

Selected Quotes of C. S. Lewis

Clive Staples Lewis is widely known for his fictional (most notably *The Chronicles of Narnia* and *The Screwtape Letters*) and non-fictional Christian writings (most notably *Miracles* and *Mere Christianity*). Lewis has an amazing story of growing up in a Christian family, in his early teenage years becoming an atheist, but later coming back to God. In a writing later in his life, this is what he had to say about coming back to Christianity: “.. 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”.

- Ω “God is not proud. He will have us even though we have shown that we prefer everything else to Him.”

- Ω “A world of nice people, content in their own niceness, looking no further, turned away from God, would be just as desperately in need of salvation as a miserable world-and might be even more difficult to save.”

- Ω “There is no neutral ground in the universe; every square inch, every split second, is claimed by God and counter-claimed by Satan.”

- Ω “The lost enjoy forever the horrible freedom they have demanded.”

- Ω “The enemy will not see you vanish into God’s company without an effort to reclaim you.”

- Ω “Be sure that the ins and outs of your individuality are no mystery to Him; and one day they will no longer be a mystery to you.”

- Ω “You cannot make men good by law.”

- Ω “When a man is getting better he understands more and more clearly the evil that is still left in him. When a man is getting worse he understands his own badness less and less.”

- Ω “Miracles do not, in fact, break the laws of nature.”

- Ω “You never know how much you really believe anything until its truth or falsehood becomes a matter of life and death to you.”

- Ω “Tribulations cannot cease until God either sees us remade or sees that our remaking is now hopeless.”

- Ω “If you are really a product of a materialistic universe, how is it that you don’t feel at home there?”

- Ω “Friendship is unnecessary, like art... It has no survival value; rather it is one of those things that give value to survival.”

- Ω “If you look for truth, you may find comfort in the end; if you look for comfort you will not get either.”

- Ω “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.”

- Ω “Christianity asserts that every individual human being is going to live forever, and this must be either true or false. Now there are a good many things which would not be worth bothering about if I were going to live only seventy years, but which I had better bother about very seriously if I am going to live forever.”

- Ω “Christians believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God because He said so.”

- Ω “If we will not learn to eat the only food that the universe grows, then we must starve eternally.”

- Ω “I believe that the damned are, in one sense, successful, rebels to the end; that the doors of hell are locked on the inside.”

- Ω “Until you have given up yourself to Him you will not have a real self.”

- Ω “Christianity, if false, is of no importance, and if true, of infinite importance. The only thing it cannot be is moderately important.”

- Ω “Where, except in the uncreated light, can the darkness be drowned?”

- Ω “Failures are finger posts on the road to achievement.”

- Ω “Heaven offers nothing that a mercenary soul can desire.”

- Ω “A continual looking forward to the eternal world is not a form of escapism or wishful thinking, but one of the things a Christian is meant to do.”

- Ω “Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another: What! You too? I thought I was the only one.”

- Ω “In reality, moral rules are directions for running the human machine. Every moral rule is there to prevent a breakdown, or a strain, or a friction, in the running of that machine. That is why these rules at first seem to be constantly interfering with our natural inclinations.”

- Ω “The perfect church service would be one we were almost unaware of; our attention would have been on God.”

- Ω “We are to be re-made. All the rabbit in us is to disappear-and then, surprisingly, we shall find underneath it all a thing we have never yet imagined: a real Man, an ageless god, a son of God, strong, radiant, wise, beautiful, and drenched in joy.”

- Ω “Joy is the serious business of Heaven.”

- Ω “The road to the promised land runs past Mt. Sinai.”

- Ω “No good work is done anywhere without aid from the Father of Lights.”

- Ω “If God thinks this state of war in the universe is a price worth paying for free will then we may take that it is worth paying.”

- Ω “At this very moment you and I are either committing selfishness, or about to commit it, or repenting of it.”

