A Local Habitation and a Name:
C.S. Lewis and the Language
of Christian Apologetics

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Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations

AL: *The Allegory of Love*

"BFSM": Bluspels and Flalansferes: A Semantic Nightmare

MC: *Mere Christianity*

Mir: *Miracles*

SMRL: *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Literature*

TWHF: *Till We Have Faces*

The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from
earth to heaven;
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to
airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.

A Midsummer Night's Dream V.i.7

I. Introduction

C.S. Lewis is a source of intrigue for many twentieth century readers. His audience consists of Christian lay-persons, students of English literature, scholars, clergy, and others. For many of us, C.S. Lewis' popularity stems from his children's stories, the *Chronicles of Narnia*. In addition to that famed set of books, Lewis is known for his *Space Trilogy* and his appeal to evangelical Christians because of his own dramatic conversion and his apologetics, which have been an inspiration to many. But there are many Christian apologists, just as there are many science fiction and children's literature writers. What is it about Lewis that makes him so popular?

No doubt his ability to convey religious ideas with clarity is a major reason for his popularity. Lewis relies heavily on metaphorical argument as a valid means for relating truth, and this metaphorical and analogical argument makes his works accessible to the average reader. In the last decade or so, linguistic theorists have come to view the use of metaphor as deeply involved not only in the way we write, but also in the way we think. After looking at theoretical background in the area of linguistics, we will examine Lewis' use of metaphor.

This paper makes a case that Lewis consciously and confidently relies on metaphor and analogy as necessary tools for treating questions of religion. First, the paper will examine George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's theory of metaphor as laid out in *Metaphors We Live By*; this theory illuminates Lewis' metaphorical style. Then, we will examine Lewis' literary criticism. His criticism reveals that metaphor is indeed one of his fundamental interests. Finally, we will turn to Lewis' nonfiction and fiction, devoting a chapter to both *Mere Christianity* and *Till We Have Faces*, in order to show the centrality of metaphor and analogy to Lewis' arguments concerning religion. The examination of *Mere Christianity* will demonstrate *how* Lewis uses metaphorical argument while our analysis of *Till We Have Faces* answers the question of *why* metaphorical argument can be necessary in understanding religious truth. By the end, we will have discovered the ways in which Lewis uses metaphor and gained insight on why his style is so effective in explaining religious concepts.

II. Theoretical Framework

In their book *Metaphors We Live By*, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson argue contrary to the impression that metaphor is simply a "device of poetic imagination" (3):

> We have found, on the contrary, that metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature.... Our concepts structure what we perceive, how we get around in the world, and how we relate to other people. Our conceptual system thus plays a central role in defining our everyday realities. If we are right in suggesting that our conceptual system is largely metaphorical, then the way we think, what we experience, and what we do every day is very much a matter of metaphor. (3)

In other words, our thoughts, actions, and language, from the mundane of the everyday to the sublime of the purely poetic, are structured by metaphor. Our brief survey of Lewis' critical work will reveal a similar insight into the workings of metaphor. Lakoff and Johnson and C.S. Lewis strike similar chords in their views, but Lakoff and Johnson make a more comprehensive case of much larger scope which, when understood, will illuminate Lewis' work more thoroughly.

Lakoff and Johnson's main argument is that human thought, communication, and action is impossible without metaphor. As cited in the quotation above, our interactions and thoughts are limited to our conceptual system. Lakoff and Johnson seek to establish the fact that our conceptual system is metaphorical in nature. Throughout the book, the authors exhibit the various ways in which our conceptual system is metaphorical--our views of the way people feel, the way they act, the way they interrelate, and the way they make sense of abstract ideas. In more analogical terms, our conceptual system is to our thought as the air is to what we breathe, and the oxygen in this air, according to Lakoff, is metaphor. The following few pages explicate, first, how we form metaphorical structures and, second, how we use these metaphorical structures.

