


A STUDY OF MERE CHRISTIANITY

Lesson 5
Chapter 2.4 | Chapter 2.5



PEACE THRU CHRIST
LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

CLASS FOUR CHAPTER SUMMARIES

2.2

Dualism does not provide an answer for what we experience in our conscience about God's moral law.

2.3

Free will has something to say about the state we are in. God's plan of salvation through Jesus is the Christian answer to our questions about God's moral law.

THEORY VS. BELIEF

The central Christian belief is that Christ's death has somehow put us right with God and given us a fresh start. Theories as to how it did this are another matter. A good many different theories have been held as to how it works; what all Christians are agreed on is that it does work.

What does Lewis mean when he distinguishes between Christian theories and Christian belief?

MEALS AND MATHEMATICS

A man can eat his dinner without understanding exactly how food nourishes him. A man can accept what Christ has done without knowing how it works: indeed, he certainly would not know how it works until he has accepted it.

The pictures are there only to help you to understand the formula. They are not really true in the way the formula is; they do not give you the real thing but only something more or less like it. They are only meant to help, and if they do not help you can drop them.

THEORY VS. BELIEF

Lewis prefers the “theory” that Christ’s atonement is like cancelling a debt that we owed. How do the following Bible passages inform our thinking on this point?

Colossians 2:13-14 Even when you were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ by forgiving us all our trespasses. 14 God erased the record of our debt brought against us by his legal demands. This record stood against us, but he took it away by nailing it to the cross.

Romans 4:4-5 Now to a person who works, his pay is not counted as a gift but as something owed. 5 But to the person who does not work but believes in the God who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited to him as righteousness.

Matthew 18:21-35 (The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant)

Slide 8

THE REASON FOR REPENTANCE

Lewis' striking descriptions of repentance:

"Only a bad person needs to repent: only a good person can repent perfectly."

"If you ask God to take you back without it [repentance], you are really asking Him to let you go back without going back."

"We love and reason because God loves and reasons and holds our hand while we do it."

"To what will you look for help if you will not look to that which is stronger than yourself?"
