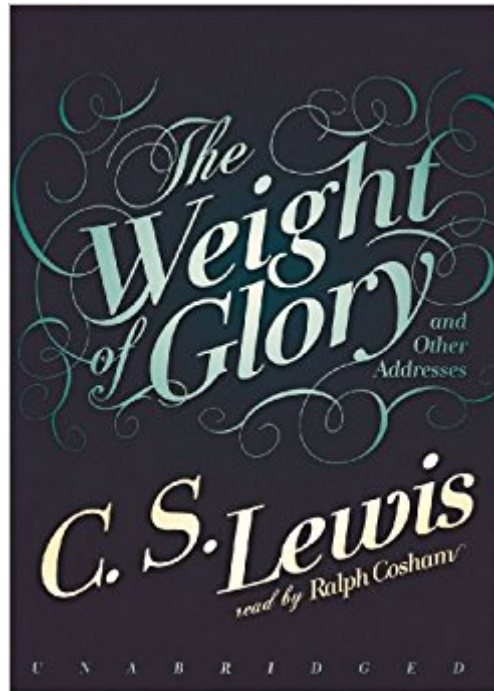




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The Weight Of Glory (Library Edition)



Synopsis

Selected from sermons delivered by C. S. Lewis during World War II, these nine addresses show the beloved author and theologian bringing hope and courage in a time of great doubt. "The Weight of Glory," considered by many to be Lewis's finest sermon of all, is an incomparable explication of virtue, goodness, desire, and glory. Also included are: "Transposition," "On Forgiveness," "Why I Am Not a Pacifist," and "Learning in War-Time," in which Lewis presents his compassionate vision of Christianity in language that is both lucid and compelling.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Lewis combines a novelist's insights into motives with a profound religious understanding. --The New York Times Book Review
If wit and wisdom, style and scholarship are requisites. . . Mr. Lewis will be among the angels. --New Yorker

Addressing some of the most difficult issues we face in our day-to-day lives, C. S. Lewis's ardent and timeless words provide an unparalleled path to greater spiritual understanding. Considered by many to be his most moving address, "The Weight of Glory" extols a compassionate vision of Christianity and includes lucid and compelling discussions on forgiveness and faith. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

I half read/half listened on Audible. There's so much in this little book I couldn't fathom everything. I plan to listen again to glean more! Some things I'll have to chew on for awhile to absorb...

Excited for the discussion tomorrow!(The Inklings Series is a monthly series featuring the works of my two favorites, J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis, or books about them. But I don't want it to be just me chatting about these books, so that's where y'all come in! I'll announce the book at least four weeks in advance of when the discussion post will go live, so you have plenty of time to get the book and read it. Then, the following month, I'll post a discussion post and let the fun begin!!) You know when you read a book and once you finish you think "huh, not at all what I was expecting." That's how I felt after finishing *The Weight of Glory*. By no means is this a bad thing, not one bit, but there was such a variety of topics, it made for some interesting reading. I also think the fact that I have been reading *Mere Christianity* (for my bible study) at the same time, played a role in those expectations. But of course I'm glad I read it! One of the takeaways for me was the vast amount of topics Lewis not only preached on, but his knowledge on so many of them. I'm pretty sure I was looking up names, pieces of literature and philosophies every other page. Like Pelagian? Oh yes, my friends and I were chatting about that just the other night. Oh wait. (It's the belief that sin didn't taint humanity, so there's no need for Divine aid, in case you're in my boat). I love that in each of his books, Lewis is honest about his struggles. His humility is evident through his passion and writings. It always makes for intense, yet awesome reading experiences. One of my favorite chapters was the book's namesake "The Weight of Glory." He wasted no time at all. "We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased." "Loved this: "For they are not the thing itself [speaking of the beauty we find in books and music]; they are only the scent of a flower we have not found, the echo of a tune we have not yet heard, news from a country we have never yet visited." And you and I have need of the strongest spell that can be found to wake us from the evil enchantment of worldliness which has been laid upon us for nearly a hundred years. Almost our whole education has been directed to silencing this shy, persistent, inner voice; almost all our modern philosophies have been devised to convince us that the good of man is to be found on this earth." One more from this chapter: "A scientist may reply that since most of the things we call beautiful are

inanimate, it is not very surprising that they take no notice of us. That, of course, is true. It is not the physical objects that I am speaking of, but that indescribable something of which they become for a moment the messengers.

“This was not as easy of a read for me as say, Mere Christianity. Was that the case for any of y’all? Some chapters (like Transposition) were very philosophical. I felt like a freshman all over again in my philosophy 101 class. Say what did I just read?? Let’s go ahead and read that again.”