First, let us examine how metaphor works in forming our language, our communication, and our thought. There are two primary ways in which we use metaphor to form our conceptual system. In the first place, we find parallels between more immediate, concrete experience and more abstract experience in order to reason about the abstract experience. And, secondly, we manipulate metaphors so as to "highlight" or "hide" certain features of a given abstract concept depending on the context within which the concept is being discussed or acted upon.

In Chapter 19, "Definition and Understanding," Lakoff and Johnson briefly sum up their argument:

> Because so many of the concepts that are important to us are either abstract or not clearly delineated in our experience (the emotions, ideas, time, etc.), we need to get a grasp on

> them by means of other concepts that we understand in clearer terms (spatial orientations, objects, etc.). (115)

So the first connection between our conceptual system and metaphor is that our abstract ideas are dependent on our experience of more concrete objects and immediate emotions. Since our physical existence consists of experiences such as being close in proximity to someone or something, using various objects, and participating in myriad other actions and relationships, we naturally use these experiences to make sense out of less tangible ideas such as love and other emotions. To use love as an example, we see that it is often spoken of in terms of a journey--"*Look how far we've come,*" for example. By associating the idea of a journey with "love," a love relationship between individuals becomes easier to conceptualize and discuss. Subsequently, one finds that both love and journeys can be long, difficult, eventful (or boring), and so on; subsequently, one can tailor his or her actions accordingly. To put it simply, our conceptual system consists of two types of concepts: one which we can experience directly and concretely and another that is more intangible, thus requiring our concrete experience to assist us in making sense of it.

Moreover, by using various concrete images to shed light on abstract ideas, we highlight some aspects of the idea while hiding others. Lakoff and Johnson write, "In allowing us to focus on one aspect of a concept, a metaphorical concept can keep us from focusing on other aspects of the concept that are inconsistent with that metaphor" (10). The "Love is a Journey" metaphor highlights aspects that the metaphor "Love is Madness" does not.

Lakoff's example, "I'm *crazy* about her", does not speak to the same concerns that a statement such as "Our love is *not going anywhere*" does. Lakoff and Johnson give us a very incisive illustration:

> ...certain actions, inferences, and goals are dictated by the "Love is a Collaborative Work of Art" metaphor but not by the "Love is Madness" metaphor. If love is madness, I do not concentrate on what I have to do to maintain it. But if it is work, then it requires activity, and if it is a work of art, it requires a very special kind of activity, and if it is collaborative, then it is even further restricted and specified. (142)

The context within which the concept is being discussed necessitates highlighting and hiding features of the concept in order to communicate intelligently. Therefore, metaphor works in our conceptual system by not only acting as a vehicle to make clear difficult concepts, but also by honing in on specific details of the concept in order for us to think about it more precisely. For example, in *Mere Christianity* Lewis compares the Christian's relationship with God to a teacher-child relationship in order to illustrate the Christian's dependence on God:

> When you teach a child writing, you hold its hand while it forms the letters: that is, it forms the letters because you are forming them. We love and reason because God loves and reasons and holds our hand while doing it. (60)

By relating distinctive situations between a teacher figure and a child, Lewis highlights a particular aspect of God while hiding others. Thus, new metaphors allow people to be very poignant in their relating of concepts; "highlighting" and "hiding" allow people to use metaphors with particular purposes in mind (*MWLB* 97).

Given the ways in which metaphor works in forming structures that aid thought and communication about intangible concepts, Lakoff and Johnson discuss two main examples of how metaphors create meaning. First, Lakoff and Johnson demonstrate how basic structural metaphors work to facilitate thought and action. Then, they show how "new metaphors" can grow out of the basic structural metaphors in order to highlight and hide very specifically.

A store of generally accepted metaphors is basic for creating meaning and understanding among individuals. Though these metaphors are fundamental to communication and action, they have become so embedded into our conceptual system that we neither realize that we are living by them nor that they create the meaning behind our language. Lakoff and Johnson give "Argument is War" as a prime example of how metaphors structure our language and action. "Argument" is the concept, and the controlling metaphor "Argument is War" provides a reference point from which we can relate to the concept. The authors write:

> This metaphor is reflected in our everyday language by a wide variety of expressions:
>
> Your claims are *indefensible*.
>
> He *attacked every weak point* in my argument.
>
> I *demolished* his argument.
>
> I've never *won* an argument with him.

