

## NOTE FROM THE PUBLISHER

The following sample from *C.S. Lewis Goes to Hell: A Companion and Study Guide to The Screwtape Letters* provides a preview into this unique resource.

The table of contents lists what is in the book, but not every section is represented in the following pages. For example, none of the third part of the book or any appendices are included here.

You may be one of the countless readers who already enjoy *The Screwtape Letters*. With this companion and guide, your appreciation for Lewis's profound insights into human nature and the Christian life will grow even more. The author's organization of key topics and suggested questions for reflection are useful for either individual or group study.

The book is [available on Amazon](#) in paperback or Kindle e-book.

Thank you for your interest!

Robert Trexler  
Publisher, Winged Lion Press

# ENDORSEMENTS

**"Presenting *The Screwtape Letters* as a theatrical stage adaptation has had the wonderful benefit of inspiring hundreds if not thousands of theatre-goers to read Lewis' classic novel. As a result we are often asked to suggest a study guide to help people wrestle more deeply with the themes and insights behind the brilliant, morally inverted universe that Lewis created. William O'Flaherty's thoughtful, copious and insightful volume is what I will be recommending to them. It is the best of its kind."**

Max McLean, Artistic Director, Fellowship for Performing Arts, New York, NY

**"A good study guide is surprisingly difficult: it must combine accuracy with imagination, it must be generative without being speculative. O'Flaherty delivers. I am genuinely excited about this important resource."**

Diana Pavlac Glycer, Professor of English, Azusa Pacific University

Author of *Bandersnatch: C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, and the Creative Collaboration of the Inklings*

**"C.S. Lewis Goes to Hell by William O'Flaherty is precisely as advertised. Part encyclopedia, part plot summary, part analysis, and part discussion guide, this book is a valuable resource for both an individual reader and for a small group interested in exploring in more detail Lewis's satirical masterpiece."**

Don King, Professor of English, Montreat College

Editor of *The Collected Poems of C. S. Lewis: A Critical Edition*

**Once C. S. Lewis's best-known work, *The Screwtape Letters* today has been somewhat eclipsed by *The Chronicles of Narnia*. For those discovering *Screwtape* for the first time, William O'Flaherty provides clear summaries, useful background information, and helpful discussion questions. Anyone leading a small group study will find this to be a valuable tool.**

Devin Brown, Professor at Asbury University

Author of *A Life Observed: A Spiritual Biography of C. S. Lewis*

**"O'Flaherty's Companion to *Screwtape* is seriously worth any Lewis lover's time, both for its penetrating study questions and its excellence as a reference tool."**

Charlie W. Starr, Professor of English, Kentucky Christian University.

Author of *Light: C. S. Lewis's First and Final Short Story*

**"A worthy resource that will be highly valued by scholars and fans of C.S. Lewis and his masterpiece, *The Screwtape Letters*. Congratulations and thanks to William O'Flaherty for his diligence and fine work!"**

