C.S. Lewis’s Humble and Thoughtful Gift of Letter Writing

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Is it a sin to love Aslan, the lion of Narnia, more than Jesus? This was the concern expressed by a nine-year-old American to his mother after reading The Chronicles of Narnia. How does a mother respond to a question like that? In this case, she turned straight to the author of Narnia, C.S. Lewis, by writing him a letter. At the time, Lewis was receiving hundreds of letters every year from fans. Surely a busy scholar, writer, and Christian apologist of international fame wouldn’t have the time to deal with this query from a child. And yet Lewis took time out of his busy schedule to answer the letter thoughtfully and carefully. He encouraged the boy, suggested a prayer for him to pray, and then wrote, “And if Mr. Lewis has worried any other children by his books or done them any harm, then please forgive him and help him never to do it again.”

Lewis’s response is both simple and profound and reveals a heart that had been softened and molded by the work of the Holy Spirit. And while the letter is unique and personal, it is just one of thousands that flowed from the mind of Lewis through pen and ink to people around the globe. Lewis’s letters touched lives in the past and still minister to us today.

Interestingly, this type of letter writing is reminiscent of another great letter writer, the apostle Paul, who wrote tenderly, “To Timothy, my dear son... I thank God... as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy” (2 Tim. 1:2–4 NIV). The letters of Paul, Peter, John, James, and Jude that fill our New Testament give witness to the power of letters to be used by God to disciple and nourish followers of Jesus. While the letters of C.S. Lewis certainly cannot be compared in inspiration and authority to the canon of the Holy Scriptures, it is clear that letter writing is a gift and ministry that when developed and shared with others can still influence lives for the kingdom of God. In fact, Lewis’s comment about Charles Lamb, the British writer, could apply to his own letters, “You’ll find his letters as good as his essays: indeed they are almost exactly the same, only more of it.”

Letter writing was much more common in the early twentieth century than it is today, as it was the primary means of long-distance communication. Without the entertainment distractions of television, YouTube, and other modern media, people used their spare time to engage in conversation with one another over a cup of tea or through the art of written correspondence. Lewis himself was sent off to boarding school at a young age and, being a dutiful son, wrote letters home to his father. He delighted in writing more than three hundred letters during his lifetime to his best childhood friend, Arthur Greeves. And he faithfully wrote to his brother, Warnie, who served overseas in the British Army.

(continued on page 12)
As you seek to become an effective disciple of Christ, it is important to have practical guidance. This issue is especially focused on application.

We start by examining an interesting and instructive aspect of C.S. Lewis’s life. Joel Woodruff, our vice president for discipleship and outreach, highlights how Lewis was faithful in a practice he disliked: answering the trove of letters he received as his books became more and more popular. We now know how much these letters ministered to the recipients—and how they can still speak to us—since so many of them have been preserved.

Jay Link, in his ongoing series on stewardship, helps us understand the need to “die to self” and live with the full understanding of God as the rightful owner of everything.

An alumnus Fellow, Jeff Lindeman, describes how he walked away from a large law firm determined to build a law practice around a culture of honoring God while also doing excellent legal work. Jeff provides a framework that many of us should consider in various leadership roles.

Tom Tarrants, our vice president for ministry, explores the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19–20) in light of three key areas: evangelism, making disciples, and teaching. Understanding that this is the primary call of all believers is key to living as authentic disciples of Christ.

Stephen Eyre, city director for CSLI–Cincinnati, shows us how our understanding of God’s attributes plays a significant role in our trust in and obedience to God. Stephen describes how God revealed Himself through Moses and, more completely, through Jesus Christ. With a clear understanding of God, we can recognize that God loves us and has a purpose for us.

In David Calhoun’s profile of David Livingstone, we are reminded of the unbelievable accomplishments that can be made through a wholehearted commitment to God’s call as Livingstone explored the African continent and shared the gospel along the way.

We are each called to grow into spiritual maturity. No matter where we are in this process, God will help us, but we must be intentional in our desire for this growth. He simply wants us to be more and more like Christ.

Sincerely,

Kerry A. Knott
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There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over all, does not cry: “Mine!” — Abraham Kuyper

I’m a follower of Jesus Christ.” Making the claim can quickly change the dynamics of one’s workplace. People may see you differently and not always positively. Saying you are a Christian may subject you to other people’s labels, prejudices, and disapproval.

Knowing that reality and knowing Christ’s claim as Sovereign over all, I have asked and wanted to understand what it means to be a Christian in the workplace. I suspect that many believers ask that question as Sunday turns to Monday. Yet everyone’s workplace is different and dynamics are never static, even for individuals working similar jobs for the same company. There is not a one-size-fits-all answer.

For most of my professional life, I have worked in large office settings. Currently I am operating my own small business. In each workplace, however, I have asked, what does it mean to be a follower of Christ here in this place? How do I represent Jesus in the office? For me, Paul’s comment to the Corinthians about being “ambassadors for Christ” has been helpful in considering these questions and learning how to implement answers.

Creating a Place

When one country establishes an embassy in another, the embassy grounds are considered the soil of the home country, not that of the host country. The ambassador posted to the embassy represents the sovereign of his home country to the citizens of the host country. As Christians, we are told that “we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us” so that others may “be reconciled to God” (2 Cor. 5:20).

With this in mind I’ve chosen to view my office as an embassy of the kingdom of God. How does this work?

To establish that outpost or embassy, I first began thanking God for the physical place where I worked, for the work that I had to do, and for the people, colleagues, and clients with whom I worked. I also prayed that when people walked into my office they would experience a tangible difference, that when they came through my door they would sense a peace and calmness even in the busyness of our work. I wanted stepping into my office to be like stepping onto the soil of God’s kingdom. I knew there was nothing I myself could do to make that happen, but I believed God could do it and that people would notice the difference.

I also made a very conscious decision not to hang religious pictures, have a Bible out on my desk, or speak using “Christian” jargon. In Washington, DC, where I work, such things can be seen as off-putting political statements. Too often, what we say using Christian jargon creates barriers. Though we may intend blessing, the language may prompt others to throw up their defenses. I do not want that. And, as I observe Jesus through Scripture, He did not intend that either. Like an ambassador, I want to be able to speak of my homeland and its King while using the language of the country where my embassy is located. In being Christ’s ambassador, I want to speak plainly and draw people to His kingdom and not suggest it is a foreign place where they are not welcome.

Working under Observation

If an embassy represents its home country in a foreign land, then everyone expects the embassy to work differently than its surroundings. If I’ve chosen not to display artifacts of my faith at the office or (continued on page 16)
I can think of no better way to define what stewardship really is than with this phrase—"keeping the heart of God at the heart of living." Stewardship is all about carrying out the wishes of the Owner. The Owner is God, and we are merely the caretakers of His property. Psalm 24:1 states it clearly, "The earth is the LORD’s and all it contains, the world and all who live in it." I think this encompasses everything we will ever get our hands on in this lifetime.

As I have said, this concept of stewardship is critically important yet so often misunderstood. Even those who intellectually acknowledge that God owns everything do not functionally live as though He does. Let me illustrate my point by asking you to choose which one of the three questions below is the proper question in regard to our material possessions:

1. What do I want to do with all my wealth?
2. What do I want to do with God’s wealth?
3. What does God want me to do with His wealth?

No doubt you chose number 3 as the proper question. In about thirty years of asking this question, every believer chooses number 3. Intellectually, everyone is able to get this part of it. But practically speaking, we live as though number 2 is the right question. We are more than happy to acknowledge that it all belongs to God, but when it comes to making decisions about what to do with what we oversee, we seldom, if ever, seek direction from the Owner.

Let me offer a few simple questions that should demonstrate just how true this is.

• When you bought your last car, did you ask God if this is the car He wanted you to buy with His money?
• When your money manager proposed an investment portfolio for you, did you go to the Lord and ask Him if these were the places He wanted His money invested?

• The last time you went shopping for clothes, did you ask your Father if these were the clothes He wanted you to wear?

Or, here is a question that will certainly apply to us all.

• Did we check with God to see if He wanted us to overindulge His dwelling place with that last meal?

I hope you see my point. We are all routinely guilty of intellectually acknowledging that God owns everything, while we live, spend, and invest like it is all our own. The cornerstone of stewardship is full acknowledgment and consistent practice of allowing God to direct what He wants done with what He has entrusted us to manage.

I have recently been struck quite seriously with the reality that all our sin, at its core, is the result of personal selfishness. I would encourage you to ponder this for a moment. As I have mulled this idea over and over in my mind, I have yet to find any exception. The truth is: we are our own worst enemies. We are continually getting in the way of God’s best because we are so consumed with our desires, our rights, our dreams, our passions, and our way that we continually fall into sins of either commission (doing the wrong thing) or omission (not doing the right thing). Think about it. Why do we lie? Why do we cheat? Why do we steal? Why are we afraid? Why do we hate? Why do we commit adultery? Why do we lose our temper? Why do we become addicted to drugs, work, and entertainment? Why do we covet what others have? Why do we wear “masks” around others? Why do we not want to submit to God? I could go on and on, but it always circles back around to self. As the cartoon character Pogo confessed, "We have met the enemy and he is us."

