality. Lewis states, “The job will not be completed in this life: but He means to get us as far as possible before death.”

Likewise Mormons have been taught by President Joseph Fielding Smith:

> Salvation does not come all at once; we are commanded to be perfect even as our Father in heaven is perfect. It will take us ages to accomplish this end, for there will be greater progress beyond the grave, and it will be there that the faithful will overcome all things, and receive all things, even the fulness of the Father’s glory.

---

**The Deification of Man.** What does repentance lead to? Glory, replies Lewis. In fact, Christ was not a prodigy but a pioneer. “He is the first of His kind; He will not be the last.” Statements like this are perhaps the most intriguing passages of Lewis’s works for Mormon readers in light of the LDS doctrines regarding the “deification” of men and women. Mormons cannot help but marvel at Lewis’s seemingly sympathetic insights on this topic.

Lewis wrote:

> [God] really does want to fill the universe with a lot of loathsome little replicas of Himself--creatures whose life, on its miniature scale, will be qualitatively like His own, not because He absorbed them but because their wills freely conform to His....He wants servants who can finally become

Covenants 67:13.

---

128 *Mere Christianity*, p. 159.


130 *Miracles*, p. 178.

sons...[God] wants a world full of beings united to Him but still distinct.\textsuperscript{132}

According to Lewis, the whole purpose of Christianity is to make us into “little Christs.”\textsuperscript{133} God’s “grand enterprise” is to transform carnal creatures into gods.\textsuperscript{134} While we are far too easily pleased and distracted by food, drink, and sex,\textsuperscript{135} God has established absolute perfection as our goal.\textsuperscript{136} You may think that you have only a cottage to look forward to, but God plans to make you into a palace.\textsuperscript{137} Lewis’s writings about glory and the potential of each individual are extensive.\textsuperscript{138} However, Mormon readers are most familiar with the following passage:

The command \textit{Be ye perfect} is not idealistic gas. Nor is it a command to do the impossible. He is going to make us into creatures that can obey that command. He said (in the Bible) that we were “gods” and He is going to make good His words. If we let Him—for we can prevent Him, if we choose—He will make the feeblest and filthiest of us into a god or goddess, a dazzling, radiant, immortal creature, pulsating all through with such energy and joy and wisdom and love as we cannot now imagine, a bright stainless mirror which reflects back to God perfectly (though, of course, on a smaller scale) His own boundless power and delight and goodness.\textsuperscript{139}

\textsuperscript{132} Screwtape Letters, p. 38.

\textsuperscript{133} Mere Christianity, pp. 138, 149, 151, 152, 155, 174.

\textsuperscript{134} A Grief Observed, p. 85.

\textsuperscript{135} A Mind Awake, p. 168.

\textsuperscript{136} Mere Christianity, p. 158, 160; Matthew 5:48; 3 Nephi 12:48.

\textsuperscript{137} Mere Christianity, p. 160. This passage and the paragraph that follows it are the most quoted by Mormon authors and leaders from Lewis’s works.

\textsuperscript{138} Great Divorce, p. 125; Mere Christianity, pp. 121-122, 149, 154, 172; God in the Dock, pp. 112-113; The World’s Last Night, p. 9.

\textsuperscript{139} Mere Christianity, p. 160.
The connections between Lewis and LDS doctrine on the divine potential of man are easily made by Mormon students. President Benson has stated that “repentance is a step by step, steady, and consistent movement toward godliness.” Sometimes, however, our progress is an “almost imperceptible growth.”\(^{140}\) God’s whole design and purpose is to perfect us. “This is my work and my glory, to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.”\(^{141}\) Mormons believe that eternal life, exaltation, and godhood are all gifts which the Eternal Father desires to bestow upon His children.\(^{142}\) As Millet has declared:

> We are becoming here what we will be hereafter. That is to say, discipleship is the training camp for Godhood. By living the gospel in this life, we are quickened by a portion of that celestial glory which shall be bestowed in fulness in the resurrection (Doctrine and Covenants 88:29). We are in preparation now for greater things, but we must be equipped and our souls adapted for such a transformation. We cannot be restored from negligence and indifference to glory and honor. In the words of President Lorenzo Snow, we shall find that “in the morning of the resurrection we will possess those acquisitions only which we acquired in this world! Godliness cannot be conferred but must be acquired.”\(^{143}\)

In the light of LDS belief in deification, passages like the following are naturally attractive to Mormons:

---

\(^{140}\) Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, pp. 71-72.

\(^{141}\) Moses 1:39.

\(^{142}\) Former LDS Church President Spencer W. Kimball has stated: “Man is a god in embryo and has in him the seeds of godhood” (Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, p. 28). See also: Romans 8:14-18; Revelations 3:21; Doctrine and Covenants 14:7; 75:5; 76:50-70; 88:4; 132:1-24. See also: Robinson, Stephen. Are Mormons Christian? pp. 60-70 (CSL is cited on pp. 63-65); McConkie, Bruce R. Mormon Doctrine, pp. 256-258; 321-322.