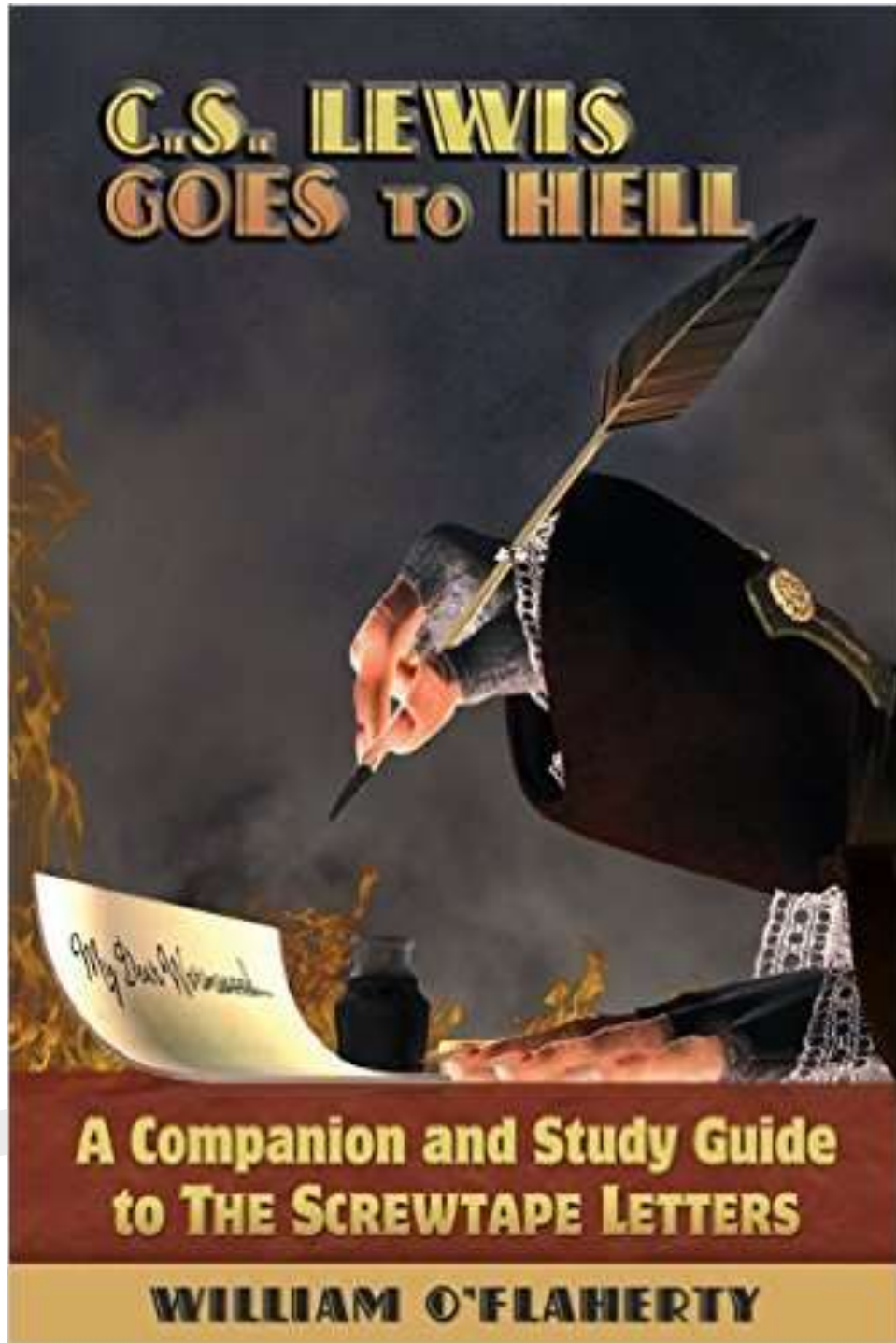
Carolyn Curtis,

Author of *Women and C.S. Lewis: What his life and literature reveal for today's culture.*

**"*C.S. Lewis Goes to Hell* is a comprehensive exploration which delves deep into the psychology of *Screwtape* and his agenda. Fans of Lewis will relish the wisdom offered here and nurture a renewed appreciation for *The Screwtape Letters*."**

Crystal Hurd

Author of *Thirty Days with C.S. Lewis: A Women's Devotional.*



[ScrewtapeCompanion.com](http://ScrewtapeCompanion.com)

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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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# INTRODUCTION

## Why Read A Book About Another Book?

*The Screwtape Letters* by C.S. Lewis has been enjoyed by readers ever since 1941 when it was first published in *The Guardian* magazine in weekly installments. Over the last seventy-five years, this classic satire has inspired others to write in a demon's hand. Yet, even casual Lewis fans can see why he set the standard. In fact, this work gave Lewis his initial fame as a writer. When people pick up the correspondence for the first time, they are caught off guard by reading seemingly private letters from one demon (Screwtape) instructing his nephew (Wormwood) on how to destroy a human's life.

