

THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS

*Spiritual Life
from the other perspective*

A Study at Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran, Knoxville, Tennessee, 2013 A.D



There's nothing more valuable in war than military intelligence. Even if you're out-gunned and out-numbered, if you know what the enemy is going to do, victory can be yours. In the book, The Screwtape Letters, C. S. Lewis writes as if he is revealing the Devil's tactics. It is amazing how well he seems to understand the Devil, until you realize what he really understands is human nature!

Since its first appearance in 1941 (and eight reprints in 1942 alone) The Screwtape Letters has opened the eyes of readers to the sinister plots of the Devil and his henchmen, the demons. C. S. Lewis intended this book to be of spiritual benefit to those who read it. "Lewis is in earnest with his belief in devils, and as anxious to unmask their strategy against souls as our intelligence department to detect the designs of Hitler" (*The Guardian*, 13 March 1942). May we be on guard against the Devil and rejoice in Jesus' final victory!

An illustration of Screwtape by William Papas.

LETTER 12

1. Any questions?
2. Churches and pastors often base their ministry to straying members on worship and communion attendance. Evaluate on the basis of the first two paragraphs of letter 12.
3. What is the greatest enemy of repentance? (See Psalm 32:1-5)
4. "Without whom Nothing is strong..." Lewis is making a play on words using the Prayer of the Day for the Fourth Sunday after Pentecost.

Latin original: Protector in te sperantium deus sine quo nihil est validum. nihil sanctum. (almost 1,500 years old)

Old translation: "O God, the protector of all that trust in thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy:"

New translation: "O God, protector of all the faithful, you alone make strong; you alone make holy..."

5. The last paragraph of this letter is my “favorite” in the whole book. Any ideas why?

LETTER 13

6. Is C.S. Lewis saying that God converts people by direct communication with them?
7. Is C.S. Lewis saying that God converts people with reading a book and taking a walk?
8. How marvelous it is that God loves and values each of us individually! See 1 Corinthians 12:7-20, Luke 12:7 and Jeremiah 1:5.
9. How could tripe and onions prevent sins of social ambition?
10. For evidence of the truth of the last paragraph, see James 1:22 and 2:26.

LETTER 14

11. Compare the words of Johann Staupitz, Luther’s overseer at the Augustinian monastery to the first few lines of this letter:
"Dr. Staupitz, I remember, said to me on a certain occasion: ‘I have more than a thousand times lied to God that I would become godly and never did what I promised. Now I shall never again make up my mind to become godly; for I see that I cannot carry out my resolution. I shall never lie to God any more.’"
12. Put the difference between false modesty and true humility in your own words.
13. What does Lewis mean by, “When they have really learned to love their neighbors as themselves, they will be allowed to love themselves as their neighbors.”