It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you talk to may one day be a creature, which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship....There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations--these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit, immortal horrors or everlasting splendors.\textsuperscript{144}

Mormon readers find certain elements in Lewis’s Narnia metaphor quite similar to their theological perspective. In Narnia there are many rulers (or gods), including the Emperor-over-the-Sea (God the Father); Aslan, King of Narnia (God the Son, Jesus Christ); and the four Pevensie children (each are kings and queens). In fact, Peter is referred to as the Great High King. The children represent humanity and the opportunity to become sons and daughters of God who can one day rule and reign as kings and queens, gods and goddesses in the eternities. Yet, like the Pevensie children, humanity will always be under the direction of God the Father (the Emperor) and the Lord Jesus (Aslan).\textsuperscript{145}

Lewis says that to become “new men” we must lose what we now call ourselves. Christ’s “will is to become ours and we are to think His thoughts, to ‘have the mind of Christ.’”\textsuperscript{146} Such comments remind Latter-day Saints of what Elder McConkie has written: “To know God is to think what He thinks, to feel what He feels, to have the power He possesses, to comprehend the truths He understands, and to do what He does.

\textsuperscript{144} Weight of Glory, pp. 18-19.

\textsuperscript{145} For those who wish to challenge the validity of this metaphor will be questioning the very foundation of Narnia. Clearly, the Emperor represents God the Father and Aslan symbolizes Christ. Paul Ford has taken the liberty to reformulate statements in the Chronicles of Narnia into a Christian Creed (see Companion to Narnia, p. 118).

\textsuperscript{146} Mere Christianity, p. 173.
Those who know God become like Him, and have His kind of life, which is eternal life.”

The question must be asked: What did Lewis truly mean when he writes about glory and becoming gods and goddesses? As an LDS scholar and dean of religious education at BYU, Millet confesses, “I honestly don’t know what Lewis meant fully (and certainly not what he understood or intended) by [Lewis’s] statements” on this topic. Most non-LDS critics would say that Lewis certainly would not agree with the Mormon doctrine of deification. In his preface to *Mere Christianity*, Lewis declared that his beliefs were outlined in the Book of Common Prayer. The Catechism of the Book of Common Prayer states, “The divine Son became human, so that in him human beings might be adopted as children of God, and be made heirs of God’s kingdom.” By so doing Jesus opened “the way of eternal life.” While there is no mention in the Catechism or the classical Christian creeds of man’s potential to be gods and goddesses, questions can be raised about what it means to be “heirs of God’s kingdom.” Lewis himself wrote, “The Son of God became man to enable men to become the sons of God.” The problem of interpretation again arises. While it may seem clear to some readers, others may read Lewis’s musings on glory and think of something entirely different. According to non-LDS scholar William Luther White, Lewis’s “conceptions of god and immortal are interchangeable [see CSL’s *The Discarded Image*]. Lewis’s reflections on life after death are in several ways more dependent upon Greek categories of thought than they are upon biblical thought. But to refer to people as gods, I think, is bound to prove more confusing.

---


150 *Mere Christianity*, p. 139.
than helpful."\textsuperscript{151} Assuming that White’s view is correct, then Lewis’s musings on glory would point simply to immortality and not godhood (in the sense of becoming as God is). But all of this raises the question: What is godhood? If men and women were to become gods and goddesses, would they then in fact become like God? If through Christ men and women become partakers of His glory, receive immortality and eternal life, and are adopted into God’s family as heirs to His Kingdom, is this not godhood? What does it mean to be a god? While Latter-day Saints believe they have answers to these questions, most Christians would label such thinking heretical. According to Mormon scholar Evan Stephenson, “Godliness to Lewis means to possess power, love, wisdom, beauty, etc., and to dwell in heaven, not that we ourselves will ever attain such attributes as omniscience, omnipotence, or omnipresence.”\textsuperscript{152}

\textit{The Holy Ghost.} Mormons believe that baptism by water is followed by the baptism of fire or spirit. Mormons call refer to this as receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost. In the LDS view, the Holy Ghost is the third member of the Godhead who testifies of the Father and Son.\textsuperscript{153} Joseph Smith taught:

\begin{quote}
The Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us. A man may receive the Holy Ghost, and it may descend upon him and not tarry with him.\textsuperscript{154}
\end{quote}

Mormons believe that the Holy Ghost (or Holy Spirit) bears witness of truth. He is sometimes referred to as the still small voice, which at times may whisper guidance.


\textsuperscript{152} Stephenson, p. 49.

\textsuperscript{153} John 15:26; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 2 Nephi 31:18; 3 Nephi 11:36; 16:3; 28:11; Ether 12:41; Doctrine and Covenants 20:27.