The reason I am making this point is to say that our practical rejection of a life of devoted stewardship is just another example of how self...
gets in the way of God’s best for us. We want to be in charge. We want to make the decisions. We want to “pull the trigger” and get things done. In ignoring the reality that we are nothing more than mere low-level managers who are expected to meticulously carry out the wishes of the all-loving and all-powerful Owner, our personal will, wishes, choices, and decisions prove to be categorically irrelevant to the discussion.

Someone once noted that at the center of SIN is the letter “I.” We will always find “I”—self, ego, always looking out for number 1—at the center of our sin.

• This is why Jesus said that if we really want to live, we must first die to self. “For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it” (Matt. 16:25 NIV).

• If you want to be first, you must let everyone else go ahead of you. As the Scripture says, “The last will be first, and the first last” (Matt. 20:16 ESV).

• If you want to be really free, you must submit to slavery. “Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave” (Matt. 20:26–27 NIV).

• If you want to be great, you must strive to make everyone else greater than yourself. “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves” (Phil. 2:3 NIV, see also Luke 9:48).

It is all about death to self.

The reason stewardship is so challenging to practice is that we must get self out of the way. As long as we are fallen creatures with a fallen nature, we will have to wrestle daily with the lingering ghosts of our own selfishness until we someday finally shed this “dirt body” and move on to better things. In the meantime, we must resist with every ounce of our being the temptation to inappropriately assume the throne and play little gods over stuff that does not even belong to us.

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He cannot bless us unless he has us. When we try to keep within us an area that is our own, we try to keep an area of death. Therefore, in love, He claims all. There’s no bargaining with Him.

C.S. Lewis
Learning to Make Disciples of Jesus: 
The Calling of Every Believer

by Thomas A. Tarrants, III, D.Min.
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Have you ever been discipled by another believer? That is, did anyone help you in the process of coming to faith? After you came to Christ, did anyone help you grow more like Jesus, either informally or in some organized fashion? Or, from the other side, have you ever been in the discipling role, helping someone come to faith in Christ or grow as His disciple? If you answered yes, you already have some level of experience with disciple making. If you answered no, fear not, for help is at hand. Help? Why do I need help, you say. I am not called to a ministry of disciple making. That’s somebody else’s job. If this is your reaction, you have lots of company. Many in the church today think that disciple making is someone else’s ministry. But Jesus doesn’t give us that option.

After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples, told them that universal authority had been conferred on Him, and commissioned them to a universal mission:

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age (Matt. 28:18–20).

This was, and still is, Jesus’ plan to spread God’s kingdom throughout the world, and you and I have a part to play. Simply put, they were to reproduce themselves by taking their disciples through the same basic teaching and training that Jesus had given them in their apprenticeship with Him. Let’s look at Jesus’ call to make disciples and how we are to do it.

As we start, let’s briefly consider why making disciples is so important. First, making disciples is the great mission Jesus gave His followers before He returned to heaven. This mission, which has been passed down from generation to generation by the faithful, now rests upon you and me.

Second, Jesus’ simple, yet brilliant plan—making disciples, who would in turn make other disciples, who would make still more disciples and so on until He returns—really works! He is counting on us to fulfill our assignment, and there is no Plan B.

Third, making disciples has been neglected for so long that there is now a crisis of discipleship in the American church. Few professing Christians are living as disciples of Jesus, and fewer still are making disciples. This failure to be salt and light in our decaying society has contributed greatly to the undermining of the church, robbing us of credibility in the eyes of the world and accelerating the spiritual and moral decline in society.

A fourth reason is that at the final exam of life, Judgment Day, Jesus will ask, among other things, whether we obeyed His command to go and make disciples. As you look into His searching, all-knowing eyes, what will you say?

What Is a Disciple?

To make disciples, we first need to know what a disciple is. Many people today are confused about what it means to be a disciple of Jesus, and this is the root of serious problems in the church. Some think a disciple is a person in full-time vocational ministry—such as a pastor, priest, or missionary—but not an ordinary believer. Others believe a disciple is someone who has gone through a “discipleship program,” studying the basics of the Christian life for
several weeks or months. Still others think a disciple is a Christian who has made an optional, higher level of commitment to Christ than the average believer.

The real question, however, is what the Bible says a disciple is. The standard lexicon of New Testament Greek defines the word *disciple* as a “learner, pupil, adherent.” With that basic definition in mind, we must go on to observe how Jesus adapted and used the word to serve His unique purposes. Based on a comprehensive analysis of the word in the Gospels, Professor Michael Wilkins says: “a *disciple of Jesus* is someone who has come to him for eternal life, claimed him as Savior and God, and has embarked upon the life of following him.” In other words, a disciple of Jesus is not simply someone who has made a profession of faith, or even someone who has learned the teachings of Jesus (or the Bible), but someone who has come to repentance and faith and is seeking to follow His teaching and example.

Some people may think the definition given above far exceeds the definition of a basic Christian and that a disciple is after all a Christian who has made a higher level of commitment to Christ. However, in the Acts of the Apostles, believers in Jesus are typically referred to as disciples, twenty-eight times, in fact. Only later did the Gentiles in Antioch give them the nickname “Christians” (Acts 11:26), which stuck. But the two words were clearly synonyms. To be a true Christian is, by definition, to be a disciple.

Following Jesus as a disciple (or true Christian) is a process of learning to become more and more like Jesus Himself. The heart of this process is learning and obeying the teachings of Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit. What are some of the teachings in Jesus’ curriculum? Things like denial of self, wholehearted love for God, sacrificial love for neighbors, forgiveness of enemies, humility, servanthood, sexual purity, the fullness of the Holy Spirit, mission, and obedience; these are some of the major themes. They are basic, foundational things that every disciple should learn about and begin to practice as early as possible in his or her Christian life.

### What Is Discipleship and Discipling?

Being a disciple of Jesus and growing in Christlikeness is a wonderfully blessed but very challenging journey through life. This “ongoing process of growth as a disciple” is commonly referred to as discipleship. (Paul uses the equivalent idea of being conformed to the image of Christ [Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18] and calls believers to the same wholehearted surrender, commitment, and transformation as Jesus [Rom. 12:1].)

Whatever language we use to describe it, we must reckon with the fact that growing in Christlikeness takes time and will have difficulties along the way. In our “instant everything” culture, we periodically will need to remind ourselves and those we disciple that this process cannot be completed in a matter of weeks or even months; it is the work of a lifetime and will require patient perseverance.

With our American tendency toward individualism, we must also remember that it cannot be completed alone. An individualistic, do-it-yourself faith or “solo Christianity” is guaranteed to fail. That is why we must be an actively engaged member of a congregation of God’s people, where we have Christ-centered friends to walk with us and help us grow as disciples. This need has given rise to the word *discipling*, which “implies the
Thomas Aquinas called theology the “queen of sciences.” But the study of theology—the study of God—was gradually sidelined and now finds no place in the contemporary curriculum. Alexander Pope captured the spirit of our modern age:

Know then thyself, presume not God to scan; The proper study of Mankind is Man.

I have come to disagree with Mr. Pope. Focusing first on “Man” can get you into trouble. When I was in college, it was fashionable to have an identity crisis. Leaving family, rejecting friends, staying in school, or dropping out—any behavior was fair game as long as it contributed to the task of “finding” yourself. Not what it was cracked up to be, looking for yourself led to a descent down the rabbit hole, into a terrifyingly confused “Wonderland” filled with smiling Cheshire cats, Mad Hatters, and insane queens shouting “off with your head!”

Knowing God is what makes sense of life. Missing God leads to disaster. In his classic book Knowing God, J.I. Packer writes:

The world becomes a strange, mad, painful place, and life in it a disappointing and unpleasant business for those who do not know about God. Disregard the study of God and you sentence yourself to stumble and blunder through life blindfolded as it were with no sense of direction and no understanding of what surrounds you. This way you can waste your life and lose your soul.1

In contrast to Mr. Pope, the famous first question of the Westminster Confession asks, “What is the chief end of man?” The wonderful answer is “To glorify God and enjoy Him forever.”

Prior to my conversion, I had the impression that the study of theology was arid, intellectual, dry, and boring. I couldn’t have been more wrong. The pursuit of the knowledge of God has introduced me to great people, great authors, great ministries, and great thoughts.

Ever since then I have been on a journey to learn as much as I can about this God who called me. I am a pastor, but I didn’t go to seminary in order to enter the ministry. (During those first days of my Christian walk, I would lie in bed awake, fearful that God might require me to be a minister or a missionary.) I went for theological study because I wanted to learn more about God.

Frankly, it is good to know God. It’s how we learn to make sense of the world and especially of ourselves. Protestant Reformer John Calvin wrote, “Our wisdom . . . consists almost entirely of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves.” He continues, “By the knowledge of God, I understand that by which we not only conceive that there is some God, but also apprehend what it is for our interest.”

So how do we get to know this God so that we can enjoy Him? As Christians we believe that God has not left us to wander in the dark. Daily, moment by moment, all that He has created points to and speaks of Him. As David wrote, “The heavens declare the glory of God . . . even if there are no words, they continually speak of him” (Ps. 19:1–3). Part of the satisfaction of studying about God is learning to experience the fullness of His presence. The knowledge of God is all around us if only we could see it. Gerard Manley Hopkins enthused, “The world is charged with the grandeur of God.”

If we are to learn to hear silent declarations of creation, we need help. While the heavens declare the glory of God, they don’t declare His name, that is, His personality and character. The existence of multiple religions makes it clear that humankind can and has drawn many different conclusions about who God is and what He is like.