Lewis uses dry humor to make serious points without triggering the reader's defenses. It is another example of getting past those "watchful dragons" as he famously remarked about smuggling Christian ideas into fiction. It was for this reason that Lewis rejected the idea of having an index to *The Screwtape Letters* because it "gives the bluff away and stamps it as deadly serious." He feared that including an index would lessen a reader's reception of his satirical approach. If a reader has their guard down, the lessons contained in the letters might have greater impact. It's also interesting to note that, before Lewis became associated with the Devil by being on the cover of *Time* magazine (September 8, 1947), he had grown tired of his connection the "Father Below." The "reverse psychology" used in writing a demon's diabolical strategies was exhausting.

The book you have in your hands was also exhausting, but a work of love and admiration for Lewis' achievements. It is, first of all, more than just an index of words found *The Screwtape Letters*. It contains a topical glossary with a summary of where the subject is addressed and whether it is mentioned in the follow-up essay "Screwtape Proposes a Toast." The second feature is a flexible study guide for individual or group use. Suggested answers are provided in the fourth section of the book. Prior to the suggested answers, there is an extended summary of each letter. Finally, there are several appendices with additional information.

## A Note On The Arrangement Of This Book

This book is divided into four major parts and seven appendices. To get the most out of the material I recommend that you first familiarize yourself with all of these sections. Then you may jump into this book wherever you like. Begin by reviewing the topical glossary, skip to the second part to find questions for reflection, or move to the third section to read key ideas for each letter. The fourth part provides suggested answers to questions.

Among the appendices are two that list important themes: "keeping things out" and "God's love." In another appendix, I compiled some "lessons" from *The Screwtape Letters*. The final appendix finds the famous demon himself giving a short address at Demon-Chapel.

## How To Get The Most Out Of This Book

There is one very important step to take before you get started. Set this book down, find your copy of *The Screwtape Letters* (you do have one, right?) and with a pen (or pencil) do the following:

1. Go to the first letter and number each paragraph (there are four).
2. Repeat this for each letter and if your copy has “Screwtape Proposes a Toast” you need to number it as well.
3. Also number each paragraph in the preface (both the original and the longer preface to the 1961 edition if your copy has this now hard to find but excellent preface).
4. Please note when numbering “Screwtape Proposes a Toast” that the first paragraph which provides background details (“The scene is in Hell...”) is “T0” and so “T1” should be before the sentence “Mr Principal.”

WHY? Throughout this book you will find the letters are referenced in a special way. The follow example explains the method:

1.3 = First letter, sixth paragraph

3.6 = Third letter, sixth paragraph

6.9 = Absolutely nothing; there are only five paragraphs in the sixth letter!

T5 = “Screwtape Proposes a Toast,” fifth paragraph

O-1 = Original preface, first paragraph

61-13 = The 1961 preface, thirteenth paragraph (it's a much longer preface!)

If you want to use the study guide within a 13 week time frame (to accommodate the length of a typical Sunday school term) then consider grouping the material as follows:

Week 1: Letters 1-2

Week 2: 3-4

Week 3: 5-7

Week 4: 8-9

Week 5: 10-12

Week 6: 13-14

Week 7: 15-17

Week 8: 18-20

Week 9: 21-23

Week 10: 24-26

Week 11: 27-28

Week 12: 29-31

Week 13: Screwtape Proposes a Toast

# PART ONE

## Topical Glossary

Part One is divided into two sections: the main characters and the major topics. The major topics begin with a definition or comment followed by a listing of where they can be found in the book.

Although you can browse this section, my suggestion is to first read a letter from Lewis' book and then look up the words or topics you want more information about.