\textsuperscript{154} Doctrine and Covenants 130:22-23.
through the conscience. The Holy Ghost may also work through feelings such as a burning in the bosom.\textsuperscript{155} Those who read the Book of Mormon are invited to pray for guidance and to ask God if the Book of Mormon is true. Latter-day Saints believe that “if ye shall ask God with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, [God] will manifest the truth of it unto you by the power of the Holy Ghost.”\textsuperscript{156}

For example, those who investigate the Book of Mormon and the LDS Church are invited to follow a process much like the one Lewis suggests in his Preface to \textit{Mere Christianity}. When trying to determine which Christian denomination to join, he advises:

\begin{quote}
You must keep praying for light: and, of course, even in the hall, you must begin trying to obey the rules which are common to the whole house. And above all you must be asking which door is the true one; not which pleases you best by its paint and paneling. In plain language, the question should never be: “Do I like that kind of service?” but “Are these doctrines true: Is holiness here? Does my conscience move me toward this?”\textsuperscript{157}
\end{quote}

Mormons would say that the Holy Ghost can “move” or direct an individual by promptings given to the mind and heart.

Lewis subscribed to the Christian Creeds, which would include the Quicunque Vult (commonly called the Creed of Saint Athansius). This creed attempts to explain the nature of the Godhead or Trinity:

\begin{quote}
And the Catholic Faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity is Unity, neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance. For there is one Person of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one, the Glory equal, the Majesty
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{156} Moroni 10:4 (3-5).

\textsuperscript{157} \textit{Mere Christianity}, pp. xi-xxi (italics added).
co-eternal....The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son, neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.\textsuperscript{158}

Lewis attempted to describe the Holy Spirit and the concept of the Trinity in \emph{Mere Christianity}:

In addition to the Father and Son, there is a “third Person,” called “the Holy Ghost or the ‘spirit’ of God. Do not be worried or surprised if you find it (or Him) rather vaguer or more shadowy in your mind than the other two. I think there is a reason why that must be so. In the Christian life you are not usually looking at Him: He is always acting through you. If you think of the Father as something ‘out there,’ in front of you, and of the Son as someone standing at your side, helping you pray, trying to turn you into another son, then you have to think of the third Person as something inside you, or behind you.”\textsuperscript{159}

Lewis’s apologetic writings offer some insights about the Holy Spirit which resonate with Mormons.\textsuperscript{160} In his essay titled, “The Seeing Eye,” Lewis writes about “that voice which speaks in your conscience and in some of your intensest joys, which is sometimes so obstinately silent, sometimes so easily silenced, and then at other times so loud and emphatic, is in fact the closest contact you have with the mystery [God]; and

\textsuperscript{158} Book of Common Prayer, p. 864-865.

\textsuperscript{159} \textit{Mere Christianity}, p. 136.

\textsuperscript{160} There are also many possible allusions to the Holy Spirit in \textit{The Chronicles of Narnia}. Sometimes it is may be referred to as Aslan’s breath. Perhaps the most vivid (and Mormon-like) description is when Shasta hears the Large Voice which is not loud but is large and very deep. Shasta is convinced the Large Voice is real when he feels the warm breath on his hand and face (\textit{The Horse and His Boy}, p. 157). For other references see: \textit{The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe}, pp. 147, 152, 159, 164; \textit{Prince Caspian}, pp. 124-125, 133, 138, 148, 153, 174, 186, 213; \textit{The Voyage of the Dawn Treader}, pp. 159-160; \textit{The Silver Chair}, pp. 13, 22-23, 31, 201, 210-211; \textit{The Horse and His Boy}, p. 138; \textit{The Magician’s Nephew}, pp. 94, 97, 100, 104, 108, 116; \textit{The Last Battle}, pp. 149, 165. For more on the topic of the Holy Spirit in Lewis’s \textit{Narnia} writings, see: Ford, Paul F. \textit{Companion to Narnia}, pp. 229-232.
therefore finally to be trusted, obeyed, feared, and desired more than all other things.”\textsuperscript{161} That last phrase of Lewis’s is similar to the a phrase of the former LDS apostle, Elder McConkie, who declared that the one thing we should want in this life more than anything else is the gift of the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{162}

Latter-day Saints agree with Lewis that the Holy Ghost is significant, because He acts as a guide to revelation and truth.\textsuperscript{163} As Lewis asks, “If we did meet God in outer space, how would we recognize Him?” Mormons would add, “How do we recognize truth?” According to the New Testament, Peter was able to discern that Jesus was indeed the promised Messiah through personal revelation.\textsuperscript{164} One of the most reliable ways a person can know God or spiritual things and to discern eternal truths is through the Holy Ghost, or what Lewis calls “the seeing eye.”\textsuperscript{165} Latter-day Saints agree with Lewis on that point. Joseph Smith explained that the primary effect of the Holy Spirit was “pure intelligence. It is [a] powerful [tool] in expanding the mind, enlightening the understanding, and storing the intellect with present knowledge.”\textsuperscript{166}

\textsuperscript{161} The Seeing Eye, p. 229. Lewis also emphasizes the importance of “listening to that other voice” in Mere Christianity, p. 154.