God in the Bible

If you want to know what a new acquaintance is like, it is wise to pay attention to what
he or she tells you and to observe that person’s actions. This is what we have in the Bible: God’s self-revelation in which He speaks about Himself and provides a record over generations and ages about how He acts.

The first five books of the Bible are attributed to Moses. Often called the Pentateuch (Greek for “Five Scrolls”) or the Torah (Hebrew for “Law”), they are the foundation for the entire Bible. Hebrew by birth, Egyptian by culture, royal by training, and desert shepherd by necessity, Moses was providentially shaped to be an agent of revelation, a prophet.

Imagine Moses’ first impression of God as he meets God in the flames of a burning bush. Light, heat, energy, power! God is more than a concept or an idea; God is a person, a shining presence who speaks as we meet Him in the fabric of creation.

In the account of Exodus 3, the very first action required of Moses is that he must take his sandals off because he is standing on “holy ground” (v. 5). The holiness of God is a central thread woven throughout the Bible, exemplified again in Moses’ encounter with God on Mount Sinai, the vision of the prophet Isaiah some seven hundred years later (Isa. 6:3), and the apostle John’s vision of heaven (Rev. 4:8).

Holiness is a mysterious concept that is hard to nail down. Words associated with it include unmixed, unpolluted, uncorrupted, separate, unique, just, righteous, sacred, precious, and honored. Holiness was not just for the Old Testament. Jesus makes the holiness of God central, as the prayer He teaches us begins, “Our Father in heaven, holy is your name” (Matt. 6:9).

Meeting with God as the holy God, for Moses and for all ever since, is a life-changing experience. R.C. Sproul describes his first encounter with God. As a college student, he was awakened and summoned from his bed in the middle of the night. At first he was overwhelmed with fear by a “foreboding presence.” As the fright subsided, he sensed a different “wave.”

It flooded my soul with unspeakable peace, a peace that brought instant rest and repose to my troubled spirit. At once I wanted to linger there. To say nothing. To do nothing. Simply to bask in the presence of God.

That moment was life transforming. Something deep in my spirit was being settled once for all. From this moment there could be no turning back; there could be no erasure of the indelible imprint of its power. I was alone with God. A holy God. An awesome God. A God who could fill me with terror in one second and with peace the next.4

It might be helpful to reflect on how God first got your attention. God is a God who steps into our world, interrupts us, and calls us to Himself and His purposes. Clearly this is what we see in the ministry of Jesus as Jesus walks into the fishing sites of Peter, James, John, and Andrew by the sea of Galilee and says, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people” (Mark 1:17 NRSV).

Immediately after declaring His holiness to Moses at the burning bush, God identifies Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Exod. 3:6). Look closely at this self-description of God. Growing up as a Hebrew in an Egyptian household, among people (continued on page 23)
David Livingstone was born in a cotton mill tenement in Blantyre, Scotland, on March 19, 1813. Now the David Livingstone Centre, the building was about to be demolished during the 1920s when it was saved by thousands of modest donations, many from Scottish Sunday school children. The center’s surrounding park features a fountain with a great marble hemisphere of the world and a dramatic statue of Livingstone being mauled by a lion. Karen Carruthers, manager of the David Livingstone Centre, says, “We get a lot of Africans coming here and for them this is genuinely a place of pilgrimage. Quite often they’ll burst into tears or sing.”

Two hundred years after his birth, David Livingstone is remembered and honored in Africa. Blantyre, the capital of Malawi, is named for Livingstone’s birthplace. The cities of Livingston in Zambia and Livingstonia in Malawi have retained the missionary’s name. In 2005 Zambia marked the 150th anniversary of Livingstone’s “discovery” of the great falls—“the smoke that thunders”—which he named Victoria for his queen. Friday Mufuzi, senior keeper of the Livingstone Museum in Zambia, says that unlike the majority of nineteenth-century missionaries who were seen as promoters of colonialism, Livingstone is regarded as “an icon” in Zambia. The name Livingstone, he explains, has become part of the very folklore of the country. One of the rituals when a new chief is being installed involves his pretending to swallow a stone, the kencheyo, which is said to be living. “When he ‘swallows’ it,” Mufuzi says, “it transforms him into a chief, so he becomes a living stone.”

The site in northeast Zambia where Livingstone died and his heart is buried stands a tall stone pillar with several inscriptions, including one added on the centenary of his death: “After 100 years David Livingstone’s spirit and the love of God so animated his friends of all races that they gathered here in Thanksgiving on 1st May 1973, led by Dr Kenneth David Kaunda, President of the Republic of Zambia.” President Kaunda led the singing and dancing and lauded Livingstone as Africa’s “first freedom fighter.”

The Making of the Missionary

David Livingstone’s Scottish heritage included a great-grandfather killed fighting on the Jacobite side at the Battle of Culloden, as well as Presbyterian Covenanters. His grandparents had migrated from the Highlands into central Scotland. Young David learned Gaelic from them and sometimes read the Gaelic Bible to his grandmother. David’s father was a door-to-door tea salesman who distributed gospel tracts with his tea. From David’s earliest years, Christian faith and hard work shaped his life. At age nine he could recite from memory all 176 verses of Psalm 119. At age ten he began to work in the Blantyre Mill. After working fourteen hours a day, he attended classes for another two hours, studying Latin, botany, theology, and mathematics.

The warm fellowship of the Congregational church where his family worshiped strengthened David’s faith and led to his dedication to foreign missions: “to consecrate my whole life,” he wrote, “to the advancement of the cause of our blessed Redeemer.” Intending to serve in China, he pursued both theological and medical studies, so that, like Christ, he could both preach and heal. When the Opium War closed the door to the China, Robert Moffat, a seasoned twenty-year missionary in Africa, challenged Livingstone to “advance to unoccupied ground” in Africa where, Moffat told him, he “had sometimes seen, in the morning sun, the smoke of a thousand villages where no missionary had
ever been.” Hearing those words, Livingstone found his life’s work.

The newly ordained minister and medical doctor was accepted by the London Missionary Society and arrived in South Africa, early in 1841, after a rough three-month voyage by way of Brazil. But his journey had only begun. He then slowly lumbered five-hundred-miles by ox cart from Port Elizabeth to Robert Moffat’s station at Kuruman.

David Livingstone would spend most of the next thirty-two years in Africa, as a missionary and explorer, covering some forty thousand miles on foot, by ox cart, steamer, or canoe through uncharted territory, suffering great hardship and much sickness, including twenty-seven bouts of malaria by one historian’s count. Running through all the years of his life was “the thread of devotion to Africa woven in with his concern that the continent should be Christianized.”

“The Smoke of a Thousand Villages”

For a few years Livingstone served in Kuruman where Robert Moffat, a skilled gardener, had created “an oasis in the wilderness” and was working hard to translate the Bible into the Tswana language. David eventually moved north to found a series of mission stations but continued to be drawn farther into the heart of the great unexplored continent. It is sometimes said that Livingstone stopped being a missionary and became an explorer, but the two roles were not opposed in his mind. He claimed his explorations were “missionary journeys” and that he was preparing “God’s highway” for those who followed. “The end of the geographical feat is the beginning of the missionary enterprise,” he said.

When he returned to Britain in 1856, Livingstone resigned from the London Missionary Society but returned to Africa the following year, commissioned by the British government as leader of an expedition to explore central and eastern Africa. Ten years later the Royal Geographic Society sponsored his further explorations.

Livingstone’s missionary strategy was summed up by three c’s—“civilization, commerce, and Christianity.” When he first caught a glimpse of Lake Nyasa, he had a vision of what “twenty or thirty good Christian Scotch families with their minister and elders” could do in this fertile place now stained by the tracks of slave traders. He never gave up his dream of white and black people dwelling together in the Christian lands of Africa. Livingstone’s aim was the welfare of the Africans themselves, not the promotion of European colonialism for its own ends.

Mary Moffat

In 1845 at age thirty, David Livingstone married twenty-three-year-old Mary Moffat, the eldest daughter of missionary Robert. He discovered and courted her at Kuruman while recuperating from serious injuries incurred in a lion attack. When Livingstone began his treks, Mary sometimes accompanied him. After all, this was her native-born continent. She crossed the great Kalahari plain twice, an incredible accomplishment in itself—say nothing of the fact that she was pregnant. When she was left behind at their small home in Mabotsa, Mary felt wretched and vulnerable. David too felt the pain of their separation but pressed on, sure that he was following God’s will. David loved Mary deeply, but he did not always treat her with loving-kindness. When he planned a longer and more dangerous journey, he decided to send Mary and their four children to England. It was a difficult time for Mary, who sank into depression, struggled with debt and, according to rumors, drank too much. For a time her mood was bitter and her faith fragile. (continued on page 26)
C.S. Lewis’s Humble and Thoughtful Gift of Letter Writing
(continued from page 1)

Lewis was a naturally gifted letter writer, and a great conversationalist and storyteller, reflecting the Irish gift of “blarney” from his homeland. And yet in his autobiography, Surprised by Joy, Lewis admits how much he dis-liked the labor of letter writing. He writes that in an ideal life “a man would have almost no mail and never dread the postman’s knock.”

