

A STUDY OF MERE CHRISTIANITY

Chapter 1.3 | Chapter 1.4



PEACE THRU CHRIST
LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

CLASS ONE CHAPTER SUMMARIES

Preface

This book attempts to show the rational value inherent to Christianity, not to say everything about Christianity.

1.1

There is Law of Human Nature and people are not good at keeping it.

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The Law of Human Nature is objective.

BOOK ONE: RIGHT AND WRONG AS A CLUE TO THE MEANING OF THE UNIVERSE

CHAPTER THREE: THE REALITY OF THE LAW

Outline:

- The Law of Nature vs. The Law of Human Nature
- Consequences

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THE LAW OF NATURE VS. THE LAW OF HUMAN NATURE

The laws of nature, as applied to stones or trees, may only mean ‘what Nature, in fact, does’. But if you turn to the Law of Human Nature, the Law of Decent Behaviour, it is a different matter. That law certainly does not mean ‘what human beings, in fact, do’; for as I said before, many of them do not obey this law at all, and none of them obey it completely. The law of gravity tells you what stones do if you drop them; but the Law of Human Nature tells you what human beings ought to do and do not.

So far, Lewis has responded to quite a few objections about the Law of Human Nature. *Why do you think people get so defensive about this topic?*

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THE LAW OF NATURE VS. THE LAW OF HUMAN NATURE

How is creation affected by natural law?



From a Biblical perspective, why are humans subject to a higher law than nature?

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CONSEQUENCES

I am not concerned at present with blame; I am trying to find out truth. And from that point of view the very idea of something being imperfect, of its not being what it ought to be, has certain consequences.

Two philosophies exposed by the Law of Human Nature:

1. _____ The truth or meaning of something is determined by whether it works (practical).
2. _____ Right and wrong is determined by whether it produces happiness (useful).

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CONSEQUENCES

1. "Why ought I to be unselfish?"



2. "Because it is good for society."

It begins to look as if we shall have to admit that there is more than one kind of reality; that, in this particular case, there is something above and beyond the ordinary facts of men's behaviour, and yet quite definitely real—a real law, which none of us made, but which we find pressing on us.



3. "Why should I care what's good for society except when it happens to pay me personally?"



Chapter 1.3 Summary

1. The Law of Human Nature only makes sense if it exists outside of us.
2. The reality of this law impacts what we believe is true and moral.

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BOOK ONE: RIGHT AND WRONG AS A CLUE TO THE MEANING OF THE UNIVERSE

CHAPTER FOUR: WHAT LIES BEHIND THE LAW

Outline:

- Three Views on the Universe
- What We Know Best and What It Tells Us
- A Logical Proof for Creation

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THREE VIEWS ON THE UNIVERSE

Materialist

- “Matter and space just happen to exist, and always have existed, nobody knows why; and that the matter, behaving in certain fixed ways, has just happened, by a sort of fluke, to produce creatures like ourselves who are able to think.”
- Conclusion: There is no higher truth or morality to life.

Religious

- “What is behind the universe is more like a mind than it is like anything else we know. That is to say, it is conscious, and has purposes, and prefers one thing to another.”
- Conclusion: The Designer of the universe is also the Lawgiver.

Life-Force

- “The small variations by which life on this plant ‘evolved’ from the lowest forms to Man were not due to chance but to the ‘striving’ and ‘purposiveness’ of a Life-Force.”
- Conclusion: There is no higher truth or morality to life.

“You cannot find out which view is the right one by science in the ordinary sense.”

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THREE VIEWS ON THE UNIVERSE

Life-Force = Theistic Evolution

One reason why many people find Creative Evolution so attractive is that it gives one much of the emotional comfort of believing in God and none of the less pleasant consequences.

The Life-Force is a sort of tame God. You can switch it on when you want, but it will not bother you. All the thrills of religion and none of the cost. Is the Life-Force the greatest achievement of wishful thinking the world has yet seen?

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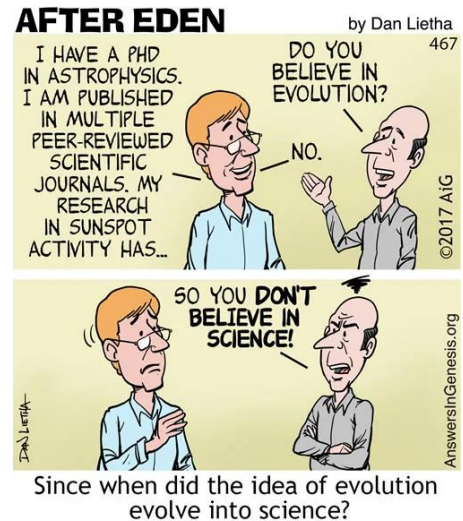
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THREE VIEWS ON THE UNIVERSE

Operational (Observational) Science: a systematic approach to understanding that uses observable, testable, repeatable, and falsifiable experimentation to understand how nature commonly behaves.

Historical (Origins) Science: interpreting evidence from past events based on a presupposed philosophical point of view.

“Both creationists and evolutionists have the same sets of data, the same evidence, and often the same techniques to examine their evidence. The different conclusions, therefore, must be based on presuppositions (or worldviews).”



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WHAT WE KNOW AND WHAT IT TELLS US

There is one thing, and only one, in the whole universe which we know more about than we could learn from external observation. That one thing is Man. We do not merely observe men, we *are* men. In this case we have, so to speak, inside information; we are in the know.

Anyone studying Man from the outside as we study electricity or cabbages, not knowing our language and consequently not able to get any inside knowledge from us, but merely observing what we did, would never get the slightest evidence that we had this moral law. How could he? for his observations would only show what we did, and the moral law is about what we ought to do.

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A LOGICAL PROOF FOR CREATION

Question: “Does the universe happen to be what it is for no reason, or is there a power behind it that makes it what it is?”

- **Premise 1:** Such a power is not an observable fact of the universe because it is the reality that makes the universe. (Architect & The House)
- **Premise 2:** We can only use what we have access to to gain information (Our Case/Our Package).
- **Premise 3:** What we know (our case) is that there is an inward pressing command that is trying to get us to behave in a certain way.
- **Premise 4:** This inward pressing command is found in all people, and it is not derived from personal desire, feeling, or social convention.
- **Premise 5:** An inward pressing command that operates in such a way would not exist without a Command-Giver.

“All I have got to is a Something 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.” p.25

Therefore, we conclude that there is a power behind the universe that makes it what it is.

“Surely this ought to arouse our suspicions?”

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At this point, Lewis is only making the case for the existence of a higher power (Theism). What are the advantages and disadvantages to this approach when it comes to our faith?

Chapter 1.4 Summary:

1. The debate about the origin of life is an area where we see the application of the Law of Human Nature.
2. Even from a strictly logical perspective, evolution is not compatible with creationism.

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CLASS TWO CHAPTER SUMMARIES

1.3

There is higher reality above and beyond the facts of human behavior.

1.4

The Law of Human Nature affects how we think of life and its origin.

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