- Ω “Really, a young Atheist cannot guard his faith too carefully. Dangers lie in wait for him on every side.”

- Ω “He loved us not because we are lovable, but because He is love.”

- Ω “All men alike stand condemned, not by alien codes of ethics, but by their own, and all men therefore are conscious of guilt.”

- Ω “What you see and hear depends a good deal on where you are standing; it also depends on what kind of a person you are.”

- Ω “Experience: that most brutal of teachers. But you learn, my God do you learn.”

- Ω “To love is to be vulnerable.”

- Ω “You don’t have a soul. You are a Soul. You have a body.”

- Ω “We were promised sufferings. They are part of the program. We were even told, *‘Blessed are they that mourn’*.”

- Ω “We’re not necessarily doubting that God will do the best for us; we are wondering how painful the best will turn out to be.”

- Ω “The devil loves ‘curing’ a small fault by giving you a great one.”

- Ω “Pain removes the veil; it plants the flag of truth within the fortress of a rebel soul.”

- Ω “The full acting out of the self’s surrender to God therefore demands pain: this action, to be perfect, must be done from the pure will to obey, in the absence, or in the teeth, of inclination.”

- Ω “Fallen man is not simply an imperfect creature who needs improvement: he is a rebel who must lay down his arms.”

- Ω “We have a strange illusion that mere time cancels sin. But mere time does nothing either to the fact or to the guilt of a sin.”

- Ω “It’s so much easier to pray for a bore than to go and see one.”

- Ω “The enemy will not see you vanish into God’s company without an effort to reclaim you.”

- Ω “We ought to give thanks for all fortune: if it is good, because it is good, if bad, because it works in us patience, humility and the contempt of this world and the hope of our eternal country.”

- Ω “Prosperity knits a man to the World. He feels that is ‘finding his place in it’, while really it is finding its place in him.”

- Ω “Education without moral values, as useful as it is, makes man a more clever devil.”

- Ω “Forgiving and being forgiven are two names for the same thing. The important thing is that a discord has been resolved.”

- Ω “God became man to turn sinners into sons: not simply to produce better men of the old kind but to produce a brand new kind of man.”

- Ω “The natural man knows that if the spiritual life gets hold of him, all his self-centredness and self-will are going to be killed and he is ready to fight tooth and nail to avoid that.”

- Ω “It is quite useless knocking at the door of heaven for earthly comfort. It’s not the sort of comfort they supply there.”

- Ω “Every uncorrected error and unrepented sin is, in its own right, a fountain of fresh error and fresh sin flowing on to the end of time.”

- Ω “God knows our situation; He will not judge us as if we had no difficulties to overcome. What matters is the sincerity and perseverance of our will to overcome them.”

- Ω “You play the hand you’re dealt. I think the game’s worthwhile.”

- Ω “Every Christian would agree that a man’s spiritual status is exactly proportional to his love for God.”

- Ω “God will look to every soul like its first love because He is its first love.”

- Ω “Has this world been so kind to you that you should leave with regret? There are better things ahead than any we leave behind.”
- Ω “According to Christian teachers, the essential vice, the utmost evil, is Pride.”
- Ω “It is when we notice the dirt inside that God is most present in us.”
- Ω “This year, or this month, or more likely, this very day, we have failed to practise ourselves the kind of behaviour we expect from other people.”
- Ω “To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable, because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you.”
- Ω “The present is the only time in which any duty may be done or grace received.”
- Ω “Some people feel guilty about their anxieties and regard them as a defect of faith but they are afflictions, not sins. Like all afflictions, they are, if we can so take them, our share in the passion of Christ.”
- Ω “Nothing, not even what is lowest and most bestial, will not be raised again if it submits to death.”
- Ω “It may be hard for an egg to turn into a bird: it would be a jolly sight harder for it to learn to fly while remaining an egg. We are like eggs at present. And you cannot go on indefinitely being just an ordinary, decent egg. We must be hatched or go bad.”
- Ω “Prostitutes are in no danger of finding their present life so satisfactory that they cannot turn to God: the proud, the avaricious, the self-righteous, are in that danger.”
- Ω “If a thing is free to be good it is also free to be bad. And free will is what has made evil possible. Why, then, did God give them free will? Because free will, though it makes evil possible, is also the only thing that makes possible love and goodness worth having.”
- Ω “Atheists express their rage against God although in their view He does not exist.”