I also really appreciated the introductions that described where all the chapters came from and who Lewis shared them with. Some chapters were also much more impactful for me than others, say The Weight of Glory vs. Pacifism. Although I would like to know how the Pacifist Society responded to his talk.

“Christian theology can fit in science, art, morality, and the sub-Christian religions. The scientific point of view cannot fit in any of these things, not even science itself. I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen, not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.”

“To excuse what can really produce good excuses is not Christian charity; it is only fairness. To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable, because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you.”

Then his last chapter has this. He knows how to make you think

“If you have not chosen the Kingdom of God, it will make in the end of difference what you have chosen instead. Those are hard words to take. Will it really make no difference whether it was women or patriotism, cocaine or art, whisky or a seat in the Cabinet, money or science? Well, surely no difference matters. We shall have missed the end for which we are formed and rejected the other thing that satisfies. Does it matter to a man dying in a desert by which choice of route he missed the only well?”

Discussion time! Here’s a few questions I thought to get the party started :).

1. Which were your favorite chapters? Mine were: Forgiveness, The Weight of Glory, A Slip of the Tongue and I also really enjoyed Is Theology Poetry. It’s like the ultimate literary academic argument for Christianity..comparing it to so many other works.
2. What were some of your key takeaways (whether from the book as a whole or an individual essay)?
3. Any favorite quotes? It’s a miracle I only picked a handful of quotes for this post
4. How does this rank from the Lewis books you’ve read? I feel I have so many more of Lewis’s books to read. This was different than the others I’ve read and I enjoyed it, but Mere Christianity still ranks number one in his theology/faith books.
5. What are thoughts would you like to add about the book? Looking forward to reading your thoughts!

Originally posted at:

This book paints a really wonderful picture of the great man and his thoughts. As a collection of essays and lectures, there is very little in terms of a consistent theme, so lots of disparate subjects are covered. I loved his insight into how he feels that educational textbooks can subconsciously shape a student's outlook. That said, I labored to get through this book. I was not brought up with a classical education especially in the realm of philosophy. The references he makes in many of the essays/lectures will make this a tough read for people like me. The part that I actually enjoyed most (Why I Am Not a Pacifist) I felt was the most outdated in terms of its view of how governments were reluctant agents of positive change in the early 20th century. As most people's view has become cynical (admittedly mine included) the text loses its applicability to anything but an idealized outlook. My review has more to do with my background and opinions than the merits and quality of this book. Though I struggled with it, hopefully you will find it more enjoyable and accessible than I did.

This is a series of essays on various Christian questions. C.S. Lewis is my favorite author in this field. I first came to know his writings through reading 'Mere Christianity'. I listen to Christian radio and Charles Colson had commented that it was 'Mere Christianity' that brought him to be a Christian. So I read the book. No one can say that C.S. Lewis is light reading. And this book is no exception. It does take concentration and quiet time to grasp the concepts discussed. But I am enjoying the book very much. The one thing that C.S. Lewis does best is using irrefutable logic to explain his position. After finishing an essay, you are left with a thought of 'Wow' and the desire to read it again.

Don't let the brevity of this book fool you. There is plenty to sink your teeth into in these five addresses delivered by the famed Christian apologist and Oxford don C. S. Lewis during World War II. Lewis demonstrates here that Christian theology is weighty enough to keep the most serious of minds occupied in very serious thinking. He does this against the backdrop of the horror and the existential threat of war. The final offering, "The Inner Ring," is probably the most accessible of the five, but the overwhelming reality of life consumed by war is the explicit frame for my favorite among the addresses, "Learning in War-Time." Lewis asks the question why, with the threat of death at any moment that is the truth of war, anyone should bother pursuing a path of learning that there is an

excellent chance they will never finish? His conclusion is that we do what we are called to do, and if we sincerely offer the gift of our efforts and our talents to God, then all we do becomes spiritual and worth the effort. Viewed this way, Lewis suggests, it makes no sense to do other than what you are best at, or what you feel God has called you to do, whether it be cleaning the streets, composing a symphony, or teaching young students. Offer your work to God, and it will be sanctified. Each of these addresses has its individual theme and its individual merits. They are not works of theological explication (which Lewis often noted was best left to theologians) so much as an unpacking of the practical implications of Christian theology for everyday life. It doesn't take long to get through them, but they'll give you something to think about for considerably longer.

Lewis' arguments against naturalism --especially that a naturalistic view provides no basis for thinking that one's reasoning is valid--shows up a couple of places in these essays/talks. But The Weight of Glory is truly the best single piece in this collection.

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