

# Mere Christianity

Wednesday Bible Study – Week 8  
Our Savior Lutheran Church & School, Lansing, MI

## Book 3 – Chapter 7 – Forgiveness

Is this the most unpopular of Christian virtues?

“I am not trying to tell you in this book what I could do – I can do precious little – I am telling you what Christianity is.” p. 115

Loving my enemies does not apparently mean thinking them \_\_\_\_\_. I am allowed to loathe some things my enemies do.

“Hate the sin but not the sinner.” p. 117. (we’ve been doing this all along with at least one)  
Christians think human beings live forever. How does that give us perspective?

## Book 3 – Chapter 8 – The Great Sin

Pride and self-deceit is the opposite of \_\_\_\_\_. p. 121

C.S. Lewis calls this the utmost evil, and the original sin of Adam and Eve. (this is similar to St. Augustine and Roman Catholic theology. Luther might see things differently)

Pride is a sin that is essentially \_\_\_\_\_. p. 122

Pride infects other sins. (Greed wants more for yourself. Pride wants more than others).

Pride can often be used to beat down simpler vices (pride can make you tame lust, greed, language, etc., to make you think yourself a better person).

Ultimately, pride comes up against someone we cannot outdo in any way: \_\_\_\_\_.

- Pleasure in being praised is not pride.
- Warm-hearted admiration for someone (proud of your kids) is not pride.
- God is not proud.
- The first step to humility is to admit that one is \_\_\_\_\_.

## Book 3 – Chapter 9 – Charity

Charity is “Love in the Christian sense.” p. 129. Not an emotion or liking someone, but wanting good for them.

“On the whole, God’s love for us is a much safer subject to think about than our love for Him.”  
Even love for God is not an emotion. Trying to do His will is fulfilling the commandment.

### **Book 3 – Chapter 10 – Hope**

“It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this. Aim at Heaven and you will get earth “thrown in”: aim at earth and you will get neither.” p. 134

Do we really want heaven? Many long for things in this life. There is a longing or desire for things that don’t really pan out in the real world.

“There was something we grasped at, in that very first moment of longing, which just fades away in the reality. I think everyone knows what I mean. The wife may be a good wife, and the hotels and scenery may have been excellent, and chemistry may be a very interesting job: but something has evaded us.” p. 135

How do we deal with this tension of longing and an unsatisfactory present reality?

*The Fool’s Way* – Put the blame on the things themselves

*The Way of the Disillusioned “Sensible Man.”* – It’s pie in the sky thinking that you grow out of

*The Christian Way* – Creatures are not born with desires unless satisfaction for those desires exists.” Probably earthly pleasures were never meant to satisfy it, but only to arouse it, to suggest the real thing... p. 137

### **Book 3 – Chapter 11 – Faith**

Do faith and reason conflict?

“Now faith, in the sense in which I am here using the word, is the art of holding on to things your reason has once accepted, in spite of your changing moods.” p. 140

### **Book 3 – Chapter 12 – Faith**

Waiting to understand everything – read first paragraph.

Discovering our Bankruptcy. You don’t really discover your lack of keeping God’s law unless you first try. You reach a point where you have to turn to God and say “You do it. I can’t!” And this moment is realized in retrospection.

So is the road back to God a moral effort? In what ways yes, and in what ways no?

“Leave it to God.” p. 147

We continue to do good works, but in a “less worried way” because we are already saved.

The pendulum of faith vs works - Philippians 2:12-13

Christianity might seem like morals and virtues and good works at the start, but it leads you beyond all these into something great. Law leads to Gospel!

**For next week, read Book 4, chapters 1-5**

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