### Reading An Entry

The sample entry below illustrates how to use the topical glossary. The word "DESPAIR" is summarized by the different ways it is used by Screwtape. You will notice that the phrase "DESPONDING TYPE" also appears within this entry. When a major word or topic is used for the first time in another entry it is capitalized to indicate that it is discussed in greater detail in its own entry. If "desponding type" had been mentioned previously, it would not be capitalized.

To locate a quotation, the shorthand reference system mentioned earlier is used. Thus, in the middle of this sample entry, "9.3" is given in parentheses. This means in the ninth letter you can find the quoted material in the third paragraph. At the end of the entry you can find a complete list (also in parentheses) of relevant times the word is used. This list may not include all the times the word is used. For example, the word FATIGUE is mentioned five times in a single paragraph, and a total of eight times throughout the letters, but I list only five different paragraphs.

### SAMPLE ENTRY - DESPAIR

This word is mentioned several times, but the first key instance is in the ninth letter when Screwtape explores how to advise Wormwood depending on whether his patient is "of the DESPONDING TYPE... or of the WISHFUL-THINKING TYPE." (9.3) In a later letter it is called "quiet despair" (28.1) when Wormwood is told to make sure his patient has a long life. Next, despair is mentioned as an EMOTION that can be produced by aggravating SHAME. Here Wormwood is informed that "Despair is a greater sin than any of the sins which provoke it." (29.7) (9.3, 28.1, 29.7, 30.2, T39)

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Here are a few more things to note:

There is sometimes an "Also see" at the end of an entry indicating that additional insights may be found by consulting similar ideas. For example, when you read the entry on ANXIETY you will find "Also see: EMOTION, HOPE."

I've chosen not to include explanations of uncommon references to people, places, or things  
Screwtape mentions when they are not essential to the text.

SAMPLE



## **FLIPPANCY**

This fourth (and final) type of LAUGHTER (or the cause of) is the “best of all” for the purposes of Hell. The main reason for this is because flippancy is “very economical.” (11.6) Humans who use it frequently develop an “armour-plating” that guards them against God (“the Enemy”) because “it is a thousand miles away from JOY;” it kills the intellect and reduces love or affection.

(11.2, 11.6, 12.4)

Also see: FUN, HUMOUR

## **FUN**

Fun is the second of four types (or causes) of LAUGHTER. It is described as “a sort of emotional froth arising from the play instinct.” (11.3) It has “very little use” for demons because it might lead to things like “CHARITY, COURAGE, [and] contentment.” It could be useful “to divert humans from something else” that God (“the Enemy”) “would like them to be feeling or doing.”

(11.2, 11.3)

Also see: FLIPPANCY, JOKE PROPER and JOY.

## **HABIT (HABITS)**

Habits are first mentioned as something “fatal” (1.2) in the sense of being dangerous to Hell’s purposes. Screwtape is advising Wormwood to be careful not to reinforce “the fatal habit of attending to “universal issues” instead of focusing on reality in the present moment.

Habits are viewed as something useful to the devils. After Wormwood’s patient has become a CHRISTIAN he is told not to lose hope because “all the habits of the patient...are still in our favour.” (2.1) That is, once a person becomes a Christian, he can use the patient’s habits to undermine or hinder him. Screwtape makes a reference to God not relying on habits, along with “mere affections” (2.3) to “carry them...to any of the goals which he sets before them.” This is something that provides an opportunity for demons.

“Mutual annoyance” (3.1 and 3.5) is a regular habit that the patient and his MOTHER have toward each other.

Later, when Wormwood is told about CONCENTRIC CIRCLES, Screwtape points out that when VIRTUES “are embodied in habits” (6.5) it is at this point they become dangerous to Hell’s causes.

