

The ScrewTape Letters **The Demon's use of Fear and Righteous Cause** **Letters 6 & 7**

Discussion Question:

1. What is your biggest phobia/fear?
2. How do we overcome our fear?

Demons uses fear to keep us focused on ourselves instead of God.

1. The devil uses fear to keep us from submitting to God's authority.

What the Enemy means by this is primarily that he should accept with patience the tribulation which has actually been dealt out to him – the present anxiety and suspense. It is about this that he is to say “Thy will be done” and for the daily task of bearing this that the daily bread will be provided. It is your business to see that the patient never thinks of the present fear as his appointed cross, but only of the things he is afraid of. (p. 25)

Let him regard them as his crosses: let him forget that, since they are incompatible, they cannot all happen to him, and let him try to practice fortitude and patience to them all in advance. For real resignation, at the same moment, to a dozen different hypothetical fates, is almost impossible, and the Enemy does not greatly assist those who are trying to attain it. (p. 26)

2. Fear is hard to beat when the focus is on the emotional fear and not the origin of the fear.

An important spiritual law is here involved. I have explained that you can weaken his prayers by diverting his attention from the Enemy himself to his own states of mind about the Enemy. On the other hand fear becomes easier to master when the patient's mind is diverted from the thing feared to the fear itself... (p. 26)

One can therefore formulate the general rule; in all activities of mind which favour our cause, encourage the patient to be unself-conscious and to concentrate on the object, but in all activities favourable to the Enemy bend his mind back on itself. (p. 26)

Discussion Question:

1. What are some worldly values we have adapted into the church?

The Devil can use science and ideologies to become false gods.

1. Demons use their ambiguity to influence science and other human concepts lead us away from God.

I have great hopes that we shall learn in due time how to emotionalise and mythologise their science to such an extent that what is, in effect, a belief in us (though not under that name) will creep in while the human mind remains closed to belief in the Enemy. The "Life Force", worship of sex, and some aspects of Psychoanalysis, may here prove useful.

If once we can produce our perfect work – the Materialist Magician, the man, not using, but veritably worshipping vaguely calls "Forces" while denying the existence of "spirits" – then the end of the war will be on sight. (p. 31)

2. Any type of extreme zeal except devotion to God is unbiblical.

Any small coterie, bound together by some interest which other men dislike or ignore, tends to develop inside itself a hothouse mutual admiration, and towards the outer world, a great deal of pride and hatred which is entertained without shame because the "Cause" is its sponsor and it is thought to be impersonal (p. 32-33)

^[10] *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. ^[11] For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers. ^[12] 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." ^[13] Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? (1 Corinthians 1:10-13 ESV)*

We want the Church to be small not only that fewer men may know the Enemy but also that those who do may acquire the uneasy intensity and the defensive self-righteousness of a secret society or a clique. The Church herself is, of course, heavily defended and we have never yet quite succeeded in giving her all the characteristics of a faction; but subordinate factions within her have often produced admirable results.. (p. 33)

^[21] *So let no one boast in men. For all things are yours, ^[22] whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, ^[23] and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's. (1 Corinthians 3:21-23 ESV)*

3. Ideas, social trends, and culture can subtly replace God in the church.

Then let him, under the influence of partisan spirit, come to regard it as the most important part. Then quietly and gradually nurse him on to the stage at which the religion becomes merely part of the "cause", in which Christianity is valued chiefly because of the excellent arguments it can produce in favour of the British war-effort or Pacifism. (p. 34)

^[27] *For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ^[28] There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ^[29] And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. (Galatians 3:27-29 ESV)*