However, something changed in his letter writing when he committed himself to following Jesus Christ. Lewis realized that if Jesus was who He claimed to be, then everything in his own life had to change, for, as Lewis wrote in his essay titled “Christian Apologetics,” “One must keep on pointing out that Christianity is a statement which, if false, is of no importance, and, if true, of infinite importance. The one thing it cannot be is moderately important.”

As a result of this conviction, Lewis was com-mitted to use all means of communication at his disposal to point others toward the truth that made sense out of history, art, philosophy, culture, religion, and all of life.

Letter writing became one of the vehicles by which Lewis could share the beauty, truth, and goodness of God with others. Having written letters all of his life prior to his conversion, it was natural for Lewis to continue to reply to letters received, just as he continued to engage in rambunctious conversation with his friends at the pub following his discovery of Christ. The difference was that now letter writing and conversations could be redeemed as natural outlets for Lewis to live out his faith. Perhaps the biggest difference in his pre- and post-conversion letter writing, besides the focus of his letters, was the sheer volume of letters to which he responded. Lewis received thousands of letters over the course of his lifetime once his books became known globally. Not only did he reply to the mother of an American boy, but he also wrote thousands of letters to friends, family members, and fans of his books and radio broadcasts, students, scholars, pastors, men in the armed forces, and others. Blogger Brenton Dickieson estimates that we have approximately 3,274 handwritten surviving letters of Lewis.

Lewis never learned to type, because he had only one joint in his thumbs, and the clackety-clack of the keys on the manual typewriter disturbed his thinking. The tactile dipping of the pen in ink, and the flow of the pen across the paper enabled him to write almost effortlessly. In fact, Lewis considered himself to be a “dinosaur” who didn’t want modern technology to distract him and upset his rhythm of life.

Many of Lewis’s handwritten letters have been published in a three-volume set edited by Lewis’s literary executor, Walter Hooper, titled, The Collected Letters of C.S. Lewis. Other individual collections are titled Letters to Children, Letters to an American Lady, They Stand Together: The Letters of C.S. Lewis to Arthur Greeves, The Latin Letters of C.S. Lewis, and Letters of C.S. Lewis saved and organized by his brother, Warren Lewis.

On top of these handwritten letters we could add the more than twelve thousand letters that Lewis’s brother, Warnie, typed with two fingers on his old Royal typewriter to help Lewis keep up with his commitment to personally reply to each letter received. Warnie lightened the work load for Lewis as he opened the mail and distinguished between the typical fan mail that could be dealt with by a standard reply and those gems that he felt Lewis would want to address more personally. Douglas Gresham, Lewis’s stepson, writes,

...amongst the usual clutter of Jack’s [Lewis’s] morning mail . . . Jack received letters from all over the world, most of which Warnie would answer for Jack and then take to Jack for his approval and signature. Jack could not type, and his handwriting was not exactly the most legible in the world, so Warnie handled the bulk of his correspondence.

Even with Warnie’s help, Lewis would spend an average of two hours each morning at his desk with pen and paper in hand, diligently and...
faithfully replying to his pen pals from around the world. And he did this for more than twenty years once he became a celebrated author and radio personality.

So perhaps the obvious question is why? Why in the midst of his busy life of tutoring, lecturing, writing, worshiping, caring for family members, and visiting with friends, did Lewis spend so much of his precious time replying to letters from children, women, and men from around the world?

One answer is that Lewis took seriously Jesus’ teaching in the Gospel of Matthew: “If anyone causes one of these little ones—that is, those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea” (Matt. 18:6 NIV). Lewis had a soft spot for children and a desire to tenderly care for and guide them. This was in part due to his own emotional and physical loss of love and security upon the death of his mom at age nine. He also endured the cruelty that was common in the English boarding schools of his day and the abuse of an insane boarding school principal. He didn’t want to repeat the sins of his father, nor of those adults in his early life who failed to nurture the young, impressionable souls in their midst. And so he stooped down humbly to address the concerns and questions that came to him through children’s letters. Toward the end of his life, he wrote to a child, “If you continue to love Jesus, nothing much can go wrong with you, and I hope you may always do so.”

Second, Lewis wrote in a letter to his childhood friend Arthur Greeves, with whom he shared more personal struggles and confidences, that he believed it was a duty to answer letters fully, especially when one is in the public eye and is shaping people’s thoughts and ideas. What is amazing about this statement? He not only answered letters from reasonable, sincere people, but he also responded to those who seemed whiny, lonely, and miserable. In his biography of Lewis, The Narnian, Alan Jacobs cites a case in which Lewis wrote 138 letters to one irritable American woman. Now that’s commitment to principle! Lewis’s sense of responsibility and fidelity to calling was solid, and he believed that as a disciple of Jesus Christ he needed to adhere to Peter’s admonition, “But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect” (1 Pet. 3:15 NIV).

Why did this American woman and others write so regularly to Lewis? I venture that, since he viewed this letter writing as part of his mission in life, his responses were so personal, helpful, and real that he made respondents feel as if he was their friend. The disarming presence that Lewis exuded when meeting people for the first time carried over into the way in which he engaged people on paper. He didn’t come across as a stuffy, erudite elitist; rather, he was able to communicate with people on their level. He made great efforts to try to understand where people were coming from and then find a way to best get his point across through a story, illustration, or sentences that may not even be grammatically correct. His goal was to connect with the heart and mind of the other person for the glory of God.

Third, and perhaps of particular importance, Lewis believed that each individual human being deserved to be treated with love and respect because each was created in the image of God. In a sermon preached in the Church of St. Mary the Virgin in Oxford, he states,

All day long we are, in some degree helping each other to one or other of these destinations [heaven or hell]. It is in the light of these overwhelming possibilities, it is with the awe and the circumspection proper to them,
that we should conduct all our dealings with one another, all friendships, all loves, all play, all politics. There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilization—these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit—immortal horrors or everlasting splendours . . . Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbour is the holiest object presented to your senses.9

Perhaps as much or more than in any other area of his life, through his faithful letter writing, Lewis lived out his belief that we must do all within our God-given power to influence other immortals toward the kingdom of God. Clyde Kilby writes, “The main cause [of Lewis’s faithful letter writing] was that Lewis believed taking time out to advise or encourage another Christian was both a humbling of one’s talents before the Lord and also as much the work of the Holy Spirit as producing a book.”10

Lewis’s letters addressed personal concerns, theological issues, questions about his books, and all kinds of everyday-life issues. One example of his ability to combine the personal with practical spiritual advice can be seen in Sheldon Vanauken's book A Severe Mercy. Vanauken shares the powerful impact C.S. Lewis’s writings, friendship, and letters had in leading him and his wife, Davy, to faith in Jesus Christ. Upon learning of Sheldon’s conversion via letter, Lewis wrote warmly, “My prayers are answered.” Then Lewis goes on to instruct the young believer, “There will be a counter attack on you, you know, so don’t be alarmed when it comes. The enemy will not see you vanish into God’s company without an effort to reclaim you. Be busy learning to pray.”11 This type of friendly kindness seasoned with clear instruction exemplified Lewis’s letters.

He also brings his own personal likes and dislikes into the letters, much as any friend would do when speaking at the conversational level. In one letter to Mary, an American lady, he writes, “...everyone writes to me at Easter, so that what ought to be a bright spot in the year threatens to become for me a very dark one. Will you, please, always avoid ‘holiday’ periods in writing to me?”12

Noting some of the different sorts of correspondents, Lewis states, “An anonymous postcard tells me that I ought to be flogged at the cart’s tail for professing to believe in the Virgin Birth . . . An unknown American writes to ask me whether Elijah’s fiery chariot was really a Flying Saucer. I encounter Theosophists, British Israelites, Spiritualists, Pantheists.”13

As Lewis dealt with such a variety of people and questions on a daily basis through the mail, he was able to develop his craft of writing letters to both entertain and engage recipients on important issues in a very down-to-earth style. This characteristic led to the book that launched his international fame, The Screwtape Letters. While sitting through a dull sermon one day, an idea struck him of writing a book that “would consist of letters from an elderly retired devil to a young devil who has just started work on his first ‘patient.’”14 Lewis’s daily discipline of correspondence provided the framework on which to shape a piece of fiction that could capture people’s imagination and clarify the issue of spiritual warfare. These fictitious letters provided readers a window into their own thoughts that helped them better understand their personal struggle with the world, the flesh, and the devil. By reading the enemy’s playbook, the follower of Christ was better equipped to put on the armor of God and access the power of the Holy Spirit in their daily lives. A year after its publication in Great Britain, it was published in the United States and was immediately acclaimed in Christian circles. Soon the number of letters from America increased exponentially. These American fans would not only send him letters, but also care packages containing hams, canned goods, paper, and other luxuries in short supply both during and following World War II.

Over the years Lewis would write works of apologetics, poetry, fantasy, science fiction, and sermons. His last published book, a sequel to...
The Screwtape Letters, was a set of fictional letters written to a “friend” titled Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer. This work, published posthumously, brought to a close the earthly letter-writing career of C.S. Lewis. Like his other letters, whether written to real people or fictional characters, they have continued to inspire and instruct people in their spiritual lives.

