The Generous Heart and Life of C.S. Lewis

by Joel S. Woodruff, Ed.D.
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C.S. Lewis’s classic The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe begins,

Once there were four children whose names were Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy. This story is about something that happened to them when they were sent away from London during the war because of the air-raids. They were sent to the house of an old Professor who lived in the heart of the country . . . He had no wife and he lived in a very large house with a housekeeper . . . and three servants.¹

What Lewis doesn’t tell the reader is that in real life he was the generous old (middle-aged) professor who opened up his home near Oxford to shelter and care for children who were evacuated from London and other cities during the German air raids of World War II. This act of hospitality was in part the inspiration behind the Chronicles of Narnia and is just one example of the kindness that permeated the life of C.S. Lewis, a generous follower of Christ.

The Reluctant Convert

In Lewis’s earlier years, generous probably wouldn’t have been the word used to describe the erudite young scholar. Some who knew him in those days might have preferred the word smug. His pride came to him naturally out of a brilliant mind, hardened on the battlefields of World War I and acclaimed through academic success. In the 1920s he finished his student years at Oxford with a rare “triple first,” graduating with first-class honors in three different disciplines, philosophy, classics, and English language and literature. He won the Chancellor’s Prize for an English essay. And he began lecturing at Oxford and published his first book, Dymer, a poem in rhyme royal, all by the age of twenty-eight. Lewis was eloquent, quick on his feet, and ready to ride roughshod over others in debate with his sarcasm and satirical wit.

His prideful ways, however, were tempered as he began his search for truth and meaning in life. This quest, chronicled in his book Surprised by Joy, eventually came to a crisis point: “That which I greatly feared had at last come upon me. In the Trinity term of 1929 I gave in, and admitted that God was God, and knelt and prayed: perhaps that night, the most dejected and reluctant convert in all England.”² Lewis soon would wholeheartedly commit his life to serving Jesus Christ as (continued on page 12)
Dear Friends,

Do you feel a certain stirring in your heart whenever you see God inject Himself specifically in a person’s life? Or when people humble themselves, perhaps at great cost, in order to serve or defend other persons? Doesn’t that move you in a powerful way? It does me. In this issue, we bring you a variety of stories that show God at work in amazing ways through a variety of people and images.

C.S. Lewis is shown as a great role model of generosity, humility and hospitality. Joel Woodruff explores Lewis’s life-long adventure of seeking ways to help those around him. David Calhoun describes how God showed George Washington Carver just enough of a glimpse into His world that he revolutionized aspects of agriculture and made a dramatic impact for the Lord. Everyone has a call from God, but we can all be inspired when we see the call answered in such a meaningful way.

Catherine Sanders shows us God’s miraculous intervention in her husband Wallace’s near-death experience that arose from a seemingly simple virus. We see God using a community of friends, nurses and doctors who witnessed and participated in this miracle.

The famous painting, The Wedding at Cana, by Paolo Veronese, is explored by Joe Kohm for its beauty, meaning and call to obedience. We can see just a glimpse of God’s creativity through the eyes of this artist who was given such a powerful gift.

Bill Smith, our Atlanta Director, describes his challenge to the church and all of us to live fully-formed, experiential lives of transformation through authentic discipleship, not the vague “spirituality” we see so much of these days. And Tom Tarrants adds to his series on fighting sin by warning us against the effects of living a life as a “carnal Christian.” Given the darkness in our culture today, we must be sure to pursue God’s truth, not our sinful desires.

We are excited to begin a series of articles by Jay Link providing practical advice on stewarding all that God has given us. I believe you will find the insights Jay offers in this and upcoming articles on this topic to be challenging and thought-provoking.

God is working today in powerful ways and the evidence is all around you. Have you taken the time to fully explore God’s call on your life? Trust me; He has an exciting adventure waiting for you.

Sincerely,

Kerry A. Knott
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Alive Due to Divine Intervention

by Catherine Sanders
C.S. Lewis Institute Fellow

“Catherine, he’s by far the sickest person here.”

I sat on the edge of a chair at Virginia Hospital Center in Arlington as an intensive care unit (ICU) nurse explained what was wrong with my husband, Wallace. Just forty-eight hours earlier we’d been enjoying a wonderful, warm spring day, playing on the playground after church with our two daughters—Caroline, age four, and Lucy, eighteen months. Now Wallace was in the ICU on life support, his heart, kidneys, and lungs having failed.

Last year, my forty-one-year-old husband nearly lost his life. The trauma of the experience is on a level that we are still trying to comprehend and process. The healing that took place, however, was even greater.

Caroline was the first to come down with a fever. Soon Wallace had one. Neither had any other symptoms, but when Wallace complained that he couldn’t catch his breath, we headed for the emergency room (ER). Little did we know that he was only a few hours from death.

With blood pressure of 65/20, he was, unbelievably, able to walk into the ER. They tested his heart, took his blood, and tried to give him oxygen. It didn’t help. The ER doctor told Wallace he could be intubated, sedated, and receive oxygen through a ventilator. “Do whatever it takes,” Wallace said. “I just want to be able to breathe.”

So he was sedated and intubated, and that was the last time I talked to him for nearly two weeks.

I suddenly panicked, wondering whether she, too, might develop breathing problems.

Then I fainted. The next thing I knew I was sitting in a chair being offered juice and crackers. “Do you need to be admitted?” a nurse asked.

“No, I just need some time to recover.” I’ll be fine. I’ll be fine. What will happen to our girls if I too, end up in the hospital?

Soon I met Dr. Jeff Hales—the pulmonologist and critical care doctor from the ICU. I had no idea, then, how important this man would be in saving Wallace’s life.

They thought Wallace had pneumonia, but they weren’t sure why. They had taken cultures of his blood, but it would take forty-eight hours for bacteria—if it was the cause—to grow and reveal what was making him so ill. They were very interested that Caroline, too, had a fever, which led them to believe she and Wallace had contracted the same bug. They gave Wallace broad spectrum antibiotics, oxygen through the ventilator, vasopressors to support his heart, and goodness knows what other medications.

When the first of many bronchoscopies revealed that Wallace had fluid in the pleural space around his lungs, a drainage tube was surgically inserted. He was assigned only the most experienced ICU nurses that week, who worked harder than anyone I’ve ever seen. And more than fifty doctors would work on his case before he eventually left the hospital.

The Body of Christ

In his letter to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul likens followers of Christ to different parts of the

(continued on page 16)
What Is My Relationship to My Stuff?

by E.G. “Jay” Link
President, Stewardship Ministries

This is clearly the most foundational question we must answer if we are going to make any progress in our attitudes, perspectives, and decisions in relation to material things—particularly material wealth. If we cannot answer this question with clarity and confidence, we will find ourselves—in spite of our financial successes—underachieving in our lives. If you think of this question as a stool with three legs upon which the answer is balanced, you will be able to better envision the truth about your stuff.

Leg 1

The first leg of this stool is the fact that God owns everything because He created everything. King David tells us in Psalm 24:1, “The earth is the Lord’s and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it” (NASB). He goes on to add in Psalm 50:10–12 (CEV),

Every animal in the forest belongs to me,
and so do the cattle on a thousand hills.
I know all the birds in the mountains,
and every wild creature is in my care.

If I were hungry, I wouldn’t tell you,
because I own the world and everything in it.

Not only did God create everything that exists, He used all of His own materials to build it. So He truly is the only One who can claim to own anything.

If we build something, we may claim it is ours, but if we use someone else’s materials to build it, then the owner of those materials can lay some claim to it as well. But in God’s case, He not only dreamed it all up, He used His own creative materials to build it.

Leg 2

The second “leg” of this stool is the fact that not only did God create us, but He also redeemed us from slavery to the prince of this world through the death of His son, Jesus Christ. Paul tells us in Titus 2:13b–14, “Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds” (NASB).

This word redeem that Paul uses here is no longer commonly used in our culture today. When I was a young boy it was used often. I remember going to the grocery store with my mother. At the checkout counter, she would be given a certain number of S&H Green Stamps, depending on how large her grocery purchase was. The reason I remember this so well is because I was charged with the task of licking those “tasty” little stamps and then putting them into the books.