- Ω “If we discover a desire within us that nothing in this world can satisfy, also we should begin to wonder if perhaps we were created for another world.”
- Ω “Though our feelings come and go, God’s love for us does not.”
- Ω “This Man (Jesus) suddenly remarks one day, ‘No one need fast while I am here.’ Who is this Man who remarks that His presence suspends all normal rules?”
- Ω “What saves a man is to take a step. Then another step.”
- Ω “When you come to knowing God, the initiative lies on His side. If He does not show Himself, nothing you can do will enable you to find Him.”
- Ω “All that is not eternal is eternally out of date.”
- Ω “You must believe that God is separate from the world and that some of the things we see in it are contrary to His will.”
- Ω “Love is something more stern and splendid than mere kindness.”
- Ω “Love is not affectionate feeling, but a steady wish for the loved person’s ultimate good as far as it can be obtained.”
- Ω “God designed the human being to run on Himself. He is the fuel our spirits were designed to burn... That is why it is no good asking God to make us happy in our own way.”
- Ω “Prayer in the sense of petition, asking for things, is a small part of it; confession and penitence are its threshold, adoration its sanctuary, the presence and vision and enjoyment of God its bread and wine.”
- Ω “Relying on God has to begin all over again every day as if nothing had yet been done.”
- Ω “Try to exclude the possibility of suffering which the order of nature and the existence of free-wills involve, and you find that you have excluded the purpose of life itself.”

- Ω “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.”

- Ω “History is a story written by the finger of God.”

- Ω “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.”

- Ω “The Son of God became a man to enable men to become sons of God.”

- Ω “Authority exercised with humility, and obedience accepted with delight are the very lines along which our spirits should live.”

- Ω “Once a man is united to the almighty eternal God, how could he not live forever?”

- Ω “It is in the process of being worshipped that God communicates His presence to men.”

- Ω “Now is our chance to choose the right side. God is holding back to give us that chance. It won’t last forever. We must take it or leave it.”

- Ω “The central miracle asserted by Christianity is the incarnation — God became man.”

- Ω “Everyone says forgiveness is a necessary and lovely idea, until they have something to forgive.”

- Ω “Do not let us mistake necessary evils for good.”

- Ω “Only He who really lived a perfect human life (and I presume that only one did) can fully taste the horror of death.”

- Ω “Forgiveness does not mean excusing.”

- Ω “Do not waste time bothering whether you ‘love’ your neighbour; act as if you did.”

- Ω “For whatever else the Christian life may be, it is the fountain of self-knowledge and disillusion, the safest form of psychoanalysis.”
- Ω “We are all fallen creatures and all very hard to live with.”
- Ω “We may ignore, but we can nowhere evade, the presence of God.”
- Ω “You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.”
- Ω “Very often what God first helps us towards is not the virtue itself but just this power of always trying again.”
- Ω “The shame I feel now is the happiness I had before I came to Christ. That’s the deal.”
- Ω “Do not let your happiness depend on something you may lose... depend only upon the Beloved who will never pass away.”
- Ω “Christ died for men precisely because men are not worth dying for; to make them worth it.”
- Ω “I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare.”
- Ω “When you are arguing against God you are arguing against the very power that makes you able to argue at all.”
- Ω “Of all bad men religious bad men are the worst.”
- Ω “Like a good chess player, Satan is always trying to manoeuvre you into a position where you can save your castle only by losing your bishop.”
- Ω “If rationalism were true then all thoughts whatever, would be wholly the result of irrational causes. It cuts its own throat.”