In the tenth letter we learn of “desirable new acquaintances” (10.1) who have “an ingrained habit” that is of good use to the devils. Next Screwtape notes that later on in the patient’s life, it’s not too bad for him to keep “externally the habits of a Christian” (12.2) if he can be directed to make CHOICES that lead him away from God. We learn what a habit “does to a PLEASURE,” (12.4) namely, making it “less pleasant and harder” to pass up. It might be called “the law of diminishing returns” in regard to sin, meaning a person continually needs more of a VICE to get the same enjoyment obtained at an earlier time.

Screwtape shares the following maxim: “active habits are strengthened by repetition but passive ones are weakened.” (13.5) Arend Smilde says on his website that this comes from the work of Joseph Butler in his 1736 book *The Analogy of Religion*. (See [lewisiana.nl/screwtapequotes](http://lewisiana.nl/screwtapequotes))

Using habit for Hell’s aims is mentioned again in relation to VANITY. (17.3) Screwtape also comments on the fact that Wormwood’s “patient has contracted the terrible habit of OBEDIENCE.” (27.3)

We learn that human choices can “harden” (T10) by “steady repetition” of them, such that the habit can be turned “into a principle” that “the creature is prepared to defend.”

(1.2, 2.1, 2.3, 3.1, 3.5, 6.5, 10.1, 11.6, 12.2, 12.4, 13.5, 17.3, 27.3, T10)

### **JOKE PROPER (THE)**

This is the third of four types (or causes) of LAUGHTER. It is a “much more promising” (11.4) tool for Wormwood to use. It is not just “indecent or bawdy humour” which some “second-rate tempters” might frequently use. It is most effective “as a means of destroying SHAME,” (11.5) because a person can do something mean or cowardly and yet be viewed as “a comical fellow.” Wormwood is advised to have his patient view opinions that this type of laughter is inappropriate “as betraying a ‘lack of humour’” or better yet, as being “PURITANICAL.” (11.2, 11.4, 11.5)

Also see: COWARD, FLIPPANCY, FUN, JOY and SHAME

### **JOY**

The first of the four types (or causes) of LAUGHTER. Screwtape gives the example of it being displayed “among friends and lovers reunited on the eve of a holiday.” (11.2) It does Hell “no good and should always be discouraged.” Wormwood is told the devils don’t know what the “real cause” of joy is, but somehow MUSIC (as opposed to NOISE) relates to it. FLIPPANCY is a total opposite of joy.

(11.2, 11.3, 11.6, 31.4)

Also see: COWARD, FUN, JOKE PROPER

### **KEEP HIS MIND OFF/KEEPING THINGS OUT**

These expressions are only used three times in the letters. The explanation in the fourth letter paints a clearer picture of what Screwtape believes is funny in regard to them. He asserts that the devils “best work is done by keeping things out” (4.2) of human’s minds and not by “putting things into” them. A careful reading finds this idea in most of the letters, although it’s not as obvious.

(3.2, 4.2, 9.5)

### **LAUGHTER**

Screwtape takes an interesting (and rather serious) approach to this topic. He warns Wormwood that laughter is not “always in our favour.” (11.1) Then he identifies four “causes of human laughter” (11.2) and that only certain ones are useful to Hell. The causes are JOY, FUN, THE JOKE

**PROPER and FLIPPANCY.**

(11.1, 11.2, 11.4, 11.6)

**PARROT TALK/PARROT-LIKE**

Both variations are associated with the topic of PRAYER. When Wormwood's patient prays, he should guide him to merely repeat words he has heard, not thinking about, or especially not being sincere about, what he is saying.

(2.4, 4.2)

**PURITANICAL/PURITANISM/PURITAN**

Another example of the devils twisting words to only have a negative meaning. Screwtape boasts that by getting patients to think or label something as "Puritanism" (10.3) or "Puritanical," they "rescue annually thousands of humans from temperance, CHASTITY, and sobriety of life.

(10.3, 10.4, 11.5, 25.6, T10)

Also see: ADOLESCENT, COMPLACENCY, DEMOCRACY, and UNSELFISHNESS.