My mother had a catalog filled with all kinds of products—everything from small kitchen appliances to a car. I was hoping my mother was not saving stamps for the car because it was several thousand Green Stamp books. I could see my tongue being forever stuck to the roof of my mouth from licking that many stamps! What made the Green Stamp catalog so unusual was that instead of having prices for each item, it had the number of S&H Green Stamp books needed. A hand mixer might be four and a half books and a television 120

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books. Do you remember the name of the place where you went to get these products? It was called the Redemption Center. It was the place where you would take your Green Stamp books to redeem the item you wanted. In other words, you traded in your stamp books for something you wanted to own.

This is what God did with Jesus. God was willing to redeem us by offering the blood of His own Son, so He could again own us—“a people for His own possession.” You see, God owns Christians twice—once because He made us and the second time because He bought us back after we were lost.

One last thought on this leg: what was the reason Paul gave in Titus 2:14 for why God was willing to redeem us? It was so we could be “zealous for good deeds.”

Leg 3

The final leg is the fact that we own nothing. We are called by God to be stewards, carrying out the Owner’s wishes for His property. It is at this point that we need to come to grips with the terribly misplaced and abused concept of stewardship.

Before I focus on what stewardship does mean, let me tell you what it does not mean. Churches routinely use the term stewardship to refer to their capital campaigns. These campaigns are simply fund-raisers used to get church members to give. But since fundraiser has such a negative connotation, they substitute (incorrectly) the seemingly nobler phrase stewardship drive.

You will often hear churches and pastors use stewardship as a synonym for tithing. I have seen in many church papers and bulletins the term stewardship used as a heading to report the weekly offerings and attendance. All of these uses that link stewardship to giving and tithing are inadequate at best—and entirely wrong at worst.

By definition, a steward is “a person who manages another’s property or financial affairs; one who administers anything as the agent of another or others, a manager.” So for us to be “stewards for God,” we must acknowledge that all we are and all we have possession of belongs to Him. We are charged with managing His property according to His wishes.

You can see that stewardship is not at all a synonym for tithing and fund-raising; it is actually the opposite. Tithing has to do with what you give; stewardship has to do with what you keep. In other words, it is about how you manage everything that you have been entrusted to oversee. What most people miss is that stewardship is more about how you manage what is left over after you give than it is about what you give.

The radical, biblical concept of stewardship is easy enough to (continued on page 20)
In the southwestern corner of the troubled border state of Missouri, Moses Carver and his wife, Susan, farmed 240 acres near the tiny settlement of Diamond Grove. They owned slaves, including a young woman named Mary who had at least two sons, the youngest named George. When George was an infant, probably in 1864, he and his mother were stolen away and resold in a neighboring state. Mary was never seen again, but George, small and frail, was found. Mr. Carver paid for the baby's return, giving up his finest horse. The Carvers cared for George, and he stayed with them after the war. George was bright and eager to learn. Although black students were not allowed to go to the local public school, he was welcome at the church, where he listened to the sermons of traveling Methodist, Baptist, Campbellite, and Presbyterian preachers, acquiring a nondenominational faith. He memorized and recited Bible verses. He sang hymns and learned to play the church piano. “God just came into my heart one afternoon” when he was eight or nine years old, he wrote years later, “while I was alone in the loft of our big barn, shelling corn to carry to the mill to be ground into meal.”

Susan Carver taught George to read. Then, when he was thirteen, the Carvers sent him to a school, eight miles away. There in Neosho he boarded with a devout black couple, Andrew and Mariah Watkins, who took him to the African Methodist Episcopal Church. They gave him a Bible for Christmas, which he carried and read every day for the rest of his life.

Seeking more schooling and a livelihood, George wandered through the state of Kansas, taking classes and working in various jobs. He opened a laundry in one town and made enough money to buy some real estate, which he sold for a profit. He went to business school and worked as a stenographer. He was accepted at Highland College in northeastern Kansas, but when he arrived and administrators saw his race, they refused him admittance. As he did in all the disappointments of his life, he “trusted God and pressed on.” He taught Sunday school in a Methodist church in one town, and in another joined the Presbyterian church.

In 1886 Carver staked a homesteader claim in western Kansas. On his 160 acres of prairie land, he built a sod house. His neighbors appreciated his articulate and refined manner, his skillful accordion playing, and his love of nature. He developed an interest in writing poetry and in painting. Somewhere along the way, he gave himself a middle name; he was now George Washington Carver. Carver did not stay on his homestead long. In 1888 he set off for further ventures.

In Winterset, Iowa, Carver took a job as hotel cook and attended the Baptist church, where he met John and Helen Milholland.
who became lifelong friends. Years later Carver wrote to them, saying he would never forget “how much real help and inspiration you gave me. You, of course, will never know how much you did for a poor colored boy who was drifting here and there as a ship without a rudder.”

The Milhollands encouraged Carver to develop his love for music and art and suggested that he enroll at Simpson College, a Methodist school nearby. The only black student, he found the people very kind and the students “wonderfully good.” His art teacher encouraged him to transfer to Iowa State College in Ames, where her father was professor of horticulture.

Earning near-perfect grades in botany and horticulture, Carver completed his bachelor’s in agriculture and began graduate study in botany. Still struggling with whether to become a scientist or an artist or a missionary, he took classes at the Chicago Academy of Arts and at the fledgling Moody Bible Institute.

Alabama

Booker T. Washington, founder and president of Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute in Alabama, a vocational school for African Americans. Having heard of Carter’s acumen, Washington wrote Carver that “we shall be willing to do anything in reason to enable you to come to Tuskegee.” Carver answered Washington, pledging “to cooperate with you in doing all I can through Christ who strengtheneth me to better the conditions of our people.”

George Washington Carver’s job at Tuskegee was to teach classes in science, agriculture, and art and to create and run a laboratory. He began with enthusiasm. Well before sunrise he was out walking in the Alabama woods, collecting samples. By nine o’clock he was in his laboratory, praying Scripture as he began his work: “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. My help cometh from the Lord who made heaven and earth, and all that in them is.”

Teacher

As teacher, counselor, and friend, the quiet, somewhat “rumpled” Carver quickly became popular with the students, who called him “the professor.” He enjoyed teaching them in class and, even more, interacting with them out of class. He delighted in good humor—both his own and that of others—saying that God “wants us to laugh.”

Carver set out to build at Tuskegee a center for teaching, research, and agricultural outreach. He kept in touch with the local farmers, black and white, and helped them implement more productive methods. He published a advisory bulletin, written in plain language. The annual Farmer’s Conference soon became one of the largest and most important events in the state. Booker T. Washington’s ambition and skillful promotion and Carver’s training and teaching “placed Tuskegee Institute in the mainstream,”

(continued on page 21)
If the world has not approached its end, it has reached a major watershed . . . equal in history to the turn from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. It will demand from us a spiritual blaze. —Alexander Solzhenitsyn

To hear some people talk you would think that individuals in our culture have given up on the possibility of God and spiritual realities. Actually the exact opposite is the case. People in our day are as much or more interested in the “spiritual” or the “transcendent” as they were at the turn of the twentieth century. Pollster George Gallup, Jr., quotes church historian Martin Marty as saying “Spirituality is back, almost with a vengeance.” Visit your local bookstore—if your community is lucky enough to still have one—and take a look at the number of books that deal with transcendent themes. But when I warn you to get ready, my caution is based on more than sheer quantity. You will find a myriad of volumes ranging from UFO abduction to palm reading to alternative health practices to the spirituality of gardening. This same interest is demonstrated by movies such as Inception, Avatar, and The Dark Knight Trilogy—all of which deal with transcendent themes. Television programming will not be outdone either, with such shows as Fringe or Lost.

Many secularist prophets of the last century predicted that the urge to connect with something or someone beyond the physical world would pass off the scene as modern man came of age. This has not been the case, at least not in North America, as polls continue to show a high level of religious belief. Try as we may to get rid of this urge, it seems like the proverbial beach ball that someone tries to hold underwa-
sense of alienation from life by its fixation on measuring, quantifying, and explaining everything by the use of reason. Therefore, in many people’s minds Christianity has contributed to the sense of separation, especially when it has used reason to support its claims.