\textsuperscript{162} McConkie, Bruce R. A New Witness for the Articles of Faith, p. 253.

\textsuperscript{163} In a conversation with a friend Lewis explained that the Holy Ghost’s “principal mission is to lead us to Christ” (Walsh, Chad. C. S. Lewis: Apostle to the Skeptics, p. 78).

\textsuperscript{164} Matthew 16:13-18. See also: Talmage. Jesus the Christ, pp. 360-363.


\textsuperscript{166} Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 149. See also: Alma 32:28; Doctrine and Covenants 11:13; Discourses on the Holy Ghost, comp. by N.B. Lundwall (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1959).
Some Mormons may unduly focus on the experience of feeling the Holy Ghost. The New Testament speaks of the fruit of the spirit as including love, peace, and joy.\textsuperscript{167} Sometimes LDS scriptures speak of the burning-in-the-bosom sensation.\textsuperscript{168} However, Lewis’s faith did not rely on such experiences, but rather he claimed that his faith was based on reason.\textsuperscript{169} His personal accounts of his conversion first to theism and then to Christianity describe these experiences as being “unemotional.”\textsuperscript{170} Lewis distrusted his emotions and feelings.\textsuperscript{171} It could be indigestion, something that you ate. Perhaps this caution about emotions could temper the anxiety some Latter-day Saints feel regarding spiritual experiences. One LDS apostle admitted that many Mormons have become frustrated because they have not had that burning-in-the-bosom experience.\textsuperscript{172}

\textit{Salvation.} According to Lewis, salvation comes through both faith and works. Questioning which is required to enter heaven is “like asking which blade in a pair of

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{167} Galatians 5:22; Doctrine and Covenants 6:23; 11:13.
  \item \textsuperscript{168} Luke 24:32; Doctrine and Covenants 9:7-9; 85:6.
  \item \textsuperscript{169} \textit{Mere Christianity}, p. 108.
  \item \textsuperscript{170} \textit{Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life}, pp. 224, 228, 237.
  \item \textsuperscript{171} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 4; \textit{Mere Christianity}, p. 84, 108. As I noted in the Preface of this thesis, there seems to be some paradox to Lewis’s thinking. Although he distrusts emotions and claims to base his faith on reason, recall his statement in \textit{Screwtape Letters} (p. 61) about the importance of acting upon feelings. Another interesting passage is in \textit{Letters to Malcolm} (p. 110). While reasoning and speculating, Lewis suddenly says, “I \textit{feel}--can you work it out for me and tell me if it is more than a feeling?--that to make the life of the blessed dead strictly timeless is inconsistent with the resurrection of the body” [Lewis himself italicized the word, \textit{feel}]. Thus, Lewis is following (to a certain degree) that sixth sense, the Seeing Eye (as he calls it), as he tries to understand spiritual things.
  \item \textsuperscript{172} Jensen, Jay E. “Have I Received an Answer from the Spirit?” \textit{Ensign} (April 1989), pp. 21-22. Jensen does not identify the name of the apostle in his story.
\end{itemize}
scissors is most necessary.” He cites Philippians 2:12-13 to confirm his view: “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you....”

Mormons view salvation in a similar way. They believe that salvation comes through the atonement of Jesus Christ. Although every mortal falls short of perfection, Christ’s atoning sacrifice makes repentance and forgiveness possible. However, faith alone is not enough. We are required to make every effort to obey God’s commandments and repent of our weaknesses. The Book of Mormon teaches that “it is by grace we are saved, after all we can do.”

**Happiness and Joy.** Lewis says that men are born for “infinite happiness.” Joy is something that mortals can experience. In *The Great Divorce* he states, “No soul that seriously and constantly desires joy will ever miss it.” Lewis notes that the “stabs” of joy we experience are meant to point us to God. However, discipline and self-restraint are required: “For any happiness, even in this world, quite a lot of restraint is going to be necessary.” After the transformation into glorified, immortal creatures, Lewis says we will experience joy “which we cannot now imagine.” Happiness is an essential part of

---

173 *Mere Christianity*, p. 115.

174 1 Nephi 10:6; 2 Nephi 2:5.

175 2 Nephi 25:23.

176 *Great Divorce*, p. 61.

177 Ibid., p. 73.

178 *Surprised by Joy*, p. 238.

179 *Mere Christianity*, p. 78.