**TEACH**

In the debut letter, Wormwood is told to not try to teach his patient. Rather, he is "there to FUDDLE him." (1.4) However, Screwtape appears to contradict himself in the thirteenth letter when he comments about Wormwood attempting to painstakingly teach the patient to value various Worldly pleasures. The same apparent contradiction happens in over half-a-dozen more paragraphs (listed below). However, Screwtape is using the word those times in a more casual sense of the word.

(1.4, 4.4, 13.3, 16.4, 20.3, 21.5, 23.3, 24.4, 24.5, 26.2, 28.1, 28.2)

**THOUGHTS (keep out)**

Screwtape advises Wormwood, in regard to his patient, to "keep out of his mind" (2.4) a particular question. He says the devil's "best work is done by keeping things out" of our mind. (4.2)

**WILL/WILLS**

The Will is the center of a person as presented in the sixth letter. References are made to either the patient's Will or the idea of keeping things from getting to human wills. The other parts are FANTASY and INTELLECT.

Also See: CONCENTRIC CIRCLES

(4.2, 4.3, 6.2, 6.6, 8.3, 8.4, 9.3, 13.4, 13.5, 18.3, 25.6, 27.1, 29.8, T12)

SAMPLE

# PART TWO

## Flexible Study Guide

This study guide was developed to provide the maximum flexibility for readers to reflect upon The Screwtape Letters. A short summary is provided after each letter in the form of two to ten words. This can help the reader to recall key themes or ideas addressed.

Ten questions, divided into two parts, are given for each letter (an exception is the Toast essay which has twenty questions). While any person or group could choose to answer all of them, the first five are suggested for individuals (“Short / Private study”) and the remaining five are for study group (“Long / Group study”). However, a group should begin with the questions from the initial set before starting this half.

Additional flexibility is built into each set of questions. That is, in each group the last two questions are optional. For short study a person would need only use questions one through three and a group study would start with those questions and skip to questions six through eight. Therefore groups would have six questions at minimum, but also the flexibility to tackle either the two other questions from the short study or the group study. However, both sets could be attempted as well! Groups have the options of doing six, eight or ten questions. Individuals can also choose to complete up to all ten questions.

If you are doing this as part of a group study and are limited to just 13 weeks then see page 3 for a suggested method of assigning the letters.

The key words CAPITALIZED in the study questions are found in the Topical Glossary, alerting you to the possibility of gaining further insight. Words quoted from the letters are placed in parenthesis.

**Letter #4:  
Prayer (A Painful Subject)**

**Short/Private Study Questions - Letter 4**

1. Why did Screwtape devote an entire letter to PRAYER, a topic he finds "painful?" (P1)
  
2. When Wormwood can't keep his patient from praying, what two types of prayer does Screwtape suggest? (P2)
  
3. What "subtler misdirection" is Wormwood told might keep humans from having meaningful prayer? (P3)
  
4. Screwtape states that one's "bodily position" in prayer matters. Do you agree or disagree? (P2)
  
5. What is the even "subtler weapon" the devils have when they can't get people to focus on themselves? (P4)

### Long/Group Study Questions - Letter 4

6. Instead of "putting things into [people's] minds," what is the alternative that is considered their "best work"? (P2)
  
7. What are some of the examples from Screwtape about how to keep the focus on self when PRAYING? (P3)
  
8. It's suggested that the patient actually prays to a "composite object." What does Screwtape like about this? (P4)
  
9. What does Screwtape mean by the "real nakedness of the soul in PRAYER?" (P4)
  
10. Is he right that we "do not desire it as much" as we think we do? (P4)

## Letter #11

### Four Causes of Laughter

#### Short/Private Study Questions - Letter 11

1. The new friends mentioned in the last letter are spoken of only briefly in terms of a larger circle. What is it about all of them that Screwtape especially likes? (P1)
2. What is the one characteristic about the new friends that doesn't alarm Wormwood, but it does Screwtape? Why? (P1/2)
3. JOY is the first cause of laughter listed by Screwtape. What is it and why is it of no use to the devils? (P2)
4. What is FUN in this context and what does Screwtape think of it? (P3)
5. Do you experience much JOY or FUN in your life? Why or why not?