Offering a fitting diagnosis of our times, in *The Pilgrim’s Regress* C.S. Lewis examines the intellectual history of Europe. He tells of a straight road representing orthodox Christianity that runs through the center of a country. To the north of this road is a territory characterized by rationalism, reason, dogmatics, and systematization. The southern territory has characteristics such as openness, feeling, mysticism, experientialism, and naturalism. Lewis describes the age in which he lived as “predominantly Northern.” We live in a different day—as the old saying goes, “the times they are a changin’.” We are living in a time when civilization is shifting southward. This southward move is affecting the way our culture talks about, pursues, and practices spirituality.

So how does having this diagnosis affect how we relate to twenty-first-century seekers of spirituality? I think our model should be Paul at Mars Hill (Acts 17:16–31). Paul meets people where they are and applies the healing balm of the gospel to those who are alienated from the living God. He both affirms and challenges his listeners at Athens. To use Lewis’s analogy, orthodox Christianity cuts through the center of the northern and the southern territory. Biblical spirituality is holistic in the truest sense. It encompasses reason and feeling, boundaries and openness, systematization and mystery. It is truly integrative, whereas our culture often swaps one form of dualism for another as it overreacts to modernity’s tendency to deify reason and science by abandoning reason for mystery, feeling, and experience. In this case the supposed cure is as bad as or worse than the disease. Perhaps God’s message to us as His people is that if we want to have the maximum impact on a culture, as disciples of Christ we need to proclaim and live a more experiential Christianity that integrates the mind (orthodoxy), the heart (orthopathy), and the hands (orthopraxy). All of life from everyday experience to the extraordinary must become the place where we meet God and are transformed. This is the kind of God-centered, earthly life (Rom. 12:1–2) that brings glory to God and is used by the Holy Spirit to illustrate the good news about Jesus Christ. An explanation of what God has done in Christ coupled with an experiential spirituality is the best remedy for both those living down south and those residing in the northern country. Ajith Fernando says it well,

So the current interest in spirituality is a challenge to the church to get its act together. We have the answer that the world is looking for. But have we ourselves experienced it? Do we know the glory of intimacy with the loving and holy God who is supreme above creation? Has this relationship transformed us into morally pure people? If we can answer these questions in the affirmative, we will truly be light to the darkness of the world in this postmodern era.

Notes

One of the most serious problems in the church today is what was once called “carnal Christianity” or, more accurately, “fleshly Christianity.” If the phrase fleshly Christianity sounds like a jarring contradiction, that’s because it is. As we have seen in previous articles in Knowing & Doing, the Bible teaches that “the flesh” is one of the greatest enemies of a true Christian. “The flesh” is, of course, concerned not only with sins of sensuality but with the whole of our lives lived apart from God in this fallen world; it includes pride and greed and envy and idolatries of all sorts. Surely, one would think, a true Christian would seek to forsake the flesh and earnestly pursue a life of obedient discipleship. Sadly, however, that does not always happen.

Fleshly Christianity is widespread in the American church and well documented by researchers like the Gallup Organization and the Barna Group. Summarizing their research findings in a 2004 report, the Barna Group said, “The ultimate aim of belief in Jesus is not simply to possess divergent theological ideas but to become a transformed person. These statistics highlight the fact that millions of people who rely on Jesus Christ for their eternal destiny have problems translating their religious beliefs into action beyond Sunday mornings.”

What is a “fleshly Christian”? First, let’s clarify what a fleshly Christian is not. A fleshly Christian is not a true believer who struggles with the flesh and is seeking to root out and forsake areas of remaining sin from his or her old life. That is normal. Rather, fleshly Christians are true believers who continue to live largely in the flesh after conversion and are not seeking to forsake their sins and move toward maturity. Significant areas of sin still dominate their lives, but they are content to continue as they are. As a result, they remain spiritual infants, whose lives show all too little of the transforming power of Christ.

Why is fleshly Christianity a serious problem? On a personal level, persisting in our former sins grieves the indwelling Holy Spirit, who alone can empower us to overcome them. By grieving the Spirit, we cause Him to withdraw the sense of His presence, and we block His empowerment until we repent. We also render ourselves spiritually dull and unable to grasp deeper teaching—teaching that could help us mature. In such a weakened state, we become much more vulnerable to other sins gaining power in our lives. Impaired fellowship with the Holy Spirit also makes our relationship with Christ seem more distant and less real. In this condition, we can begin to rationalize away our disobedience, become hardened in our hearts, and doubt our salvation. No longer sober minded and watchful, we are easy prey for the devil, who, like a roaring lion, is always prowling about seeking someone to devour (1 Pet. 5:8).

On a public level, fleshly Christianity reinforces the common perception that faith in Christ makes little or no positive difference in a person’s life. It feeds the increasingly common idea that Christians are just hypocrites. Quite naturally, this leads nonbelievers to assume that Christian faith makes little no beneficial contribution to society. Thus, instead of glorifying Christ, the fleshly Christian dishonors Him, undermines the plausibility of the gospel,
and turns people away from Him. This sad spectacle is only magnified when the case is not an individual believer but an entire congregation.

**The Corinthians Fall Short**

Fleshly Christianity is not new. The apostle Paul had to address it in the Corinthian church. This congregation, which took pride in having an abundance of spiritual gifts, was beset by a number of serious sins, including spiritual pride, lawsuits against one another, sexual sin, lack of love, abuse of the Lord’s Supper, and division.

Clearly many of the Corinthians were living in the grip of the flesh, not the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Consequently their personal lives were a mess, and their public witness was a scandal. Although they had initially experienced some basic changes, those changes were overshadowed by sinful attitudes and behaviors characteristic of their former lives. The Corinthians gave little evidence of the love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control that are characteristic of the new life empowered by the Holy Spirit.

In his first letter to the church at Corinth, Paul opens with the customary introductory words of the day, followed by thanks to God for His grace in their lives. Then he immediately turns to the divisions in the church, strongly appealing for unity:

> I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. For it has been reported to me by

Then in chapter 3, he strongly reproves the Corinthians for two sins of the flesh that lay behind their conflict: jealousy and strife. These sins had given rise to the divisive, party-spirit that threatened to destroy the church and its credibility before the watching world. Their jealousy and strife were behaviors typical of the old self and the way they lived before coming to salvation in Christ. Paul cites these two sins as evidence of their failure to grow up spiritually and describes them as “people of the flesh, as infants in Christ” (1 Cor. 3:1). He will deal with a number of other sins as the letter progresses.

Given these and other serious sins that were common in the church, we might be excused for wondering if the Corinthians had ever been truly converted. But Paul clearly affirms that they were born again people, who had been enriched in speech and knowledge and who had all the gifts of the Holy Spirit operating through them (1 Cor. 1:4–9). Precisely because they were genuine believers, who did manifest evidence of new life, he was so deeply dismayed to see them continuing to live like nonbelievers in certain respects. The following paraphrase from Roy Ciampa and Brian Rossner clarifies Paul’s perspective:

> Chloe’s people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers. What I mean is that each one of you says, “I follow Paul,” or “I follow Apollos,” or “I follow Cephas,” or “I follow Christ.” (1 Cor. 1:10–12)

(continued on page 27)
Lord. One of the first fruits of his conversion was the generosity that began to exude from Lewis. As he studied the Scriptures, he came to the conclusion that it truly is “better to give than to receive.”

The Gift of Hospitality

Hospitality, a natural trait of Lewis’s generosity, expanded as his faith grew. Lewis had been supported by his father, Albert Lewis, through all of his student years at Oxford. Upon employment as an Oxford don or professor, Lewis was finally able to support himself, although the salary of a don was meager. On a modest income, he was also providing food and shelter for Mrs. “Jane” Moore, the mother of his deceased war buddy, Paddie Moore. Mrs. Moore’s daughter, Maureen, also lived with them. Lewis had made a pact with Paddie that if either of them were killed in the war, the survivor would take care of the other’s family. True to his word, Lewis ended up caring for Mrs. Moore for the rest of her life. With little money to spare, Lewis lived a simple life.

Upon the death of their father, C.S. Lewis and his brother, Warnie, pooled their inheritance and purchased a home in Headington Quarry, just outside of Oxford. There, at “The Kilns,” the Lewis brothers, both single, lived with Mrs. Moore and her daughter. The Kilns became a place of generous hospitality. For thirty years Lewis cared tenderly and tirelessly for Mrs. Moore at The Kilns until she died, often doing dishes, laundry and other household chores for her, even as he managed to write his books and do his scholarly work.