180 Ibid., p. 160.

Mormons share Lewis’s philosophy that joy can be experienced during mortality. In the Book of Mormon the prophet Lehi declares, “Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy.” But an individual chooses between happiness or sorrow, joy or misery. Nibley has written: “If the world is a dark and dreary place, it is because we prefer it that way, for there is nothing in the world that can keep man from joy if joy is what he wants.” But once again effort is involved. Joseph Smith taught, “Happiness is the object and design of our existence; and will be the end thereof, if we pursue the path that leads to it; and this path is virtue, uprightness, faithfulness, holiness, and keeping all the commandments of God.” Latter-day Saints agree with Lewis that earthly joy does not compare with the eternal happiness that awaits those who desire it. According to Mormonism, a fulness of joy will come only after being resurrected and inheriting the kingdom of God. Furthermore, Joseph Smith said that if we could get just a glimpse of the glory and joy of the heavenly life we would want to die right now.

---

181 *Letters to Malcolm*, p. 93.

182 2 Nephi 2:25.


184 *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 255-256.


Life on Other Worlds. According to Mormonism, there is an innumerable number of earths. In the Pearl of Great Price, God told Moses, “Only an account of this earth, and the inhabitants thereof, give I unto you. For behold there are many worlds that have passed away by the word of my power. And there are many that now stand, and innumerable are they unto man; but all things are numbered unto me, for they are mine and I know them.” Mormons believe that there are other worlds and that there is life on them. According to the Doctrine and Covenants, God the Father created many worlds through Jesus Christ, and “the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God.” Our particular earth, the one on which Christ was sent to work out the infinite and eternal atonement, has seen greater wickedness among her people than has been the case on any other planet. Hence Latter-day Saints believe that Christ’s atonement is both infinite and universal. He died not just for us on earth but for all of God’s creations.

Naturally, Mormons are fascinated with Lewis’s thoughts on this topic. In Mere Christianity, Lewis refers to a plurality of worlds. In fact, there may be intelligent life

---

187 Pearl of Great Price-Moses 7:30. See also: Discourses of Brigham Young, p. 20.

188 Pearl of Great Price-Moses 1:33.

189 Doctrine and Covenants 76:24.

190 Pearl of Great Price-Moses 7:29-36. See also: Heb. 1:1-4; Smith, Joseph Fielding. Doctrines of Salvation Vol. 1 (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954), pp. 72-74. Also in Mormon Doctrine (p. 212 ) Elder McConkie writes, “We are blessed with the knowledge that ours is not the only earth. Rather, Christ acting under the direction of the Father is the Creator of worlds without number. Moses was permitted to see many of these earths, to learn that they are inhabited by spirit children of the Father, and to receive the revelation that it is the Lord’s work and glory to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of the inhabitants of all these earths.”


192 Mere Christianity, p. 122; The Weight of Glory, p. 17.
on those planets; perhaps creatures who are more God-like than us. 193 According to Lewis, some people think that if a rational species were discovered on another planet, the discovery would be “fatal to Christian theology.” Perhaps there are “rationally inhabited planets [which] are to be had by the million.” If so, does this oppose Christian doctrine? It is a typical Lewisian approach: ask a big question and then speculate and philosophize over it. In April 1958, the Christian Herald published Lewis’s article, “Will We Lose God in Outer Space?” Lewis says that the question (which may become quite “formidable”) focuses on the doctrine of the Incarnation, the belief that God became a man (Jesus Christ) and offered Himself as a sacrifice so that humanity could be saved from sin and death. “Why [would God care] for us men more than for others? If we find ourselves to be but one among a million races, scattered through a million spheres, how can we without absurd arrogance, believe ourselves to have been uniquely favored?” 194

Elsewhere, Lewis speculates that perhaps if we did find a race of rational species on another planet they might be innocent and pure. 195 They would likely be puzzled if we related the story of Christ’s Incarnation and Redemption. “We should have much to learn from such people and nothing to teach them. If we were wise, we should fall at their feet. But probably we should be unable to ‘take it.’ We’d find some reason for exterminating them.” Or, says Lewis, we may find a race who has also struggled with the forces of good and evil. Perhaps, like us, God had exercised his supernatural powers to interfere with


195 In fact, Lewis observes, they may be more godly than we are (Mere Christianity, p. 123).
their history. Maybe they were familiar with the pattern of Christ. But Lewis is unsure. “God may have other ways—how should I be able to imagine them?—of redeeming a lost world.” Perhaps that race needs redemption, and we should send missionaries to “preach the Gospel to them. For if they are rational, capable both of sin and repentance, they are our brethren, whatever they look like.” Alas, Lewis admits, this is all “in the realm of fantastic speculation.”

Either way, Lewis sees possible discoveries through space exploration as neither assets nor liabilities to the Christian faith. “Christians and their opponents again and again expect that some new discovery will either turn matters of faith into matters of knowledge or else reduce them to patent absurdities. But it has never happened. What we believe always remains intellectually possible; it never becomes intellectually compulsive.”

