



# The Collected Letters Of C.S. Lewis

*C. S. Lewis*

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## The Collected Letters Of C.S. Lewis C. S. Lewis

The life and mind of C. S. Lewis have fascinated those who have read his works. This collection of his personal letters reveals a unique intellectual journey. The first of a three-volume collection, this volume contains letters from Lewis's boyhood, his army days in World War I, and his early academic life at Oxford. Here we encounter the creative, imaginative seeds that gave birth to some of his most famous works.

At age sixteen, Lewis begins writing to Arthur Greeves, a boy his age in Belfast who later becomes one of his most treasured friends. Their correspondence would continue over the next fifty years. In his letters to Arthur, Lewis admits that he has abandoned the Christian faith. "I believe in no religion," he says. "There is absolutely no proof for any of them."

Shortly after arriving at Oxford, Lewis is called away to war. Quickly wounded, he returns to Oxford, writing home to describe his thoughts and feelings about the horrors of war as well as the early joys of publication and academic success.

In 1929 Lewis writes to Arthur of a friendship that was to greatly influence his life and writing. "I was up till 2:30 on Monday talking to the Anglo-Saxon professor Tolkien who came back with me to College ... and sat discoursing of the gods and giants & Asgard for three hours ..." Gradually, as Lewis spends time with Tolkien and other friends, he admits in his letters to a change of view on religion. In 1930 he writes, "Whereas once I would have said, 'Shall I adopt Christianity', I now wait to see whether it will adopt me ..."

*The Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis, Volume I* offers an inside perspective to Lewis's thinking during his formative years. Walter Hooper's insightful notes and biographical appendix of all the correspondents make this an irreplaceable reference for those curious about the life and work of one of the most creative minds of the modern era.

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C. S. Lewis was a prolific letter writer, and his personal correspondence reveals much of his private life, reflections, friendships, and the progress of his thought. This second of a three-volume collection contains the letters Lewis wrote after his conversion to Christianity, as he began a lifetime of serious writing. Lewis corresponded with many of the twentieth century's major literary figures, including J. R. R. Tolkien and Dorothy Sayers. Here we encounter a surge of letters in response to a new audience of laypeople who wrote to him after the great success of his BBC radio broadcasts during World War II -- talks that would ultimately become his masterwork, *Mere Christianity*.

Volume II begins with C. S. Lewis writing his first major work of literary history, *The Allegory of Love*, which established him as a scholar with imaginative power. These letters trace his creative journey and recount his new circle of friends, "The Inklings," who meet regularly to share their writing. Tolkien reads aloud chapters of his unfinished *The Lord of the Rings*, while Lewis shares portions of his first novel, *Out of the Silent Planet*. Lewis's weekly letters to his brother, Warnie, away serving in the army during World War II, lead him to begin writing his first spiritual work, *The Problem of Pain*.

After the serialization of *The Screwtape Letters*, the director of religious broadcasting at the BBC

approached Lewis and the "Mere Christianity" talks were born. With his new broadcasting career, Lewis was inundated with letters from all over the world. His faithful, thoughtful responses to numerous questions reveal the clarity and wisdom of his theological and intellectual beliefs.

Volume II includes Lewis's correspondence with great writers such as Owen Barfield, Arthur C. Clarke, Sheldon Vanauken, and Dom Bede Griffiths. The letters address many of Lewis's interests -- theology, literary criticism, poetry, fantasy, and children's stories -- as well as reveal his relationships with close friends and family. But what is apparent throughout this volume is how this quiet bachelor professor in England touched the lives of many through an amazing discipline of personal correspondence. Walter Hooper's insightful notes and comprehensive biographical appendix of the correspondence make this an irreplaceable reference for those curious about the life and work of one of the most creative minds of the modern era.

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