After the Germans invaded Poland, the Lewis brothers opened up The Kilns to children forced to evacuate the big cities. The first group was four school girls, and throughout the war several other groups of children came in and out of their home. The highlight during this time was a delightful sixteen-year-old named June Flewett. She brought much fun and laughter to the household. The Lewises’ gift of hospitality was being reciprocated by the gift of joy that emanated from this young lady.

In his later years Lewis opened his home to a brash, gifted, divorced, Jewish American follower of Jesus, Joy Gresham Davidman, and her two sons. This relationship, retold in the movie Shadowlands, once again highlights Lewis’s hospitality. After spending time with Joy’s sons, David and Douglas, Lewis wrote humorously in a letter to his friend Ruth Pitter, “I never knew what we celibates are shielded from. I will never laugh at parents again. Not that the boys weren’t a delight: but a delight like surf-bathing which leaves one breathless and aching. The energy, the tempo, is what kills.”

Eventually Lewis married Joy in a civil ceremony, so she could gain British citizenship and remain in the United Kingdom. Though he did this out of his generous spirit, this friendship over time led to romantic love; Lewis and Joy were married by a priest in the hospital where Joy was battling cancer. After only four years of marriage, Joy succumbed to the ravages of cancer and died. Grief stricken, Lewis wrote one of the most powerful books ever written on grief, A Grief Observed. This didn’t stop him, however, from continuing to raise Joy’s two sons, David and Douglas, paying for their education and including them in his estate.

C.S. Lewis’s hospitality was one that permeated his life and blessed many people.

For many of us the great obstacle to charity lies not in our luxurious living or desire for more money, but in our fear—fear of insecurity.
Lewis Shares His Time and Talent

A second area of generosity evident in Lewis was his gift of time to others. Austin Farrer, a close friend of Lewis, remarked about Lewis's “taking of the world into his heart.” Lewis was able to connect with people; he could make them feel that what they had to say was important and, more important, that they were of value. This came out in the amount of time Lewis spent communicating in various forms, from meeting with people for lunch and dinner regularly, following up with them by letter, and praying for them.

As his books became well-known, and as soon as he was discovered in America, Lewis began receiving fan mail, particularly from the English-speaking world. Lewis believed that it was his duty to reply to each letter. Eventually he would spend at least an hour every morning responding to letters. His brother, Warnie, would help him with the logistics of organizing and mailing the correspondence. These letters today provide wonderful insights into ways to live out the Christian faith in daily life, while giving us a glimpse into Lewis's warm personality and sense of humor.

An amusing string of letters was written to an American named Dr. Warfield Firor, who regularly sent Lewis care packages of canned hams. Great Britain was still recovering from the war, so the specialty foods were greatly appreciated. Lewis received so much food from Americans that he gladly shared the spoils with others in town. His letters show not only that he could be generous himself, but also that he knew how to receive generosity with gratitude. For example, he writes to Dr. Firor, “The arrival of that magnificent ham leaves me just not knowing what to say. If it were known that it was in my house, it would draw every housebreaker in the neighbourhood more surely than would a collection of gold plate! . . . I am very deeply grateful to you for your great kindness.”

In *A Severe Mercy*, Sheldon Vanauken tells how while a student at Oxford, Lewis would eat dinner with him and his wife, Davy, engaging in rich conversation well into the night. Through Lewis's mentoring influence and openness, both Sheldon and Davy eventually were pointed toward receiving Christ’s mercy and grace.

Endlessly Generous

Finally, Lewis both preached and practiced his deep conviction that he was to use his material wealth to serve the needs of others. He writes in *Mere Christianity*, “Christ says ‘Give me All. I don’t want so much of your time and so much of your money and so much of your work: I want You.’” Lewis understood this to mean that all of his life was to be surrendered to God including how he used the money and other resources that had been given to him. He also realized the dangers of materialism. He writes in *The Screwtape Letters*, “Prosperity knits a man to the world. He feels that he is finding his place in it, while really it is finding its place in him.”

As Lewis’s books became popular, large royalties poured in. Rather than upgrade his lifestyle, Lewis decided to maintain his current standard of living and give the rest away. As he got paid for *The Screwtape
Letters, which were published in The Guardian, he instructed the newspaper to send the royalties to a Clergy Widows fund. He did the same with the BBC when they sent money for his radio broadcasts. This generosity got him into some trouble, however, when, after having given the money away, he learned that he owed taxes on it. One of Lewis’s weaknesses was math and numbers. One of the fortunate circumstances of Lewis’s life was that as a war veteran he was exempt from taking Oxford’s math entrance exam; some propose that he may not have passed the test. This should be encouraging to those who struggle with math to know that one of the world’s most brilliant men also didn’t care for numbers.

Fortunately for Lewis, his good friend and lawyer Owen Barfield set up a charitable trust for him called the Agape Fund. From then on, two-thirds of Lewis’s royalties were paid into the trust and distributed anonymously to many people, including those in poverty, clergy widows, seminary students, churches, and many other ministries. Lewis went to great lengths to ensure that his name would not be tied to any of the gifts. He detested the idea of conspicuous living, writing, “This must often be recognized as a temptation. Sometimes our pride also hinders our charity; we are tempted to spend more than we ought on the showy forms of generosity (tipping, hospitality) and less than we ought on those who really need our help.”

Lewis also took great joy in giving spontaneously and with fun. In a letter to an American, he wrote,

*It will not bother me in the hour of death to reflect that I have been “had for a sucker” by any number of impostors; but it would be a torment to know that one had refused even one person in need . . . Another thing that annoys me is when people say “Why did you give that man money? He’ll probably go and drink it.” My reply is “But if I’d kept [it] I should probably have drunk it.”*

This doesn’t mean that Lewis didn’t struggle with giving or worry about money. In fact, one of Lewis’s greatest fears was the idea of ending up in poverty. Following the writing of *A Grief Observed*, he became very worried about money. Hooper writes, Lewis “had spent so much over the last years that he now began keeping a minute account of his expenses.”

It was from deep within his own personal experience that Lewis wrote, “For many of us the great obstacle to charity lies not in our luxurious living or desire for more money, but in our fear—fear of insecurity.” However, Lewis, in surrendering his life to Christ, consistently sought to overcome this insecurity by trusting God and giving generously, the antidote to fear, worry, and materialism.

Lewis gave us some wise advice about how much we should give.

*I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare. In other words, if our expenditure on comforts, luxuries, amusement, etc., is up to the standard common among those with the same income as our own, we are probably giving away too little. If our giving does not at all pinch or*
If Christianity should happen to be true, then it is quite impossible that those who know this truth and those who don't should be equally well equipped for leading a good life. Knowledge of the facts must make a difference to one’s actions.

C.S. Lewis
body—all working together in concert. Each part plays a unique and important role. When Wallace’s own body was broken, it was the body of Christ who came to our aid.

The first member of the body to arrive was my Aunt Susan, who showed up in the ER. She helped me think through many pressing family matters and prayed for wisdom for Dr. Hales and the other doctors. We had no idea then, how important a prayer that would be.

For weeks I was at the hospital every day from the early morning until early evening. My mom had come to watch the girls, and Wallace’s parents went to the hospital every day. Our nanny, Yenny, a nursing student, gave up a whole summer of classwork to help us. Friends and family provided meals; some even sent us breakfast! I didn’t cook for two months.

My sister offered to coordinate updates and specific prayer requests. Early one morning that first week, my mom, Aunt Susan, and a friend from church—Molly—gathered in Wallace’s ICU room to pray. They anointed him with oil and prayed over his feet—that he would one day walk again. Lord, hear our prayer.

A medical diagnosis at first seemed a relief: he had contracted strep Group A—the common bacteria responsible for strep throat. Yet there were puzzles; this particular strain of strep rarely causes pneumonia . . . septic shock . . . organ failure.

Caroline, also diagnosed with strep, had responded to antibiotics and was recovering. But despite penicillin, which is 100 percent effective against strep Group A, Wallace wasn’t getting better.

His heartbeat had become arrhythmic, and his kidneys had shut down, requiring continuous dialysis. Would his kidneys ever recover? Doctors couldn’t say.

A Miracle

Four days after we’d first arrived, the doctors went into Wallace’s ICU room early in the morning, amazed to find that his chest drainage tube had fallen out. A nurse friend of ours told us she had never heard of this happening. It had been surgically inserted deep into his lung. It would require surgery again to reinsert it, which was risky in Wallace’s compromised condition.