### Long/Group Study Questions - Letter 11

6. How is “the JOKE PROPER...a much more promising field” for Hell’s purposes, but yet not always used effectively by “second-rate tempters?” (P4)
  
7. What is Wormwood told is “invaluable as a means of destroying SHAME?” (P5)
  
8. Screwtape saves the best for last and proclaims what as the most economical cause of LAUGHER? What does it do to JOY? (P6)
  
9. What is the cause of most of your laughter?
  
10. Identify Screwtape’s two examples of KEEPING THINGS OUT.

# PART FOUR

## Suggested Answers to Study Guide

*The following pages give suggested answers to the questions found in the second part of this book. As noted previously, some of the questions are more reflective and do not have an answer found in the letters themselves. Finally, whenever you see a word that is CAPITALIZED this means that there is an entry found in the Topical Glossary from part one.*

### Short/Private Study Questions - Letter 4

#### 1. Why did Screwtape devote an entire letter to PRAYER, a topic he finds "painful?" (P1)

(A) He believes that Wormwood misunderstood his previous advice about prayer...which is pretty humorous considering the last half of the previous letter dealt with suggestions on how to get the patient and mother to misunderstand each other. Wormwood misunderstands what Screwtape said about prayer and gets blamed, even though he is told not to "shift responsibility." (4.1)

#### 2. When Wormwood can't keep his patient from praying, what two types of prayer does Screwtape suggest? (P2)

(A) Either "parrot-like" prayers taught in childhood (repeat prayers learned without considering what they mean) or silent prayers where the patient will try to "produce in himself a vaguely devotional mood" (Lewis emphasis). (4.2)

#### 3. What "subtler misdirection" is Wormwood told might keep humans from having meaningful prayer? (P3)

(A) "Turn their gaze away from Him towards themselves." (4.3) That is, look to ourselves for what we are asking God for or trying to produce or manufacture feelings in our own WILLS instead of asking and receiving them from God.

#### 4. Screwtape states that one's "bodily position" in prayer matters. Do you agree or disagree? (P2)

(Answers will vary): This is a question for personal reflection and/or group discussion. Points to consider are: There are those who pray on their knees because it was taught to them and it has

become a meaningless HABIT and others who resisted trying it only to find how much more meaningful it is to help them focus their attention on the Lord.

**5. What is the even "subtler weapon" the devils have when they can't get people to focus on themselves? (P4)**

(A) Because we are unable to have a totally accurate picture of the nature of God, we tend to create a concept of Him based on what Screwtape called "quite ridiculous ingredients." (4.4) However, some of them do not have to be so far off the mark if we attempt to base them on Scripture (which Screwtape doesn't like).

## **Long/Group Study Questions - Letter 4**

**6. Instead of "putting things into [people's] minds," what is the alternative that is considered their "best work"? (P2)**

(A) At the end of the second paragraph we are told that "KEEPING THINGS OUT" (4.2) of a person's mind is the superior method. In fact if you look closely you will see this method encourage through the letters.

**7. What are some of the examples from Screwtape about how to keep the focus on self when praying? (P3)**

(A) Try to produce the feelings they are asking for. For example: try to feel brave when praying for COURAGE OR feeling forgiven when seeking FORGIVENESS. Thus, if the feeling doesn't come then the prayer didn't work.

**8. It's suggested that the patient actually prays to a "composite object." What does Screwtape like about this? (P4)**

(A) This is more about a false image of what God is like. Using a physical image and praying to it is a poor substitute for the Creator of all things. That doesn't mean that this practice has to be meaningless for all people.