Recently, at the C.S. Lewis Institute, a young lawyer interviewing to be accepted into the Fellows program mentioned that her dad had been the most influential person, discipling her since she’d gone to college. I asked how her dad had fulfilled that role, especially once she’d left home. For the past ten years or so, from her first week of college up to the present day, he had faithfully written a weekly letter to her. He had kept her informed of life at home, given her fatherly words of advice, and had always told her how much he loved and cherished her as his daughter. Only recently had she started replying to his letters and perhaps stopped taking them for granted. She said that when her friends learn of her dad’s weekly letters, they seem envious of her relationship with her dad and his clear expression of love through letter writing.

In our modern world of text messages, tweets, and Facebook posts, perhaps Lewis has something to teach us about the importance of taking time to craft thoughtful letters to those whom God has placed in our lives. How would our work world change if we viewed each email as coming from another immortal? How could our letters, e-mails, tweets, or texts point others toward the kingdom of light if we were more intentional about our use of the written word? Or imagine what could happen if even once a week, we were to sit down at our desks, take out pen and paper, and write one letter of encouragement to a friend or family member? Perhaps we still have something to learn from the one who signed most of his letters, “Yours, C.S. Lewis.”

Notes:

12. Lewis, Letters to an American Lady, 29.

My correspondence involves a great number of theological letters already which can’t be neglected because they are answers to people in great need of help and often in great misery.

C.S. Lewis
communicate in Christian jargon, how can I show evidence of God’s kingdom? If the embassy is a place set apart, then the ambassador must also be different. As ambassadors for Christ, we invite others to look at us and see Christ. This is in fact my largest ongoing challenge. Our actions show the attitudes of our hearts—and in the office people see that. When we put forth that we are Christians, others observe how we work and how we treat other people, all to prove or disprove the attitudes they have about Christians and about Christ. Being an ambassador is not a low-risk proposition. However, as Christians we have unique resources. Jesus has promised He will never leave or forsake us. We have the gift of the Holy Spirit (John 16:7–11). And Christ has prepared good works ahead of time for us to do (Eph. 2:10). No ambassador has had better resources, though all ambassadors serve in a country that is not their own.

One of the first things people notice about colleagues and clients is how they treat other people. They watch to see if the coworkers are kind, helpful, considerate, or honest; whether they care about the work they do and about the people with whom they work. It is quite noticeable when someone is “in it for him- or herself.” Applying the label of Christian to ourselves invites an even more critical assessment. We must be aware of this.

The Bible is clear about our attitude toward our neighbors: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Lev. 19:18; Gal. 5:14) and “Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor” (1 Cor. 10:24). In the workplace, love for one’s neighbor expresses itself not only in interactions with colleagues and customers but also in seeking the success of the organization. This is not meant to overspiritualize our attitude and actions at the office. Rather, it is quite practical. There are not many coworkers who put others above themselves. Such people stand out. More is said about this below, but we are to work heartily as for the Lord and know we will receive our reward from Him (see Col. 3:23–24). This is a challenge and a comfort. We serve Jesus Christ, and our work as ambassadors is done for Him.

Our work and our faith go hand in hand. The quality and character of the work we do speaks about our faith—probably much more than any of our spoken words. And people observe our work. We can show our faith by the work we do: ‘But someone will say, ‘You have faith and I have works.’ Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works’ (James 2:18). Here the idea of works is not charitable or “Christian” works but the things we do day-in and day-out. Those works do not necessarily have to be “big things” and are most often the small, regular tasks. At work, most of the tasks we do are those regular tasks—the routine. Often people want to do the “big thing,” the high-impact job, and not the small, regular tasks. But when work is done “as for the Lord,” that work itself speaks the gospel. It is not the size of the task or job that has the impact; it is the Lord and what He can do and does through our faithful work. Ambassadors recognize that their work is not their own.

Not only do we show our faith by work, our work can point others to God. In His Sermon on the Mount Jesus said that as believers we are the light of the world. Like a city on a hill that cannot be hid or a lamp placed on a stand to light the entire house, we believers are to be about the regular tasks of work and life; that is where our light shines. Jesus said, “In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory.
to your Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 5:16). There is a progression here, sweeping upward. It begins with believers, doing the good works Christ has prepared for us. It moves to the others who see those good works and turn to give glory to our Father in heaven. The ambassadors’ work points others to their sovereign and to their homeland.

The Work We Do and Do Not Do

Knowing that others will give glory to our heavenly Father as they see our good works, our work is then to lift up Jesus. Speaking of Himself, Jesus promised “that I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself” (John 12:32). But what does that mean? Practically speaking, how do we “lift up Jesus”?

First, we ask Jesus to help us and to work through us. We want to abide in Him, knowing that apart from Him we can do nothing (John 15:5). An ambassador must stay connected to his or her sovereign. We ask that the Holy Spirit fill us and enable us to live true, first and foremost, to Jesus’ call and claim on our lives. We must lift up Jesus in our own lives. He must have first place in our hearts, and in everything Jesus is to be preeminent (Col. 1:18). We must live with increasing obedience to Him. Along these same lines, we also pray for ourselves, the others working in and visiting our workplace, and for God’s kingdom to come.

Second, we do our work diligently and to the best of our ability. The quality of what we do and the attitude by which we do it matters in the workplace. This may be the first way those working with us recognize the difference Christ makes in our lives. In my work, I have wanted to follow Paul’s instruction, “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ” (Col. 3:23–24). That instruction speaks of the attitude by which we work. It is not easy but we have that goal.

Third, we must recognize that in the workplace we are in a community of colleagues and clients. The workplace provides opportunities to interact and develop relationships with them and care for them. We must value the people we work with just as Jesus did. He came to seek and save the lost. At work we will encounter people whom we may not otherwise meet in other contexts and likely not (at first) in church. We must be prepared to give people an answer for the hope that is in us in the place where we meet them. The place for many of us is at our work—in the embassy we establish there. We lift up Jesus by acknowledging His involvement and action in our lives, and that includes the work we do and the business and busyness of our lives. Quite often I am reminded of how God is present with me at the office; if God did not come through, I would not be able to do my work and maintain my responsibilities. For example, there have been recent paydays where I have been waiting and praying for the cash to come in to pay my employees. By God’s grace, we have always made payroll. It would be wrong for me not to acknowledge God and His provision in such ways and within the community, my workplace, where He is acting.

Even though I can see how God is acting in our workplace, I am learning that not everyone at my workplace is or will be open to hearing about Jesus. There will be those who are eager to hear, and others who like to ask questions. Some will like working in a good environment but will not be curious or go beyond that. There may be others who actively oppose any expression of Christianity. We do not know what God is doing in the lives of those around us. Nor should we expect that only one conversation is needed or what God intends. It may be one conversation about God or a series of conversations that do not necessarily focus on God. Most likely it is through our daily work,
It is clear that Christianity does not exclude any of the ordinary human activities. St. Paul tells people to get on with their jobs... ‘Whether ye eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.’

C.S. Lewis

including actions that we are not aware of, that God is working or speaking. We may not know if we are planting seeds or working in the harvest. It is not necessary for us to know.

We do know, however, that an ambassador does not grant citizenship. Only the sovereign grants citizenship. By creating a place for the kingdom of God at our work, we act as ambassadors welcoming others and facilitating introductions. It is God the Holy Spirit who convicts the human heart and draws people to Christ (see John 16:8-11). Lifting up Jesus means that we are to be faithful to Him and to do work as unto Him. We are not to be ashamed to be known as Christians. In fact our job as ambassadors is to let God make His appeal through us. There is no need to shrink back or be afraid. It is God who is really at work. We are His ambassadors.

Notes:


2. All Scripture quotations in this article are from the English Standard Version.


4. See Jeremiah 29:4–7: Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

5. Matthew 5:14–16: You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Recommended Reading

Letters of C.S. Lewis, by C.S. Lewis, edited and with a memoir by W.H. Lewis, revised and enlarged edition edited by Walter Hooper

An important revision and expansion of the earlier collection of Lewis’s letters. Entries from Lewis’s diary are included, as is Warnie Lewis’s memoir of his brother’s life. Edited by Walter Hooper and W. H. Lewis; Introduction by Hooper; Index.
responsibility of disciples helping one another to grow as disciples.”

Discipling is a ministry to which all believers are called in some fashion. Someone has said that each of us needs to be in relationship with at least one person who is like a “Paul”—a more mature believer who can disciple (spiritually mentor) us; at least one like “Timothy”—a person younger in the faith whom we can disciple; and one or two peers like “Barnabas” (who encouraged Paul) to cheer us on.

What Are the Qualifications of a Disciple Maker?

To make disciples, you must be a disciple yourself. This doesn’t mean that you need to be a perfect disciple or a Bible scholar, only that you have a repentant faith, are committed to Jesus as Lord, and are seeking to follow Him in your daily walk. You should have been a disciple for a while and be reasonably well grounded in Scripture and established in your spiritual life. And you should also be humble enough to let your disciple know that you have your own struggles and aren’t perfect.

How Do We Make Disciples?

Jesus gave us clear, practical instructions. If we follow them, we will find success. He said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them . . . teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:19–20). What we have here is a main verb, make disciples, as an imperative that is amplified by three subordinate participles that share some of its force: going, baptizing, and teaching. Making disciples (learners, pupils, adherents) of Jesus is the focal point and begins with our going out to help nonbelievers learn more about who Jesus is, what He did on the cross, and how that applies to their lives, with the goal of helping them come to saving faith. But it doesn’t end there. It is characterized by encouraging and assisting those who repent and believe the gospel to be baptized and then teaching them to obey all that Jesus commanded His disciples to do. Failure to do the last part has had disastrous consequences for the church. Let’s look at each of these aspects in more detail.