Lewis’s musings on the topic of life on other worlds appeals to Latter-day Saints because he logically sheds light on a doctrine they already believe in. Mormons are not afraid of scientific exploration in outer space because they already believe that mankind on this earth is not alone in this vast universe. Latter-day Saints believe that they have answers to many of the questions that Lewis poses: that God loves all of His creations, that mankind on earth is not uniquely favored, that compared to the wickedness of this earth other planets’ inhabitants are more righteous, and that Christ’s atonement is universal. Mormons agree with Lewis that regardless of whether or not scientific exploration proves the existence of life on other planets ultimately does not affect the validity of the gospel of Jesus Christ or the testimonies of His faithful disciples.

Mormons admire and embrace C. S. Lewis because he was an intellectual who also believed in God. He viewed life through the gospel perspective and humbly bore witness to those truths which enlightened his mind. Furthermore, they are impressed to find a


197 “Will We Lose God in Outer Space?” Christian Herald, p. 76.
non-Mormon writer who seems to agree with some of their doctrines, often articulating their peculiar beliefs in remarkable language. Lewis’s writings help Mormons ask faithful questions about gospel principles and gain deeper insights on how to be better disciples of Christ.
Conclusion

During his lifetime C. S. Lewis chose to speak to Christians in plain and simple language that they could understand. Lewis taught and defended truths that he felt were discernible through reason. Morality, free will, and the divinity of Jesus Christ were fundamental to his core beliefs and teachings. His writings have attracted Christian readers from many denominations, including those of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Through references to Lewis by LDS Church leaders and authors, Mormons have been attracted to Lewis’s writings in significant ways. General Authorities have used his thoughts and analogies to illustrate certain gospel principles. Many Latter-day Saints have been impressed by the similarities they perceive between Lewis’s theology and Mormonism. Such appreciation has led to Lewis’s becoming one of the most quoted non-LDS authors in General Conference talks and various Mormon publications.

While Lewis was aware of the Latter-day Saint religion, he chose to worship in the Church of England. Through his writings, however, he entered into a much broader fellowship with millions of Christians around the world. His thoughts on “mere Christianity” have created an enormous common ground on which many have stood. Among those who have set foot upon that soil are the Latter-day Saints.

Given their open-minded approach to theological reflection, Mormons not only read authors like Lewis but also feel comfortable citing his insights on human nature and Christian discipleship. Although they do not agree with everything he says, Mormons treasure particular Lewisian teachings that have a familiar ring of truth to them. Something deep inside them (which they call the Holy Ghost) resonates when they read certain passages of Lewis’s writings.

This study has described Lewis’s theology, the Mormons’ discovery of Lewis, and the spread of his reputation among the LDS membership. He has become a popular
author in the LDS community largely through numerous references to his writings in General Conference talks and books by leaders like Elder Neal A. Maxwell. While Mormons do not look to Lewis as an authority on doctrinal matters, many acknowledge his valuable insights on how to be better Christians. His ideas challenge and enliven their understanding of Mormon doctrines. They admire Lewis’s courage for being a public intellectual who believed in God and for articulating both the stabs of joy and the adversities that he experienced. His words comfort those in the process of being undragoned by Aslan, reminding them that somehow even children can become kings and queens in Narnia.
Bibliography


_____.“Beware of Pride,” Ensign (May 1989).

_____.“Born of God,” Ensign (November 1985).

_____Come Unto Christ (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1983).

_____.Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988).


Carnell, Corbin Scott. Bright Shadow of Reality: C. S. Lewis and the Feeling Intellect (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974).

Christensen, Michael J. C. S. Lewis on Scripture (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1979).


Discourses on the Holy Ghost, comp. by N. B. Lundwall (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1959).


——. Richard Evans’ Quote Book (Salt Lake City: Publisher’s Press, 1971).

Eyring, Henry. Reflections of a Scientist, ed. by Harden Romney Eyring (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1983).


Gospel Principles (Salt Lake City: LDS Church, 1978).


Jensen, Jay E. “Have I Received an Answer from the Spirit?” *Ensign* (April 1989).


______. *Miracle of Forgiveness* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969).

______. *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982).


______. *C. S. Lewis for the Third Millenium* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1994).


_____The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe (New York: Macmillan, 1950).
_____The Pilgrim's Regress (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1933).
_____The Silver Chair (New York: Macmillan, 1953).
_____“Will We Lose God in Outer Space?” Christian Herald (April 1958).

Marshall, Don. “Jeffrey R. Holland: A Style All His Own,” Ensign (June 1983).

Maxwell, Neal A. “All Hell is Moved,” BYU Speeches of the Year (Nov. 8, 1977).
_____A More Excellent Way (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1967).
_____A Time to Choose (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1972).
McConkie, Bruce. *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1985).


______.“Putting Off the Natural Man,” *Ensign* (June 1992).


______. *Nibley on the Timely and the Timeless* (Provo and Salt Lake City, Utah: BYU and Bookcraft, 1978).


______. *Since Cumorah* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1967).


Reynolds, Charlotte Teresa. “Poem to C. S. Lewis,” *Exponent II* (Summer 1980).


