

# WEEK FIVE DISCUSSION GUIDE

MERE CHRISTIANITY | C.S. LEWIS

## THIS WEEK

### Book Three, Chapters 1-3

Lewis turns his argument to the nature of Christian morality and what the marks of a Christ-follower should be.

## ASSESSING THE TEXT

***"There is a story about a schoolboy who was asked what he thought God was like. He replied that, as far as he could make out, God was the sort of person who is always snooping around to see if anyone is enjoying himself and then trying to stop it' (pg. 69)."***

How have Christians contributed to this view of God?

How can we paint a more positive (and accurate) picture of God to those around us?

***"Morality, then, seems to be concerned with three things. Firstly, with fair play and harmony between individuals. Secondly, with what might be called tidying up or harmonizing the things inside each individual. Thirdly, with the general purpose of human life as a whole: what made was made for: what course the whole fleet ought to be on: what tune the conductor of the band wants it to play. You may have noticed that modern people are nearly always thinking about the first thing and forgetting about the other two (pg. 72)."***

Why do you think the majority of people struggle with reasons 2 and 3 for morality?

***"If somebody else made me, for his own purposes, then I shall have a lot of duties which I should not have if I simply belonged to myself (pg. 74)."***

What moral responsibilities come with this understanding that we belong to Christ, rather than ourselves?

***"Prudence means practical common sense, taking the trouble to think out what you are doing and what is likely to come of it (pg. 77)."***

Do you think our culture still values this as a common moral principle? Why or why not?

***"...Christ never meant that we were to remain children in intelligence... He wants a child's heart, but a grown-up's head. He wants us to be simple, single-minded, affectionate, and teachable, as good children are; but He also wants every bit of intelligence we have to be alert at its job, and in first-class fighting trim (pg. 77)."***

Do you think the Church's intelligence or is more childlike or adult? What about our hearts?

***"If you are thinking of becoming a Christian, I warn you, you are embarking on something which is going to take the whole of you, brains and all (pg. 78)."***

Do you think the majority of Christians are honestly ready to let the Gospel cost them everything? Why or why not?

***"Temperance is, unfortunately, one of those words that has changed its meaning. It now usually means teetotalism. But in the days when the second Cardinal virtue was christened, 'Temperance,' it meant nothing of the sort. Temperance referred not specially to drink, but to all pleasures; and it meant not abstaining, but going the right length and no further (pg. 78)."***

Where could the church be more temperate?

***"One of the marks of a certain type of bad man is that he cannot give up a thing himself without wanting everyone else to give it up. That is not the Christian way. An individual Christian may see fit to give up all sorts of things for special reasons – marriage, or meat, or beer, or the cinema; but the moment he starts saying the things are bad in themselves, or looking down his nose at other people who do use them, he has taken the wrong turning (pg. 78-79)."***

Do you agree or disagree with Lewis on this point? Why or why not?

***"Justice means much more than the sort of thing that goes on in law courts. It is the old name for everything we should now call 'fairness'; it includes honesty, give and take, truthfulness, keeping promises, and all that side of life (pg. 79)."***

What steps can we take to promote justice and fairness as Christians today? Where does our faith intersect with this moral principle?

***"And Fortitude includes both kinds of courage- the kind that faces danger as well as the kind that 'sticks it' under pain. 'Guts' is perhaps the nearest modern English (pg. 79)."***

In what areas of our faith is fortitude required for spiritual growth and impact?

## BRINGING IT HOME

How does this section of the book better help you defend the principles of Christianity?

How can others in the group pray for you?

Who in your life can the group pray for that might need to hear this message?