Going

Going is the initial stage in making disciples. A literal rendering of the Greek text reads, “having gone, make disciples.” But because this participle has imperative force, the best way to express its meaning is to use the word go as does the English Standard Version. It is a command, not a suggestion. On a practical level, this means that we must take initiative, that we must be intentional about going out to make disciples. We may go nearby or we may go to the ends of the earth, but we must go. To whom do we go? Because the mission of Jesus and the kingdom is no longer focused exclusively on Israel (Matt. 10:5–6) but is now opened up to all ethnic groups, everyone is fair game.

Since the first step in becoming a disciple is to repent of sin and to trust Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, we need to understand the gospel message and learn how to share it with others. Many people find this idea unsettling, if not terrifying; but it need not be so if we are properly prepared. What exactly is the gospel message? Sometimes people confuse sharing the gospel with sharing their personal testimony. But the two are very different. Sharing one’s testimony is telling the story of how the gospel message brought you to salvation; it is not the gospel message itself. The heart of the gospel is the good news that “Christ died for our sins in accordance with
the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day, in accordance with the Scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:3–4). This simple message “is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” (Rom. 1:16).

Is it hard to share the gospel? Not really. The biggest obstacle is with us—our “fear of men” and what people will think of us, the impact on our reputation in the community, and the like. We need to resist this, ask God for increased courage, and step out in faith and obedience, trusting Him to teach, guide, and empower us.

In today’s world, sharing the gospel typically involves first building a relationship, and this takes time. At some point, when the time seems right, you could share the gospel very naturally by weaving something like this into a conversation: “God loves you so much that He sent His only Son to pay for your sins on the cross so that you can have everlasting life. Then He gave proof that Jesus was the divine Savior of the world by raising Him from the dead.” It is on the basis of this simple, powerful message that we invite men and women to repent of their sins and trust in the crucified and resurrected Christ for salvation. You could make that invitation by saying something like this, “If you believe that Jesus is the Son of God who died to pay for your sins and are ready to turn to Him for salvation, just tell Him so in your own words and give yourself to Him.”

How do we reach the point with someone where we can share this message? As noted, building a relationship is normally the first step. In each stage, it is vital to have the guidance and empowering presence of the Holy Spirit, for He is the agent of conversion and will give us wisdom. This means we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit, exhibiting an attitude of grace and love, no matter what a person’s particular sins may be. Jesus was able to love and accept sinners without compromising truth or righteousness, and He is our model. We aim to exhibit humility, gentleness, and respect and resist any tendency toward arrogance, cockiness, or having all the answers. Patience is also important; normally the process will take time, as we listen to questions and concerns, gently answer and address them, and share our own stories and experiences where appropriate.

The process of helping someone become a disciple of Jesus moves quickly with some people and takes longer with others. I have read that people who come to salvation have had some twenty-six exposures to the gospel before finally praying to receive Christ. Each encounter can be seen as a step that moves someone closer to Christ and salvation. That should be our goal. We should help people take as many steps as they are ready and willing to take. We may never see the final outcome, but that does not mean our efforts have been in vain. We are not responsible for the results; that is God’s work. Our responsibility is simply to share the message as clearly and lovingly as we can in the power of the Holy Spirit, asking the Spirit to apply it in His own way and time. Once we see that we have done all we can with a person in the evangelistic stage, we need to pray for God to bring the next witness into that person’s life to continue His work—to hand the person off, so to speak.

In our desire to see a response, we may become impatient for results. But we are ill-advised to use pressure tactics or manipulation,
Our responsibility is simply to share the message as clearly and lovingly as we can in the power of the Holy Spirit, asking the Spirit to apply it in His own way and time.

Baptizing

Once individuals have come to saving faith in Christ, the next step is to be baptized. In baptism they are publicly forsaking the world and declaring their allegiance to Jesus and submission to His lordship and entrance into His kingdom. In the New Testament, baptism was considered so important that converts were baptized immediately—even in the middle of the night, as with the Philippian jailer. Your role with such people is to help them understand the importance of obeying Jesus’ command to be baptized. An unbaptized disciple would have been unthinkable to the early church. Yet today it is not uncommon to find people who have prayed to receive Christ and even attend church but have not been baptized.

This brief, one-time event is the doorway into the fellowship of the church. We should do all we can to encourage converts to be baptized as soon as practically possible. Becoming a member of a healthy church, a community of disciples, is not optional; it is essential for spiritual survival and maturation.

Teaching

The person who has repented of his or her sins, trusted Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and has been baptized has become a disciple of Jesus. He or she is now in the school of discipleship—a follower, learner, and pupil of the Lord. Accordingly, the disciple-making process now shifts to teaching the new disciple to understand and obey the teachings that Jesus taught His first disciples (Matt. 28:19). This is the work of a lifetime. To progress, the new Christian needs help from a more mature disciple.

How do we facilitate this learning process, and where do we find teaching material? A vital key in the discipling process is to build a trusting relationship. Basic friendship is the goal. This can be developed in any number of ways. (See recommended resources at the end of this article.) The best frontline teaching material is the Gospel of Matthew, which was designed as a manual of discipleship and has been used for that purpose throughout church history. The Sermon on the Mount, the first of Matthew’s five teaching sections, is the specific place to begin. The other three Gospels also contain important material not found in Matthew and provide valuable teaching. Good study guides are available for this purpose.

As you disciple people, remember that simply learning Jesus’ teachings doesn’t make one a disciple. The true disciple obeys Jesus’ commands. How well the disciple engages in this process largely determines whether he or she will be a good disciple or a poor one.

The teachings of Jesus can be learned in several ways, and you should encourage your disciple to engage with each. The first priority is helping the disciple find and attend a church that teaches the Bible. Next, encourage regular, private reading and study of the Bible, along with memorization and meditation. Help him or her develop a regular practice of these important spiritual disciplines. Disciples also need to connect with other disciples in their church community through Bible study.
Learning to Make Disciples of Jesus: The Calling of Every Believer

groups and discussions where they can form friendships and benefit from the insights of others. Getting plugged into such a group is vital. But your most important role is to serve as a spiritual mentor through personal discipling, meeting regularly to talk about following Jesus and all that it involves. Remember that this is not a purely cognitive endeavor. All study must be dependent on the Holy Spirit’s illumination, should engage the emotions where appropriate, and ultimately lead to obedience.

As the disciple grows from a baby believer to an adolescent and then to a mature believer, the issues and challenges he or she must deal with will change. But no matter how long any of us lives, we will never graduate from Jesus’ school of discipleship. Throughout life, we all need the ministry of a discipler or spiritual mentor to encourage us along in the process of spiritual transformation—of being conformed into the image of Christ.

Where Do I Start?

“How could I ever do this?” you say. I don’t have the training or ability. It can be helpful to remind ourselves that Jesus’ first disciples were ordinary men with no special education or training other than knowing Him and learning from Him. They had neither college degrees nor high school diplomas, but He used them to turn the world upside down. And most of the discipling that has been done since Jesus’ day has been done by people like them. Reading a few good books on discipling and discipling can be helpful, but you don’t need a degree in religion or theology to disciple people effectively. You just need to know Him and His teachings, be filled with His Spirit, and be obedient. As you step out in faith and obedience, you will ultimately learn by doing. And the longer you do it, the more effective you become.

One good way to start discipling is to be a small-group co-leader with a more experienced discipler. That way you can be coached by someone. Or you can serve as a group facilitator, using a resource like Multiply or Discipleship Essentials. This way, you are not expected to have all the answers. In any case, discipling is learned through experience; the more you do it, the more effective you become. There is no other way.

Ultimately, the most important thing you need is provided by Jesus Himself. He told His first disciples, “I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matt. 28:20). The promise of His presence (through the Holy Spirit) remains in full force for all who follow in their steps. He will be with you and me every step of the way as we seek to do the work of making disciples, work we could never do in our own strength.

Recommended Resources

Making Friends: The Friendship Factor, Alan McGinnis (Augsburg)
Making Friends, Em Griffin (InterVarsity).

Evangelism: Questioning Evangelism, Randy Newman (Kregel Publications)
Bringing the Gospel Home, also by Randy Newman (Crossway)
Two Ways to Live (Matthias Media)

Discipleship Books:
Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time, Greg Ogden (InterVarsity)
In His Image: Reflecting Christ in Everyday Life, Michael Wilkins (NavPress)
Studies in the Sermon on the Mount, D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones (Martino or Eerdmans).
Multiply, Francis Chan and Mark Beuving (Cook);
Discipleship Essentials, Greg Ogden (InterVarsity).

Notes:

1. All Scripture quotations in this article are from the English Standard Version.
3. Michael Wilkins, Following the Master (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 41.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid
who worshiped many different gods, Moses’ view of God up to this point would have been influenced by a variety of sources. Unlike today, when the common question for many is “do I believe in God?” the question for Moses would have been “which god do I worship?”

You may not think that you face the same sort of question that Moses did. After all, we don’t live in a polytheistic society. But the “many gods” now masquerade as “belief systems” and “theological inclinations.” Liberal, conservative, secular, modern, Muslim, Mormon, Buddhist, atheist, agnostic—it’s everywhere! Each of us, consciously or unconsciously, makes choices about which god to worship.