Sibley, Brian. *C. S. Lewis: Through the Shadowlands* (Grand Rapids: Revell, 1994).

Sill, Sterling W. *The Three Infinities: To Know, To Do, To Be* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969).


_____.*The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, compiled by Dean C. Jessee (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1984).


Talmage, James E. *Jesus the Christ* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1976). The first copyright was granted in 1915. The text cited is the 42nd edition.

_____. *A Study of the Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City: LDS Church, 1977).


West, Emerson R. *Profiles of the Presidents* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1977).


Wilcox, Steven Michael. "Reality, Romanticism, and Reason: Perspectives on a C. S. Lewis Pedagogy" (University of Colorado, 1982), a doctoral dissertation in the School of Education.


Young, Brigham. Discourses of Brigham Young, sel. by John A. Widstoe (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1954).
Appendix A

Note: The following is a chronological summary of some of the references to C. S. Lewis in Mormon publications, scholarly work done on Lewis, and other miscellaneous items relating to the history of Lewis and Mormonism. Page numbers are given below for each reference where Lewis is cited or where either his name or one of his works is mentioned.

1962


1963


1967


1968


1969


CSL’s Christian Reflections (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967) is reviewed.


Sill, Sterling W. The Three Infinities: To Know, To Do, To Be (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969), p. 201.

1970


1971


Hanks, Marion D. “Moving into Marriage,” The Gift of Self (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1974), pp. 263-264. This was an address given by Elder Hanks in an Area Conference at Manchester, England, August 1971.


Madsen, Truman. “The Sacramental Life,” The Highest in Us (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1978), p. 35. This address was given in 1971 as a James E. Talmage Lecture at BYU.

1972


Maxwell, Neal A. A Time to Choose (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1972), p. 54.

Maxwell, Neal A. “To the Youth of Zion,” To the Glory of God: Mormon Essays on Great Issues, ed. by Truman G. Madsen and Charles D. Tate, Jr. (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1972), p. 100.


1973
Winter Semester at BYU: a student-run class is offered on C. S. Lewis. Guest lecturers include: Arthur Henry King, Dennis Rasmussen, Truman Madsen, and Neal A. Maxwell.


1973 (cont.)
Maxwell, Neal A. *The Smallest Part* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1973), pp. 6, 15, 17, 18-19, 21, 23, 24, 36, 44, 45, 56, 71, 76.

1974


1975


1976
Maxwell, Neal A. *Deposition of a Disciple* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1976), p. 47.

1977

Dunn, Paul. “We Have Been There All The Time,” *Ensign* (November 1977), p. 24. This address was given during the October General Conference.

Maxwell, Neal A. “All Hell is Moved,” *BYU Speeches of the Year* (Nov. 8, 1977).


1978
1978 (cont.)

Funk, Ruth H. “Come Listen to a Prophet’s Voice,” *Ensign* (November 1978), p. 107. This address was given during General Women’s Conference.


Maxwell, Neal A. *Things As They Really Are* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1980), pp. ix, 10, 35-36, 47-48, 61, 86.

1979
Ashton, Marvin J. “Progress Through Change,” *Ensign* (November 1979), p. 61. This address was given during the October General Conference.

Smith, Barbara B. “Women for the Latter Day,” *Ensign* (November 1979), p. 108. This address was given during General Women’s Conference. Sister Smith was then serving as the Relief Society General President.

Maxwell, Neal A. *All These Things Shall Give Thee Experience* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1979), pp. 29, 56, 97, 98.

1980


Ashton, Marvin J. “Adversity and You,” *Ensign* (November 1980), p. 60. This is an address given during the October General Conference.


1981
1981 (cont.)


1982


Pinegar, Rex D. “Faith--the Force of Life,” *Ensign* (November 1982), p. 24. This address was given during the October General Conference.

Wilcox, Steven Michael. “Reality, Romanticism, and Reason: Perspectives on a C. S. Lewis Pedagogy” (University of Colorado, 1982). This was a doctoral dissertation in the School of Education.


Maxwell, Neal A. *We Will Prove Them Herewith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1982), pp. 15, 62, 81, 123.

1983

Maxwell, Neal A. “Shine As Lights in the World,” *Ensign* (May 1983), p. 10. This address was given during the April General Conference.


1984
Carmack, John K. “Upheld by the Prayers of the Church,” *Ensign* (May 1984), p. 76. This address was given during the April General Conference.

Maxwell, Neal A. *We Talk of Christ* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1984), pp. 9, 19, 21-22, 47, 96, 109, 110, 149, 156, 166.

1985

Maxwell, Neal A. “Premortality, A Glorious Reality,” *Ensign* (November 1985), p. 18. This address was given during the October General Conference.