That morning during her prayer time, our friend Molly sensed that there was something hidden in Wallace and prayed that the surgeon would find it. A CT scan, ordered by Dr. Hales, revealed a thick layer of infection on Wallace’s lung that would surely spread and take his life, if not removed. Surgery was set for 3:30 that afternoon, to be performed by cardio-thoracic surgeon, Dr. John Garrett, a praying man who sometimes invited young men and women from our church to join his surgical practice as volunteer interns.

Before the surgery, at my request, Dr. Garrett’s physician assistant and I joined hands with the ICU nurse, while he prayed powerfully and with great insight over Wallace and his impending surgery. Clergy and others also prayed for him.

When the anesthesiologist came into the room to take Wallace to the Operating...
Room, his expression was grim. Mom and I told him we'd pray that God would guide his every step. He looked at us and said simply, “Thank you. I will need him.” Wallace’s odds of surviving even the anesthesia were extremely low.

When they took him to the OR, Dr. Garrett’s nurse told me she would call me once the doctor had made the first incision—this was assuming Wallace survived the anesthesia.

A group of us—mostly family—had gathered now. We waited intently for my phone to ring. Yes, Wallace had survived the anesthesia. Two hours later Dr. Garrett walked through the doorway. “Catherine,” he said, “your husband is really sick.” It turns out that there was very little infection on his lungs, contrary to what had shown up on the CT scan. I can’t imagine the mood in the OR, when it seemed they had “gone in” for nothing. But then, right at that moment, as if to answer the question, Wallace went into cardiac arrest.

Dr. Garrett manually squeezed and started Wallace’s heart, and as he did so, to everyone’s great surprise, infection streamed out of the heart sac. After a second arrest, Dr. Garrett opened the heart sac and removed all the infection. Imagine. If the chest tube hadn’t fallen out, Dr. Hales would not have ordered the CT scan. And if the CT scan hadn’t been wrong, they most certainly would not have done the surgery that found the hidden infection, that saved his life.

Wallace could not have been in a better place and time to go into cardiac arrest—in the cardiac OR with the surgeon’s hand on his heart.

A few months later, Dr. Hales reminded us that Aunt Susan had prayed for him to have wisdom that week. He said it was a miracle Wallace survived because he made decisions that week—about the CT scan and the surgery—that were clearly inspired.

Defying the Odds

The next forty-eight hours were dicey. Even though they’d found the mother lode of the infection, we didn’t know what other infection might be hidden in his body. And of course he was very susceptible to additional hospital-acquired infections.

Mom and I spent a sleepless night in the ICU. I remember being afraid to shut my eyes for fear that we would lose him if I did. In the morning, the nurse assigned to care for him all weekend, who happened to be a member of our church, prayed for him; my uncle, a pastor, led us in communion and prayer for healing.

If I thought I’d had support before the surgery, now the spiritual push increased. Friends and family came from near and far—from North Carolina, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Texas, New York, and Florida. They brought food and read the Bible over Wallace; they played soothing music and held a prayer vigil. Someone even set up a Starbucks coffee station, for whoever needed a boost while praying for Wallace.

It seems the strep bacteria, after being treated by antibiotics, had released toxins into Wallace’s bloodstream. That night he was diagnosed with toxic shock syn-
drome—which is often fatal. One friend later told me she was sure we’d be attending a funeral the following week.

Incredibly Wallace survived toxic shock syndrome. Six days after we had entered the ER, a cardiologist used a camera scope to check Wallace’s heart function. To his amazement, its pumping capacity was almost back to normal. Nearly two weeks after he had entered the ER, they took Wallace off of the ventilator and off of sedation.

There were subsequent complications, including a secondary infection and considerable blood loss from ulcers. But after just four weeks, his kidneys bounced back; he was taken off dialysis.

He had lost thirty-five pounds, including nearly all of his muscle mass. When he finally came home after six weeks, he could walk only short distances; if we went anywhere as a family, he had to go in a wheelchair. Having two small children, we didn’t go many places!

Fall-Out

As a result of his illness, Wallace’s solo public relations consultancy had to be folded, and I had only two weeks of paid federal leave time. Amazingly friends and total strangers donated four months of leave to me so I could be home. We also received gift cards to buy groceries. And that is what we lived on. Donated leave and donated food. The girls were incredibly resilient. When we could not be there for them, others stepped up. Friends and family babysat, sent toys, books, games, and DVDs.

After seven months of hard work, just before Christmas, Wallace completed his physical therapy and cardiac rehabilitation.

Not one doctor would take credit for Wallace’s recovery. Dr. Garrett said that God had guided his hands. We later saw the anesthesiologist and thanked him profusely for his skill. He said he had nothing to do with it and pointed heavenward. Wallace’s infectious disease doctor told me that Wallace was alive due to great luck. Then he paused, corrected himself and said, “No. He is alive due to divine intervention.”

Dr. Hales commented on the number of people who came to support Wallace. His hospital room was covered with encouraging notes, words of Scripture, drawings, and pictures. One ICU nurse told Wallace
that when she was having a bad night, she
would quietly slip into his room and soak
up the atmosphere—so warm and inviting.
And so then it became our turn to take no
credit and point to heaven.

After he’d been home awhile, Wallace
started to worry about how he could ever
repay everyone for all they’d done for us. I
mentioned his concern to a friend who had
been at his ICU bedside. Her response was
that she had been witness to a miracle, and
that was payment enough. “He’s already
repaid me in a way no one else can,” she
said. “My faith has been strengthened, and
I will remember what happened for the rest
of my life.”

But as the C.S. Lewis Institute’s Tom
Tarrants has commented, not everything
ends tied up neatly, with a bow. Wallace’s
final release from outpatient rehabilitation
brought new stresses. He had been at the
hospital every day for seven months and
with the help of many people there, had
overcome death. Leaving was like losing
a job.

And beyond our own household we ask
questions. One of Wallace’s oldest and dear-
est friends, also in his early forties, who
came to visit him in the hospital, passed
away—due to an aggressive cancer—not ten
weeks after his visit. We also learned about
two young fathers who did not survive the
same illness as Wallace. We mourn for these
losses and don’t understand why Wallace
survived and they didn’t.

When asked at a dinner party about his
year, Wallace replied, “To quote the queen,
it’s been an annus horribilis.”

We later looked up that Latin phrase,
used by Queen Elizabeth II in her 1992
Christmas Day address to describe a par-
ticularly difficult year for the royal family.
Its meaning is the opposite of annus mirabi-
lis, which means “year of wonders.”
“Horribilis” and “mirabilis.”

We decided that, for us, this year
was both.

Each miracle writes for us in small letters something that God has
already written, or will write, in letters almost too large to be noticed,
across the whole canvas of Nature.

C.S. Lewis

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What Is My Relationship to My Stuff?
(continued from page 5)

understand intellectually. However, it is anything but easy to consistently apply and live out. So what is your relationship to your stuff? You are not the owner; you are merely the caretaker of somebody else’s property. And it is your job to manage all of it according to the Owner’s wishes. Now, that really changes the game, does it not?

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[Senior devil Screwtape to junior devil Wormwood]
The sense of ownership in general is always to be encouraged. The humans are always putting up claims to ownership which sound equally funny in Heaven and in Hell and we must keep them doing so. . . And all the time the joke is that the word “Mine” in its fully possessive sense cannot be uttered by a human being about anything.

C.S. Lewis, The Screwtape Letters

Thank YOU to the nearly 600 individuals who attended our Call to Global Discipleship banquet in April. We are happy to report the event was a big success! Your generosity helped us exceed our fundraising goal of $225,000! With your support, the Institute has grown from a local, to a national, and now a global ministry! The Lord has given us a call to discipleship and is opening new doors. We are doing everything we can to reach people with the express purpose of helping them become more mature disciples of Jesus.
and sometimes the forefront, of early agricultural education.”

**Carver and Washington**

Carver did not always find his work at Tuskegee easy. The students, the grandchildren of slavery, were poorly prepared for higher education. The college had little money, and some of the teachers resented Carver because of his popularity with the students and his perceived special status.