**9. What does Screwtape mean by the "real nakedness of the soul in PRAYER?" (P4)**

(A) This is when a person accepts his/her own acknowledged limited understanding of God, embraces the mysterious nature of God, and opens oneself to Him even with these limitations.

**10. Is he right that we "do not desire it as much" as we think we do? (P4)**

(Answers will vary): This is a question for personal reflection and/or group discussion. Points to consider are the fact that many people really do not want to be open to God even though they may say they do.

SAMPLE

## Short/Private Study Questions - Letter 11

**1. The new friends mentioned in the last letter are spoken of only briefly in terms of a larger circle they are a part of. What is it about all of them that Screwtape especially likes? (P1)**

(A) While none have committed any “spectacular crimes,” Hell wants the patient to associate with them because they are “consistent scoffers and worldings” who are “progressing quietly and comfortably towards [Hell].”

**2. What is the one characteristic about the new friends that doesn’t alarm Wormwood, but it does Screwtape? Why? (P1/2)**

(A) We learn they are “great laughers,” (11.1) and this isn’t always beneficial to Hell. That’s because there are four “causes of human LAUGHTER” (11.2) and not all are useful to the devils. The different causes are Joy, Fun, the Joke Proper and Flippancy. So, depending on the cause of it, laughter may not help Hell’s efforts.

**3. JOY is the first cause of laughter listed by Screwtape. What is it and why is it of no use to the devils? (P2)**

(A) Joy is a difficult concept for Hell to understand. It is beyond their ability to comprehend and therefore they can only give examples when humans experience it. Screwtape admits to not knowing the “real cause,” which many would describe as coming from the lasting happiness that results from resting in God’s love.

**4. What is FUN in this context and what does Screwtape think of it? (P3)**

(A) Fun is viewed as "related to Joy" (11.3) that might be useful to the devils at times. However, Screwtape finds it has "undesirable tendencies," like promoting the "evils" (to Hell) of "CHARITY, COURAGE, [and] contentment."

**5. Do you experience much JOY or FUN in your life? Why or why not?**

(Answers will vary): This is a question for personal reflection and/or group discussion.

## Long/Group Study Questions - Letter 11

**6. How is “the JOKE PROPER...a much more promising field” for Hell’s purposes, but yet not always used effectively by “second-rate tempters?” (P4)**

(A) Screwtape says this type of laughter as being better for them, but some tempters don’t use it properly. It “turns on [a] sudden perception of incongruity,” (11.4) meaning something inappropriate, it goes beyond “indecent or bawdy humour.” Wormwood is told that ineffective tempter will just try to get a person to talk about sex without considering the “two classes” of people that are impacted differently by such talk.

**7. What is Wormwood told is “invaluable as a means of destroying SHAME?” (P5)**

This is a part of Screwtape’s description of the third cause of laughter. Jokes are “the all-consoling and (mark this) the all-excusing grace of life.” (11.6) Thus a person can do something bad to a person and pass it off as merely joking, so they can be seen as “a comical fellow.”

**8. Screwtape saves the best for last and proclaims what is the most economical cause of LAUGHER? What does it do to JOY? (P6)**

(A) FLIPPANCY is the final cause of laughter mentioned. “It is very economical” because “the Joke is always assumed to have been made.” (11.6) When flippancy becomes a HABIT for a person it “builds up...the finest armour-plating against the Enemy” and “is a thousand miles away from joy.”

**9. What is the cause of most of your laughter?**

(Answers will vary): This is a question for personal reflection and/or group discussion.

**10. Identify Screwtape’s two examples of KEEPING THINGS OUT.**

Screwtape encourages Wormwood to figure out which group the patient is in regarding the JOKE PROPER, “and see that he does not find out.” (11.4) Then Screwtape notes how seriously his English patient takes his humor that the TEMPTATION to use Jokes to justify bad behavior “...can be almost entirely hidden from.” (11.5)