God chose to make His character known to Moses by associating Himself with certain people Moses knew about: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Those stories, passed down through the generations of the Hebrews, told about a certain God who provided, protected, and blessed—the accounts we read in the book of Genesis. As God has chosen to make Himself known by association, there are people in your life, sent by God, who provide important information about what God is like. Pay attention to them.

To Moses at the burning bush, God also reveals what He is like when He says, “I have indeed seen the misery of my people . . . So I have come down to rescue them” (Exod. 3:7–8). Like holiness, salvation is a theme that runs through the Bible. The Israelites’ exodus from Egypt shows us something significant about the character of God: He is a saving God. This stands in stark contrast to the gods of the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, or Babylonians who were not especially interested in saving anybody. Saving Israel from slavery in Egypt by Moses, saving us from spiritual slavery to sin and Satan, God is not willing for His creation to become co-opted and corrupted and to be in a place of enduring pain and misery. Mary celebrates the saving character of God when the angel announces the coming birth of her son. “My spirit rejoices in God my Savior” (Luke 1:47 NRSV).

I love the way the psalmist celebrates the character of God.

The LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made . . . The LORD is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made. The LORD upholds all those who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down. (Ps. 145:8–9, 13–14)

God is holy. God is the God of Moses’ ancestors. God is a saving God. These are important pieces of information for Moses. But there is more: Moses wants to know God’s name (v. 13). It’s the ultimate question, because we can’t claim to know anybody if we don’t know that person’s name. Think about brand names; they convey the importance of a name. Car, shoe, guitar are generic names. We know a great deal more when we know the brand name: BMW, Nike, Martin.

The name God provides is not generic; it is His brand. He is not just any god, He is “I AM WHO I AM”

The name God provides is not generic; it is His brand. He is not just any god, He is “I AM WHO I AM” (v. 14). Commentators struggle to mine its meaning. “I Am the One Who Is” or “I Am the One Whom You Shall Know” are two of the proposed options. “I Am” is how God wants to be addressed.

C.S. Lewis’s portrayal of Aslan in the Chronicles of Narnia portrays the wonder and thrill of hearing God name Himself.

“Who are you?” asked Shasta.

“Myself,” said the Voice, very deep and low so that the earth shook: and again “Myself,” loud and clear and gay; and then the third time “Myself,” whispered so softly you could hardly hear it, and yet it seemed to come from all round you as if the leaves rustled with it . . .

. . . But after one glance at the Lion’s face he slipped out of the saddle and fell at its feet. He
God’s Character and Personality

couldn’t say anything but then he didn’t want to say anything.5

God has revealed Himself most completely through Jesus Christ. The first Christians came to the conclusion that Jesus is “the image of the invisible God” (Col. 1:15). That is,

The God revealed in the Bible from the first lines of Genesis 1 is the Maker, the Craftsman, the Workman, the Governor, the Speaker . . .

Jesus is the “visible God” and reliably embodies the character of God (Heb. 1:3). If you want to know God, pay close attention to Jesus, who He is, what He taught, what He did. Reflecting on God from the Old Testament to the New, the church through the ages discovered a complex being, a triune God, a Trinity of persons comprising one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

What we take away from our theological reflection is that I have a Creator who provides for me, protects me, has purposes for me, and has a place for me in His world. In God I have a Savior who rescues me from the problems of the corrupted world. In God I have a Holy Spirit who indwells me: He provides insight, inspiration, encouragement, inspiration, and empowerment.

The God revealed in the Bible from the first lines of Genesis 1 is the Maker, the Craftsman, the Workman, the Governor, the Speaker . . . How different from the unmoved mover of Greek philosophy or the “higher power” that stands and watches us from a distance. Your God Is Too Small is the title of a great little book written in the middle of the twentieth century. No matter who we are and at what stage of our spiritual journey, we can all say that the way we think about God isn’t big enough.

The Pursuit of God

The desire to know and proclaim the knowledge of God is not only what the Bible is about. It is the subject of innumerable books—filling libraries. The mystery of God draws us. Consider Augustine’s take:

You awake us to delight in your praise; for you made us for yourself, and our heart is restless, until it rests in you.6

What, therefore, is my God? . . . most secret and most truly present . . . unchangeable, yet changing all things; never new, never old; . . . always working, ever at rest; gathering, yet needing nothing . . . You love, but without passion; are jealous, yet free from care; repent without remorse; are angry, yet remain serene.7

The Westminster Catechism, written in the seventeenth century to instruct children in the knowledge of God, succinctly and memorably asks the question and provides the answer.

Question: What is God?

Answer: God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.

Writing in the twentieth century, A.W. Tozer notes:

God is a Person, and in the deep of His mighty nature He thinks, wills, enjoys, feels, loves, desires and suffers as any other person may . . . The continuous and unembarrassed interchange of love and thought between God and the soul of the redeemed man is the throb- bing heart of New Testament religion.8

St. Anselm in the eleventh century said that study of God was “faith seeking understanding.” The whole history of the church shows that knowing God is a journey of delight and desire. St. Bernard in the twelfth century said it this way:

We taste Thee, O Thou Living Bread,
And long to feast upon Thee still:
We drink of Thee, the Fountainhead
And thirst our souls from Thee to fill.
The knowledge of the triune God is not something we merely possess, but something that possesses us. Tozer challenges us to:

*Come near to the holy men and women of the past and you will soon feel the heat of their desire after God. They mourned for Him, they prayed and wrestled and sought for Him day and night, in season and out, and when they had found Him the finding was all the sweeter for the long seeking.*

The pursuit of the knowledge of God is not a duty or a drudge, but a journey filled with bright and shining light that leads to enjoyment and pleasure, now and for all eternity.

**Notes**

3. Ibid., I.2.1.
7. Ibid., I.4.
9. Ibid., 7.

To believe that God—at least this God—exists is to believe that you as a person now stand in the presence of God as a Person. What would, a moment before, have been variations in opinion, now become variations in your personal attitude to a Person. You are no longer faced with an argument which demands your assent, but with a Person who demands your confidence.

*C.S. Lewis*
But she prayed, “Accept me, Lord, as I am, and make me such as thou wouldst have me be.” 12

After years of separation, Mary returned to Africa, leaving her children behind in England. She and David had three months together before she died of fever on April 27, 1862. She was buried beneath a baobab tree on the banks of the Zambesi in a destitute region of Mozambique. Livingstone wept like a child, and for the first time in his life, he said, he too was “willing to die.”13

This bicentennial year of Livingstone’s birth has produced not only new books about his life and work, but also a much-needed book about Mary—Looking for Mrs. Livingstone.14 Alexander McCall Smith writes in the introduction that Julie Davidson “has created in this remarkable work of historical and geographical reflection a fascinating picture of a remarkable life.” 15

“Living-Stone”

The years took their toll on David Livingstone, but he carried on, determined to fight slavery and track down the elusive Nile, thereby providing a route for commerce and Christianity into the heart of Africa. He hoped, he said, that “when the day of trial comes” he would “not be found a more sorry soldier than those who serve an earthly sovereign.”16

For months no one heard from Livingstone until the Welsh-American journalist Henry Morton Stanley, on behalf of the New York Herald, found him in the heart of Tanzania on November 10, 1871. Stanley greeted him with the famous handshake and words, “Dr. Livingstone, I presume.” Livingstone refused to go home to Britain with Stanley. He wanted to continue his work in his beloved Africa.

At the age of sixty, David Livingstone died in what is now Zambia, on May 1, 1873, at four in the morning, kneeling in prayer beside his cot. His African friends, former slaves he had freed, buried his heart under a tree, read the funeral service from the Book of Common Prayer, and then sat down “and cried a great deal.” They wrapped his body in calico and dried it in the sun to preserve it for the long trip back home. They treked fifteen hundred miles to the coast, a journey of more than eight months. David Livingstone’s body was brought back to England and buried at Westminster Abbey on April 18, 1874. The great congregation sang, thundering forth the “Old One Hundredth” tune of the doxology: “Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heavenly host: praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.”

Livingstone’s tomb in the center of the nave of Westminster Abbey bears the inscription: “Brought by faithful hands over land and sea, David Livingstone: Missionary, Traveler, Philanthropist. For thirty years his life was spent in an unwearied effort to evangelize the [Africans], to explore the undiscovered secrets and abolish the slave trade. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.”

A British magazine paid tribute to the famous missionary-explorer with these words:

He needs no epitaph to guard a name
Which men shall prize while worthy work is known;
He lived and died for good—be that his fame:
Let marble crumble: this is LIVING-STONE.17

His Legacy

There are more than one hundred biographies of David Livingstone. The earliest books picture him as a servant of God who became a great missionary and courageous champion of Africans, giving his last years and ebbing strength to fighting the slave trade. Florence Nightingale spoke for many when she called him “the greatest man of his generation.”18 Anglican bishop and missiologist Stephen Neill
wrote, “I have not found it necessary to revise my opinion, formed many years ago, that the two great men of the nineteenth century were Abraham Lincoln and David Livingstone.”

Later studies concentrated on Livingstone’s faults and failures and his supporting role in the European colonizing of Africa. Tim Jeal’s Livingstone, published in 1973, the year of the centenary of Livingstone’s death, “seemed intended to reduce Livingstone to a good deal less than half-size,” according to Neill.