George Washington Carver (continued from page 7)

Carver and Washington developed a respectful but uneasy relationship. Mr. Washington, Carver quickly discovered, was a stickler for detailed reports, which Carver had little use for. He wanted money to develop his laboratory, assistants to help him in his growing responsibilities, and a certain amount of freedom to develop things the way he chose.

Despite the aggravation that the two main people at Tuskegee caused each other, Washington and Carver cared deeply about the same goals—improving opportunities for black people and living their lives in a way that honored God. They also loved and respected each other. Washington said that Carver was “quite the most modest man” he had ever met. When Booker T. Washington died in 1915, Carver was devastated and took temporary leave from teaching. He gave a thousand dollars—a year’s salary—to a memorial fund in Washington’s honor. “I am sure Mr. Washington never knew how much I loved him, and the cause for which he gave his life,” Carver said.

**Sweet Potatoes and Peanuts**

Carver was greatly interested in sweet potatoes and peanuts—“two of the greatest products that God has ever given us,” he said. Sweet potatoes and peanuts, he believed, would provide essential nutritional supplements to southern diets and could be easily and cheaply grown by the average farmer. Furthermore they would not deplete the soil, like cotton.

People asked Carver how he came up with so many innovative and unusual ideas for using peanuts and sweet potatoes. “I don’t make these discoveries,” he answered. “God has worked through me to reveal to his children some of his wonderful providence.” Frequently Carver told the following story:

One day I went into my laboratory and said, “Dear Mr. Creator, please tell me what the universe was made for.” The Great Creator answered, “You want to know too much for that little mind of yours. Ask something more your size, little man.” Then I asked, “Please, Mr. Creator, tell me what man was made for.” Again the Great Creator replied, “You are still asking too much.” So then I asked, “Please, Mr. Creator, will you tell me why the peanut was made?” “That’s better,” God
George Washington Carver

answered, “what do you want to know about
the peanut?”

In 1921 Carver addressed the U.S. House
of Representatives Committee on Ways and
Means about the many uses of the peanut
as a means to improve the economy of the
South. When he finished, the chairman
asked him, “Dr. Carver, how did you learn
all of these things?” Carver answered,
Carver said, “The Bible,” the chairman
asked, “Does the Bible tell about peanuts?”

One of the most effective agricultural educators and
scientific popularizers of his era … Not only did
he serve magnificently as an interpreter between
scientists and laymen, but many of his ideas did
indeed foreshadow areas of later significant research.

“No, sir, but it tells about the God who
made the peanut. I asked Him to show me
what to do with the peanut, and He did.”

In less than an hour before the committee
Carver won “a tariff for the peanut industry
and national fame for himself.”

Racism

Like all African-Americans, Carver experi-
enced racial prejudice. He was not allowed
to enter a Presbyterian college in Kansas.
He was required at first to eat with the jani-
tors at Iowa State. Once, during a harrowing
incident in Alabama, he feared for his life.
As he traveled he frequently faced discrimi-
nation in the North as well as in the South.

Occasionally fellow blacks criticized
Carver for what they perceived to be his ac-
commodation to the racial situation. By
the time of Tuskegee’s twenty-fifth anniversary
in 1906, Booker T. Washington was interna-
tionally recognized as the leading spokes-
man for his race. Washington often said
that “the best means for destroying race
prejudice is to make oneself a useful and,
if possible, an indispensable member of
the community in which he lives.” On at least
one occasion he added, “I do not know of a
better illustration of this than may be found
in the case of Professor Carver.”

“Love is more powerful than hate,” Carver
always said, and he practiced what he
preached. He used the story of David and
Goliath to illustrate the power of love to
vanquish hatred. “David, though small, was
filled with truth, right thinking and good
will for others. Goliath represented one who
let fear into his heart, and it stayed there
long enough to grow into hate for others.”

Carver was “a dreamer with a vision of a
better world and a very dim grasp of politi-
cal and economic reality,” writes L.O. Mc-
Murry. Like Martin Luther King, George
Washington Carver had a dream: of a better
America and of a new South. And through
his interracial work in the 1920s and 1930s,
a time of racial unrest and violence, worked
hard to help bring this about. In 1939 he
was awarded the Roosevelt Medal for Out-
standing Contribution to Southern Agricul-
ture, with the declaration: “To a scientist
humbly seeking the guidance of God and
a liberator of the white race as well as the
black.” A white man who heard Carver
speak in Virginia said Carver had been “the
greatest inspiration” of his life and noted,
“In the whole life of this saintly man I see
the future of a great race. In his eyes I see
the soul of a people who experienced God
and understand the meaning of the Cross.”

Science and God

Carver was a generalist in an age of in-
creasing specialization. He did not make
major scientific discoveries, and few of his
inventions, if any, were commercially suc-
cessful. But, according to L.O. McMurry,
George Washington Carver was “one of the
most effective agricultural educators and
scientific popularizers of his era. Like an interpreter he served as a bridge between scientists and laymen, and he opened the door to later breakthroughs.” In Fruits of Creation: A Look at Global Sustainability as Seen through the Eyes of George Washington Carver, John S. Ferrell notes his contributions:

Far from resembling an environmentalist as that term is currently understood, Carver was a potentially puzzling combination of nature mystic, saint, scientist, and business booster. He certainly stood in awe of creation as he found it, but his wonder was combined with a sense that God had placed in nature vast potential for human betterment. He was a St. Francis armed with test tubes, seeking, through scientific means, creation’s undiscovered fruits to enhance the well-being of all people.”

On November 18, 1924, Carver addressed five hundred people at the Marble Collegiate Church in New York City. Without God to “draw aside the curtain,” Carver said, he was helpless to do anything. The audience responded with warm applause, but a writer for the New York Times wasn’t as impressed. Carver was deeply hurt when he read the article titled “Men of Science Never Talk That Way.” He later explained to a minister friend in Alabama: He wasn’t troubled that “the cynical criticism was directed at me, but rather [that it was directed] at the religion of Jesus Christ. Dear brother, I know that my Redeemer liveth . . . Pray for me please that everything said and done will be to His glory. I am not interested in science or anything else that leaves God out of it.”

In a letter written in 1930 Carver expressed eloquently his conviction about science and God:

The singing birds, the buzzing bees, the opening flower, and the budding trees all have their marvelous creation story to tell each searcher for truth . . . from the frail little mushroom, which seems to spring up in a night and perish ere the morning sun sinks to rest in the western horizon, to the giant redwoods of the Pacific slope that have stood the storms for centuries . . . Nature in its varied forms are the little windows through which God permits me to commune with Him, and to see much of His glory, majesty, and power by simply lifting the curtain and looking in . . . I love to think of nature as unlimited broadcasting stations, through which God speaks to us every day, every hour and every moment of our lives, if we will only tune in and remain so . . . I am more and more convinced, as I search for truth, that no ardent student of nature can “Behold the lilies of the field,” or “Look unto the hills,” or study even the microscopic wonders of a stagnant pool of water, and honestly declare himself to be an infidel.
Carver’s lectures at Tuskegee covered religious as well as scientific themes. His agricultural classes became one of the school’s most effective means of teaching Christianity. As commencement day approached one year, Carver began a class by saying, “We are told to ‘go unto the four corners of the earth and preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ.’ That can be done by those of you who will not be in the pulpits of the churches, as well as those who will.”

Bible Class

In February 1907 seven students asked Carver to help them organize a Bible class to meet during the thirty-five-minute break between Sunday supper and the evening chapel service. Fifty students came to the first meeting to hear Carver talk about the creation story. In three months, attendance had grown to more than a hundred. It continued to grow during the thirty years that Carver taught the class.

Carver, who was never seen without a sprig of green or a flower in the lapel of his coat, began his Bible class with a brief prayer, a broad smile, and a few words of greeting. Then he stated his theme, such as “your aim in life should be to glorify God.” Carver’s Bible teaching, as remembered by his students, consisted of a Bible story or text, with the professor’s exhortation to know and love the Creator, to live good and useful lives, and to reach out in kindness and help to all people.

“We are told that in the beginning all was void and darkness covered all things and that our Creator and Father began his work by setting all things in order,” Carver told the students. “And as God proceeded with his work, it was with deliberation and by well-ordered degree. Not one of all the millions of things He made was left until it was pronounced ‘very good.’ What an example for us!”