- Ω “Surely what a man does when he is taken off his guard is the best evidence for what sort of man he is.”
- Ω “The only things we can keep are the things we freely give to God.”
- Ω “There is, hidden or flaunted, a sword between the sexes till marriage reconciles them.”
- Ω “Everyone feels benevolent if nothing happens to be annoying him at the moment.”
- Ω “The happiness which God designs for His higher creatures is the happiness of being freely, voluntarily united to Him and to each other in an ecstasy of love and delight.”
- Ω “He that but looketh on a plate of ham and eggs to lust after it hath already committed breakfast with it in his heart.”
- Ω “When the author walks on the stage the play is over. God is going to invade, all right — something so beautiful to some of us and so terrible to others that none of us will have any choice left? For this time it will be God without disguise. It will be too late then to choose your side.”
- Ω “Does loving your enemy mean not punishing him? No, for loving myself does not mean that I ought not subject myself to punishment — even to death. If you had committed a murder, the right Christian thing to do would be to give yourself up to the police and be hanged.”
- Ω “True friends face in the same direction, toward common projects, interests, goals.”
- Ω “God, who foresaw your tribulation, has specially armed you to go through it, not without pain but without stain.”
- Ω “As long as this deliberate refusal to understand things from above, even where such understanding is possible, continues, it is idle to talk of any final victory over materialism.”
- Ω “If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were precisely those who thought most of the next.”

- Ω “The future is something which everyone on this earth reaches at the rate of 60 minutes an hour, whatever he does, whoever he is.”
- Ω “He Himself is the fuel our spirits were designed to burn, or the food our spirits were designed to feed on. There is no other.”
- Ω “There are two kinds of people: those who say to God, ‘*Thy will be done,*’ and those to whom God says, ‘All right, then, have it your way, but you pay the price’.”
- Ω “It is not your business to succeed, but to do right: when you have done so, the rest lies with God.”
- Ω “Though we do not experience our life as an endless present, we are eternal in God’s eyes; that is, in our deepest reality.”
- Ω “God did entrust the descendants of Abraham with the first revelation of Himself.”
- Ω “To ask that God’s love should be content with us as we are is to ask that God should cease to be God.”
- Ω “The higher animals are in a sense drawn into Man when he loves them and makes them (as he does) much more nearly human than they would otherwise be.”
- Ω “We are what we really believe we are.”
- Ω “The safest road to Hell is the gradual one — the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts.”
- Ω “God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from Himself, because it is not there. There is no such thing.”
- Ω “Selfishness is a fierce imprisonment, but self-giving is absolute freedom.”
- Ω “We have had enough of Hedonism — the gloomy philosophy which says that worldly Pleasure is the only good.”

- Ω “Selfishness has never been admired.”

- Ω “A little lie is like early pregnancy — it doesn’t take long before everyone knows.”

- Ω “Nothing that you have not given away will ever be really yours.”

- Ω “When we lose one blessing, another is often most unexpectedly given in its place.”

- Ω “Jesus Christ did not say, ‘Go into the world and tell the world that it is quite right’.”

- Ω “The terrible thing, the almost impossible thing, is the hand-over of your whole self — all your wishes and precautions — to Christ.”

- Ω “If we really think that home is elsewhere and that this life is a ‘wandering to find home,’ why should we not look forward to the arrival?”

- Ω “We must lay before Him what is in us, not what ought to be in us.”

- Ω “You and I have need of the strongest spell that can be found to wake us from the evil enchantment of worldliness.”

- Ω “All joy emphasizes our pilgrim status; always reminds, beckons, awakens desire for the eternal. Our best havings are wantings.”

- Ω “Every story of conversion is the story of a blessed defeat.”

- Ω “Christ 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 the intelligence we have to be alert at our job, and in first-class fighting trim.”