While sharply critical of Livingstone at some points, Cecil Northcott in David Livingstone: His Triumph, Decline, and Fall, also published in 1973, states that his “critical judgment is in no sense a demolition. [Livingstone] remains essentially, I think, a great and unique person.” “If I have laid the accent on failure,” Northcott writes, “it is because somewhere within that failure lies the essence of his triumph.”

Sarah Worden, curator of the David Livingstone bicentenary exhibition in the Royal Scottish Museum, says that Livingstone is “a complex and engaging subject, a fascinating story of a man who seems on the one hand larger than life, determined and driven, but essentially a fallible and vulnerable individual.”

David Livingstone combined conflicting characteristics. He was stubborn and long-suffering, judgmental and generous, harsh and gentle, proud and humble, reckless and courageous.

Both friends and enemies noted that he could be notoriously stubborn. The London Missionary Society (LMS) found it difficult to control its famous missionary. Livingstone wrote to the LMS that he would try to follow its instructions, adding that he was willing to go anywhere, “provided it be forward.” And Livingstone believed that he knew better which way was forward. A friend commented lightheartedly that “in an Englishman we might, I think, have called the phase obstinance, but with Livingstone it was Scottishness.”

Livingstone drove himself beyond reason and expected others to do the same. He could be ruthless, at times, in his disregard of people’s feelings. Longtime friend John Kirk joined Livingstone on his Zambezi expedition but became furious with Livingstone’s leadership, throwing a copy of Livingstone’s Missionary Travels into the river. But Henry Stanley, who stayed with Livingstone for four months, wrote that he could not wish for a “happier companion, a truer friend, always polite—with a politeness of the genuine kind.”

David Livingstone recognized his failures. He realized, he said, that his heart was
“sometimes fearfully guilty of distrust,” and he was ashamed to think of it. 27

In a review of Oliver Ransford’s David Livingstone: The Dark Interior, Stephen Neill notes that Ransford acknowledges the “less pleasant side” of Livingstone alongside his “real greatness”: “his love for Africa and Africans, his deep hatred of the slave trade, his concern for the spread of the gospel, the immense services he rendered to Africa.” 28

His Love for Africa and Africans

David Livingstone shed much light on “the dark continent” in his books, in which he treated geographical, scientific, linguistic, and cultural observations with explanations of his missionary work. 29

Livingstone’s attitude toward the people of Africa contrasted sharply with that of most nineteenth-century Europeans. The Boer farmers’ “stupid prejudice against colour” and their treatment of the Africans infuriated him, as did British policy in the Cape. 30 He defended the rights of the Xhosa to fight for their land, and justified the 1851 rebellion of the Hottentots.

Livingstone developed deep friendship with Africans and valued their opinions and culture. He displayed more trust and openness toward Africans than he sometimes did toward his European colleagues. He believed that Africans were more resistant to the gospel because of the oppressive white people they had met. He thought that “the natives always become much worse somehow after contact with the Europeans.” 31 Livingstone’s “missionary principles gave the primacy to Africans in the work of evangelizing Africa.” 32

Northcott summarizes Livingstone’s work: “He took Africa seriously and treated its people accordingly. Following his footsteps, no one any longer could call Africa a continent of savages, and in his wake followed a volume of goodwill to Africa that would have surpassed all his dreams.” 33 Andrew Walls agrees: “His life and writings show a respect for Africans and African personality unusual at the time, and his confidence never wavered in African capacities and in the common humanity of African and European.” 34

His Deep Hatred of the Slave Trade

Livingstone met slavery first in South Africa and later, in its Arab and Portuguese form, in East Africa. He drove himself relentlessly to do what he could to destroy the slave trade—“the open sore of the world,” he called it. 35 His exploratory journeys were done with one aim—to open up Africa for commerce and Christianity, which was the only way, he believed, to overcome slavery.

In the year Livingstone died, the last slave was sold openly in the Zanzibar market. “His exposure of the African inland slave trade could well be counted his greatest achievement,” concludes Northcott. 36

Andrew Walls writes that Livingstone’s later career was dominated by the desire to root alien oppression out of Africa. There is real truth behind the title of one of the popular biographies—Livingstone the Liberator . . . If Livingstone is a herald of imperialism,
he is also more importantly and permanently a herald of African independence. In this . . . he is typical of the missionary movement of his day. In some respects it led the way to empires. But, more than any other force of Western origin, it pointed beyond them.37

His Concern for the Spread of the Gospel

Livingstone was much ahead of his time in sympathizing with the Africans’ struggle to connect Christianity with their culture.38 When Sechele, king of the Bakwena people—sometimes called Livingstone’s only convert—asked about polygamy, Livingstone urged him to seek the counsel of the Bible. The king decided that the Bible did not instruct him to give up all the customs of his people, although it required him to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Livingstone’s life and testimony impressed many Africans, and they became his friends. God alone knows how many became true Christians. Henry Stanley called Livingstone a “truly pious man—a man deeply imbued with real religious instincts. His religion . . . is of the true, practical kind, never losing a chance to manifest itself in a quiet, practical way—never demonstrative or loud.”39

Livingstone ended his famous Cambridge speech in December 1857 with the words, “I go back to Africa to try to open up a path for commerce and Christianity. Do you carry out the work which I have begun.”40 The response was immediate and impressive. The Universities’ Mission to Central Africa was established and supported by Anglicans at the universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Dublin, and Durham. A little later, soon after Livingstone’s death, both the Free Church of Scotland and the Church of Scotland began missionary work in Africa.

Livingstone’s example challenged people in the nineteenth century to go as missionaries or to support those who went. James Stewart, who accompanied Livingstone in 1862, recovered his respect for his hero and served at the Lovedale Institution in the Eastern Cape of South Africa until his death in 1905. Mary Slessor’s missionary call to Africa was confirmed by the death of David Livingstone in 1873. Two years later she arrived in Calabar. Young William Henry Sheppard, an African-American born in the South
David Livingstone (1813–1873)

during the era of slavery, went to the Congo in 1890 because Livingstone considered it to be a promising mission field. Peter Cameron Scott, founder of the African Inland Mission, was inspired to return to Africa in 1895, when he read the inscription on Livingstone’s tomb, “Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring.” Alexander Mackay became an engineer missionary to Uganda in 1876, inspired by Livingstone’s conviction that missions should transform the material as well as the moral and spiritual aspects of African life. The list of missionaries of “the great century” inspired by David Livingstone’s example would no doubt reach into the hundreds.

Tim Jeal judged that “Livingstone appears to have failed in all he most wished to achieve . . . Undoubtedly Livingstone’s greatest sorrow would have been that Africa never became a Christian continent.” When Jeal wrote those words in 1973, there were already millions of Christians in Africa. Today there are many more, at least 390 million. Philip Jenkins predicts that “by 2025, Africa and Latin America will vie for the title of the most Christian continent.”

David Livingstone believed that “the missionary enterprise” included “every effort made for the amelioration of our race, the promotion of all those means by which God in His providence is working, and bringing all his dealing with man to a glorious consummation.” These words, supported by a lifetime of devoted labor, sum up Livingstone’s view of God’s world mission and our participation in it. T.J. Thompson has written, “As ‘the real Livingstone,’ faults and all, is rediscovered, his continuing relevance for mission in the twenty-first century will be revealed.”

Notes:

1. There are impressive statues of David Livingstone in Princes Street Gardens in Edinburgh and at Cathedral Square in Glasgow.
3. Ibid., 73.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
7. Ibid., 22.
8. Ibid., 14.
11. There is a Mary Moffat Museum at her birthplace, Griquatown, eight hundred miles north of Cape Town.
15. McCall Smith made several journeys to Botswana to visit a childhood friend, Howard Moffat (a member of the same family as Robert Moffat and Mary Moffat Livingstone), who ran a small hospital in a village north of Gaborone. McCall Smith writes, “I had always admired Howard’s work, which has been much the same in its concerns and spirit as that of his missionary forebears.” McCall Smith’s visits to Botswana became the inspiration for his famous No. 1 Ladies’ Detective Agency series.

Without Christ, not one step; with Him, anywhere!

David Livingstone
Profile in Faith

RECOMMENDED READING

The Life and African Exploration of David Livingstone by Dr. David Livingstone

During his travels as a missionary, David Livingstone beheld many previously unknown wonders of the African interior. He put Victoria Falls and Lake Ngami on the map, and was the first white man to cross the African continent. Diaries, reports and letters are combined to create a wonderful narration of Livingstone’s travels in a widely unknown continent. Included in this harrowing tale is Livingstone’s narrow escape from a lion’s wrath, his negotiations with an African chief, and his account of the Portuguese slave traders brutally punishing slaves after their attempt to escape. The Life and African Explorations of Livingstone also reveals Livingstone’s deeply-rooted Christian beliefs and the strength he took from them, strength that allowed him to live and thrive amid the hardships of equatorial Africa.

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The Retreat at Perimeter Summit, Atlanta, Georgia
Bill Smith, Atlanta Director | b.smith@cslewisinstitute.org | 404-271-4124

A Loving God OR Cosmic Tyrant?

Dr. Peter Williams
September 20-21, 2013
Fourth Presbyterian Church, Bethesda, Maryland

GLITTERING Vices:
A New Look at the Seven Deadly Sins and their Remedies

Dr. Rebecca DeYoung
November 8-9, 2013
GREATER WASHINGTON DC AREA