One visitor to Tuskegee declared, “When we talked about the things of God his eyes sparkled and his soul caught fire.” Carver and a literature professor in Minnesota corresponded for seven years. Though separated by distance, they set times to pray together. In 1935 Glenn Clark came to Tuskegee and prayed with Carver in person. He wrote: “Never have I experienced more dynamic praying than I experienced that day. He, a black man from the deep South, I a white man from the far North, he loving and taking into his great heart all of the South, white as well as black, and giving them to the Father.” Lifelong friend Henry Wallace said: “To the world he was known as a scientist. Those who knew him best, however, realize his outstanding characteristic was a strong feeling of the eminence of God.”

“Secretary of Inspiration”

Carver was the most popular professor on the Tuskegee campus. In time he became known throughout the South and beyond the South and outside his field of agricultural research. In 1923 the newly founded
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) awarded him its highest honor as the person “of African descent and American citizenship” who had during the year “made the highest achievement in any field of human endeavor.”32 That same year Carver was made a fellow of the Royal Society of Great Britain and received a resolution from the Atlanta chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, thanking him for his good work and wishing him “God-Speed” in his future endeavors.33

As Carver’s fame spread, so did his name—given to schools, parks, and public buildings. “Eventually it became practically impossible to enter a black community anywhere in America without being reminded of the existence of a man named George Washington Carver.”34

Carver was a much sought after speaker at white and black colleges and church conferences. He became a favorite speaker at YMCA conferences at Blue Ridge, North Carolina. His “Blue Ridge boys” respected and admired Carver; they also liked him. One of Carver’s closest friends, the grandson of a Confederate major, praised Carver for helping him in his professional and personal life. “I think I will write President Roosevelt,” he said, “and ask him to make you Secretary of Inspiration.”35

By 1938 Carver’s health began a slow, steady decline. He carried on his work at Tuskegee and taught his Bible class, which brought standing-room-only crowds every Sunday whenever the old professor was in town. The George Washington Carver Museum at Tuskegee was dedicated on March 11, 1941, with more than two thousand guests attending the inaugural festivities.

Near the end of his life Carver wrote to a friend, “When you get your grip on the last rung of the ladder and look over the wall as I am doing you don’t need proofs. You see. You know you will not die.”36 At 7:30 p.m., on January 5, 1943, he met the Great Creator face to face. “Not expected to survive infancy, he had drawn on an incredible reservoir of will, courage, and faith for almost eighty years.”37

George Washington Carver was buried on the Tuskegee campus, near the chapel. Students, alumni, and friends from far and near came to pay their respects. People across the country praised his lifetime of quiet devotion and his commitment to lifting up “the man farthest down.”38 Most of the people who knew Carver did not consider him merely a symbol—for black pride or for Southern tolerance—but “a remarkable individual, and some loved him as a fellow human being.”39 Longtime friend Henry Ford said it best in a few words: “Dr. Carver had the brain of a scientist and the heart of a saint.”40

Notes

1. William Federer, George Washington Carver: His Life and Faith in his Own Words (St. Louis, MO: Amersearch, 2002), 75.
2. Apparently Carver considered himself a Presbyterian his whole life. See Rackham Holt, George Washington Carver: An American Biography (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran, 1943), 37. This biography, published the year of Carver’s death, relies on the author’s conversations with Carver and many of his friends. Gary R. Kremer writes that Holt’s book presented “Carver’s life as he wished it had been, not exactly as it always was, and he loved it.” Gary R. Kremer, George Washington Carver: A Biography (Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2011), 182. This new book is one of the best basic biographies of Carver.
3. Federer, 30.
4. John Perry, Unshakable Faith: Booker T.
George Washington Carver


5. McMurry, 44.
6. Perry, 349.
8. McMurry, 128.
10. Perry, 300.
11. Perry, 309.
12. Perry, 315.
19. Federer, 86.
20. Perry, 331.
22. John S. Ferrell, Fruits of Creation: A Look at Global Sustainability as Seen Through the Eyes of George Washington Carver (Shakopee, MN: Macalester, 1995), 91–92. Mark D. Hersey has developed more fully this neglected aspect of Carver’s work in My Work Is That of Conservation: An Environmental Biography of George Washington Carver (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011). Hersey includes a chapter on “Divine Inspiration” (179–93), in which he describes Carver’s religious convictions. He agrees that Carver possessed “conventional” Christian convictions but attempts to show that he went beyond orthodox Christianity at a number of points. Carver was not a theologian, but he was a Bible student, and his ideas appear to fall well within what could be viewed as interdenominational Protestantism.
23. McMurry, 208.
24. Federer, 56.
25. Federer, 71–73.
27. Smith, 39.
28. McMurry, 150.
29. McMurry, 268.
31. Shirley Graham and George D. Lipscomb, Dr. George Washington Carver (New York: Julian Messner, 1944), v.
32. Perry, 318.
33. Perry, 324.
34. McMurry, 262.
35. McMurry, 284.
36. Federer, 68.
37. McMurry, 302.
38. Perry, 361.
40. Smith, 75-76. The year of his death, the Seventy-eighth Congress of the United States created the George Washington Carver National Monument at his birthplace, Diamond Grove, Missouri.

Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Romans 5:3-5
(1 Cor. 2:14–15). At the time of my initial work among you several years ago, the time of your conversion and baby Christian status, I could not address you as spiritually mature people, but I was able to speak only as I would speak to mere infants in Christ, as those who have the Spirit and thus a capacity for welcoming the truth and experiencing spiritual growth, but as yet having limited experience of it. At that time, and for that stage, I gave you milk to drink, food for babies, that is, elementary spiritual truths for baby Christians. When I was with you those eighteen months (Acts 18:11), I did not give you solid food, food for adults, that is, the wisdom of God (cf. 1 Cor. 2:6–7), that is, deeper spiritual truth for mature Christians. This was because you were not yet ready for solid food. But now some four or five years later you are still not ready!3

Paul was a realist and understood human nature. He did not expect instant perfection, but he did expect steady growth. The normal pattern of spiritual development was to progress along a continuum from baby believer to mature believer. The Corinthians’ prolonged period of infancy—fleshly living—was not normal and deserved no sympathy or indulgence. It was an intolerable situation that must change. They had believed the gospel and received the grace of God; they had made a good start. But they had not continued to grow in grace or at least not very much. They were spiritually stagnant, and Paul could still feed them only “milk, not solid food” (1 Cor. 3:2). Like runners in a marathon, they had begun the race, but something had soon gone wrong. They had slowed down to a walk and were now wandering along the race track, distracted first by one thing then by another.

How did this situation develop? The Corinthians’ problems were traceable to a failure of church leaders and church members to take the Word of God and other means of grace seriously. As a result, they had not been earnest about putting to death the deeds of the old nature and walking in newness of life.

Paul puts them on notice that their disobedience was a culpable matter that would result in significant consequences unless they repented and began to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord. One consequence would be the forfeiture of the rewards God will bestow on those who have served Him well in His church—those who have built on the foundation of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 3:10–15). That would be a terrible loss for any believer. But Paul goes on to warn the Corinthians of even more serious consequences if they continue in their sins and cause a destructive split in the congregation: “Do you not know that you [plural] are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him. For God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple” (1 Cor. 3:16–7). This is a very strong and frightening warning.

Our Pursuit of Holiness

How do Paul’s instructions to the believers at Corinth have relevance for us today? What are our personal and corporate expressions of sin? What can we do corporately and personally to break out of these patterns of fleshly living? First, church leaders need to make the lifelong pursuit of holiness a priority in their personal lives. 

Holiness is not optional, and on the day of judgment, church leaders will have to give an account to God, not of how large their congregation became, or how many programs they ran, or how large their budget was, but rather of how faithful they were in shepherding those under their care to become holy.
Fleshly Christianity?

Their example is crucial for those they lead. If a picture is worth a thousand words, a living example is worth far more! As Robert Murray M’Cheyne once said, “My people’s greatest need is my personal holiness.” Leaders must seek to be to others what they ask them to become. This doesn’t mean leaders must be perfect, but it does mean they must earnestly seek to grow in holy living, that is, in increasing Christlikeness (Phil. 3:12–16). Church leaders must follow the example of Jesus, and His servants Peter, Paul, John, and James, and make the subject of holiness a priority in their preaching and teaching. One of the clearest facts of the Bible is that God calls His children to forsake their sins and pursue holiness. To cite but one of many, many verses, Peter says to church leaders and members alike,

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one’s deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile. (1 Pet. 1:14–17)

The importance of holiness is underscored even more powerfully by the writer to the Hebrews when he urges his readers to, “Strive for . . . the holiness without which no one will see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14). Holiness is not optional, and on the day of judgment church leaders will have to give an account to God, not of how large their congregation became or how many programs they ran or how large their budget was, but rather of how faithful they were in shepherding those under their care to become holy (Heb. 13:17).