Monson, Thomas S. *Favorite Quotations of Thomas S. Monson* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1985), p. 103.


Holland, Jeffrey R. *However Long and Hard the Road* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1985), pp. 48, 56.

1986

Hafen, Bruce C. *The Believing Heart: Nourishing the Seed of Faith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1986), p. 82.

1987

Faust, James E. “The Great Imitator,” *Ensign* (Nov. 1987), p. 35. This address was given during the October General Conference.


This address was given during the April General Conference.


Top, Brent L. *Though Your Sins Be As Scarlet* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1989), pp. 54, 97, 98-99, 106, 117, 121.
1989 (Cont.)


Millet, Robert L. *By Grace Are We Saved* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1989), pp. 15, 21-22, 35, 36, 81, 82, 87-88, 102.


1990


Maxwell, Neal A. *A Wonderful Flood of Light* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1990), pp. 18-19, 35, 43.
1991

This address was given during the April General Conference.


This was an address given at the FARMS banquet at BYU in Sept. 1991.


This address was given during the November General Conference.


1992


Millet, Robert L. “Putting Off the Natural Man: An Enemy to God,” Ensign (June 1992), p. 9.

Ashton, Marvin J. "A Yearning for Home," Ensign (November 1992), p. 23. This address was given during the October General Conference.

Maxwell, Neal A. "Settle This in Your Hearts," Ensign (November 1992), p. 67. This address was given during the October General Conference.


1992 (Cont.)

McConkie, Joseph Fielding; Millet, Robert L. and Brent L. Top. *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon* Vol. 4 (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992), pp. 228, 301.


1993


Young, Bruce. “Young Previews Fall Play *Shadowlands*,” *Ke Alaka'i* (November 10, 1993), p. 7. The *Ke Alaka'i* is the student newspaper at the BYU-Hawaii campus.


1994

“For Your Information,” *New Era* (July 1994), p. 34.


1995


This address was given during the October General Conference.


Burgess, Allan K. Timely Truths From The Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1995), pp. 59, 117-118.

Millet, Robert L. Within Reach (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1995), p. 70.

Stirling notes that in Robert L. Millet's chapter C. S. Lewis is quoted more than any LDS prophet or priesthood authority.

1996

This address was given during the April General Conference.

Maxwell, Neal A. If Thou Endure It Well (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996), pp. 48, 64, 123-124, 128.

1997


Judd, Daniel K. “Entering to Learn and Going Forth to Serve,” Brigham Young University Magazine (Spring 1997), pp. 44-45.


Morrison, Alexander B. Zion: A Light in the Darkness (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1997), p. 68.

Top, Brent L. A Peculiar Treasure (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1997), pp. 130-131.

1998


Young, Bruce. “For Unto Us a Child Is Born: A Father’s Perspective,” This People (Summer 1998), p. 33.

Millet, Robert L. “C. S. Lewis: From Atheist to Apologist,” lectures given during a week-long course on CSL offered during Church Education Week at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, August 1998.


1998 (Cont.)


*Sunshine for the LDS Soul* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1998), p. 96. On the cover C. S. Lewis’ name appears with seven popular LDS leaders and authors. There is only one CSL passage excerpted, and it is the palace metaphor from *Mere Christianity*.

1999
1999 (Cont.)

A selection of essays presented at the C. S. Lewis Conference held at BYU, Provo, Utah, on December 4 and 5, 1998.

2000


Maxwell, Neal A. “Insights from My Life,” *Ensign* (August 2000), pp. 7-13. This article is from a talk given on January 12, 1999 at BYU.
Appendix B

Note: The following is a chronological list of those books and articles written by or about C. S. Lewis cited by Neal A. Maxwell in his speeches, books, and articles. As shown in the thesis, Maxwell has been an influential figure in spreading Lewis' reputation among the Latter-day Saints.

1969  Weight of Glory.

1971  Screwtape Letters.

1972  Keefe, Carolyn, ed. C. S. Lewis, Speaker and Teacher  
      (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974).

1973  Mere Christianity.


1977  The Great Divorce.  
      The World's Last Night.


1981  A Mind Awake: An Anthology of C. S. Lewis.

1982  Weight of Glory.  
      The Problem of Pain.

1983  Purtill, Richard L. C. S. Lewis's Case for the Christian Faith  

1985  Como, James T., ed. C. S. Lewis at the Breakfast Table, and Other Reminiscences  

1987  The Last Battle.

1990  Griffin, William. Clive Staples Lewis: A Dramatic Life  
      Lewis, W.H., ed. Letters of C. S. Lewis.


1992  Barfield, Owen and Jerry Root, eds. The Quotable C. S. Lewis  
      Lindskoog, Kathryn, comp. Around the Year with C. S. Lewis and His Friends  
      (Norwalk, CT: C.R. Gibson Company, 1986).
1999


2000
*The Pilgrim’s Regress.*