Second, individual believers, while praying for their church leaders to fulfill their God-appointed duties, must also take personal responsibility for their own growth in grace and holiness. As the passages above make clear, holiness is not simply for church leaders, nor is it an “extra” for those who are “more serious about their faith.” These exhortations are addressed to everyone in the congregation because the pursuit of holiness is a basic requirement for every believer. God is holy, and He calls every child He adopts into His family to become holy, that is, to have His image restored in them. Our growth in holiness is God’s preparation of us now, in our brief earthly pilgrimage, for life with Him in the world to come. Those who are God’s true children desire holiness, and with the Spirit’s help, they can make extraordinary progress through persistent, earnest effort. Those efforts will reap great rewards for us when, like church leaders, we give an account of our lives to God on judgment day (Rom. 14:10–12; 2 Cor. 5:8–10).

Practical Steps

You may be wondering, what practical steps can I take to grow in holiness? It needs to be said at the outset that good intentions are not enough. We must be earnest and vigorous in our pursuit of holiness. I would suggest beginning with this simple prayer: Father, do whatever it takes to deliver me from my sins and make me holy. An important next step would be to ask God to open our eyes to His holiness and to increase in us the fear and reverence of Him that is so crucial to growth in holiness. The reverent
fear of God is largely unknown among believers today because, amazingly, we think it is an Old Testament doctrine that is no longer applicable to New Testament believers. The next step is to ask God to convict us of our particular sins and to deepen our repentance. Many of us, whether from ignorance, worldliness, or demonic deception, seem to be largely unaware of our sins and of the great importance of confessing and repenting of them daily. Few of us have any idea of how shallow our repentance is, and that this leads to our repeating the same old sins over and over. When particular sins or patterns of sin become clear to us, we must work vigorously with the Spirit’s help to put them to death. If done with a right attitude of heart, these steps will have a happy effect: Jesus and His work on the cross for us will become much more precious to us and increase our love for Him and our desire to obey. The necessity of walking daily in the Spirit’s fullness will become obvious. And in the wake of deeper repentance will come greater joy! These steps can be taken alone or with one or two like-minded friends.

It will be very helpful to follow up these fundamental prayers for holiness. I suggest you take an exhaustive concordance, like Strong’s or Young’s (or use convenient computer software), and find the New Testament passages that include the words holy or holiness and obey or obedience and fear of God. Prayerfully ponder them, asking the Holy Spirit to open your understanding and show how they apply to your life. For helpful articles on these words, go to the New Bible Dictionary or Tyndale Bible Dictionary. You may also want to read (or re-read) the article on “Freedom from the Flesh” in the previous issue of Knowing & Doing. Once you are aware of what the Bible teaches on these topics, you will might profit greatly from Jerry Bridges’s Respectable Sins: Confronting the Sins We Tolerate, which is very helpful for identifying and dealing with some of the most common besetting sins. You would do well to follow that book with Bridges’s The Fruitful Life: The Overflow of God’s Love through You, an exceptionally good volume on growing in the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Both have study guides for small groups, a venue for growing deeper with Christ and other believers. For more depth, consider Rediscovering Holiness, by J.I. Packer, and Holiness, by J.C. Ryle. Above all, immerse yourself in the Scripture, purposing to know more fully our holy God and His grace and truth in Jesus Christ. Plead with God by His Spirit to illumine your mind and change your heart.

Consider becoming part of an accountability group with a few friends. In some cases, the advice of a wise, godly elder (male or female) or couple in the church can be very helpful. Having said that, some areas of temptation and struggle require the insight and guidance of a well-trained and experienced pastor. Don’t tell yourself that your pastor is too busy to help you deal with significant spiritual issues. That is a fundamental part of a pastor’s ministry.

There is great reward in forsaking the flesh and pursuing a life of holiness and righteousness. May we follow the example of the apostle Paul, who at his life’s end was able to say, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me, but to all who have loved his appearing” (2 Tim. 4:7–8).

Notes

2. Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version. Italics added.
3. Roy Ciampa and Brian Rossner, The First Letter to the Corinthians (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 140.
Finding Obedience in Paolo Veronese’s
The Wedding at Cana
by Joseph A. Kohm, Jr.
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If you have visited the Louvre Museum in Paris, you have probably seen Paolo Veronese’s impressive painting The Wedding at Cana. As one of the museum’s largest pieces (approximately 21 feet by 32 feet), it is difficult to miss. Interestingly, it hangs on a large wall within a few feet of Da Vinci’s Mona Lisa. The close proximity to arguably the most famous painting in the world assures that The Wedding is seen by the majority of the 8 million people who visit the Louvre each year.

The painting depicts Jesus’ first miracle recorded in the Gospels (John 2:1–11), when at the request of His mother, He turned water into wine. As an artistic snapshot, the image reveals more than 130 individuals enjoying a wedding banquet while, along the bottom of the image, servants pour newly created wine out of ceremonial pots.

Those with formal art training undoubtedly contemplate the aesthetics and technical elements of Veronese’s work. But for the average viewer, the initial visceral reaction evoked by The Wedding undoubtedly stems from its physical enormity, which might then transition to belief or skepticism as to whether Jesus did actually turn water into wine. Thus, for many, this painting elicits the question of Jesus’s divinity.

On a deeper level, the message of The Wedding is about obedience. John’s account tells us that after the wine ran out, Mary said to Him, “They have no more wine.” Jesus’s answer, “My time has not yet come,” seems to imply that He was not going to get involved. Perhaps it was a mother’s intuition, or maybe it was a look or the inflection in His voice, but we are told that Mary next went to the banquet servants and said, “Do whatever he tells you.” Jesus instructs them to fill the vats with water, and the rest, as they say, is history.

When the master of the banquet tasted the new wine, he was amazed, because usually the cheaper wine was served to guests who had imbibed enough to lack a discerning palate. In this case, Jesus provided the best wine last, after the servants had obeyed Jesus’s command.

The lesson we are not to miss from Veronese is that obedience to Christ and His commands produces the good wine in our lives. Quoting the poet Addison, in A Preface to Paradise Lost C.S. Lewis wrote, “That which reigns in Milton is the most universal and most useful that can be imagined, it is in short this, ‘that obedience to the will of God makes men happy, and that disobedience makes them miserable.’” Realistically considered, the measure of our happiness is almost always in direct proportion to the level of our obedience to our Lord’s commands.

Veronese adds visual force to his admonition for obedience through the positioning of all the characters on the canvas. Of the 130 figures in the painting, only Jesus, who is located almost directly in the center with His head surrounded by a pale glow, is looking directly at the viewer. Everyone else is busy, bustling and enjoying the party. Christ’s penetrating stare at the viewer gives added force and emphasis to Mary’s sententious command for how we are to
Obedience is the road to freedom, humility the road to pleasure, unity the road to personality.

*C.S. Lewis*

live: be obedient and “do whatever he tells you.”

The difficulty with obedience is that it is a doctrine assented to more often by the intellect than the will. After all, obedience is difficult; if it were easy, everyone would be doing it. Fortunately Christ is the model for our obedience. He reminds His disciples that “the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me” (John 14:31). Love is the key to obedience. The wondrous result was “through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous” (Rom. 5:19). Like the attendees portrayed by Veronese, humanity received the benefit of the good wine. Conversely, Christ asks a hard question of the disobedient, “Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?” (Luke 6:46).

When we view art, we consider the concept of image. The Christian knows we are made in God’s image. When we fail to obey Him, we do not fully reflect the eternal image in which we were made. We are only a portion of the finished painting He desires us to be. Even delayed obedience is disobedience. C.S. Lewis reminds us, “The first demand any work of art makes upon us is surrender. Get yourself out of the way.” It is not surprising that obedience requires us to do the same.

**Note**

1. Scripture quotations are from the *New International Version.*

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