He *shot down* all my arguments.

It is important to see that we don't just *talk* about arguments in terms of war. We can actually win or lose arguments. We see the person we are arguing with as an opponent. We attack his positions and we defend our own.... Many of the things we *do* in arguing are partially structured by the concept of war.... It is in this sense that the "Argument is War" metaphor is one that we live by in this culture; it structures the actions we perform in arguing. (*MWLB* 4)

The metaphor "Argument is War" has given us one way to talk about arguments and to structure the act of arguing. In other words, our language *and* our whole way of living has been conditioned by the metaphor. Lakoff and Johnson demonstrate our use of metaphor to structure concepts as diverse as love and making economic decisions. It is within these constructs that we act and communicate.

In addition to and as a corollary of the subtle and pervasive influence of metaphor on the ways we think and act, nonconventional or "new" metaphors can affect us in a more obvious fashion. Lakoff and Johnson do not give as much time to this manner of metaphor compared to the time they give to the more subtle workings of metaphor; nonetheless, their assumptions can be applied just as effectively to it.

Understanding our experiences in terms of objects and substances allows us to pick out parts of our experience and treat them as discrete entities or substances of a uniform

> kind. Once we can identify our experiences as entities or substances, we can refer to them, categorize them, group them, and quantify them--and, by this means, reason about them. (*MWLB* 25).

New metaphors are usually based on conventional metaphors. "For example, the metaphor 'Problems are precipitates in a chemical solution' is based on the conventional metaphor 'Problems are Objects'" (*MWLB* 148). By identifying the concept of "problem" in such an interesting way, as a "precipitate in a chemical solution," we can think about it and deal with it in a more precise manner than if we merely thought of a problem as an unidentified object which we must "handle" in some unspecified way. Lakoff and Johnson explain their example:

> The similarities thus induced between problems as we usually experience them and precipitates in a solution are: they both have a perceptible form and thus can be identified, analyzed, and acted upon. These similarities are induced by the "Problems are Solid Objects" part of the "Chemical" metaphor. In addition, when a precipitate is dissolved, it appears to be gone because it does not have a perceptible form and cannot be identified, analyzed, and acted upon. However, it may precipitate out again, i.e., recur in solid form, just as a problem may recur. (*MWLB* 149)

The new metaphor makes use of "highlighting" and "hiding" within the overall structural idea that "Problems are Objects," but at the same, the new metaphor specifies *exactly* how to deal with the problem.

We will find that Lewis makes much use of new metaphors in his apologetics. By doing so, he assists one in identifying abstract religious ideas with objects and more concrete experiences in distinctive ways, subsequently allowing one to reason about them more effectively and precisely. Since metaphor at its most basic enables human thought, metaphors that are specific and creative do the same thing but in a more obvious and exact manner.

Our examination of *Metaphors We Live By* equips us with a clear theoretical background to understand Lewis' interest in and use of metaphor. By applying Lakoff and Johnson's work to Lewis' writings, we find one very apparent connection. Lewis' religious works extract experiences from the common and concrete in life and equate them with theological concepts, thereby attempting to help people understand his conception of who God is. Lakoff and Johnson provide a summary of much of their argument that relates to C.S. Lewis' use of language:

> We view language as providing data that can lead to general principles of understanding. The general principles involve whole systems of concepts rather than individual words or individual concepts. We have found that such principles are often metaphoric in nature and involve understanding one kind of experience in terms of another kind of experience (*MWLB* 116).

As mentioned in the first chapter, many people have difficulty handling the concept of God; therefore, Lewis develops structural metaphors in which to couch and clarify his Christian perspective.

Both Lewis' fiction and nonfiction engage the questions of whether or not there is a God, what God is like, and how we relate to him.

What follows is a brief discussion of Lewis' studies in classic Renaissance and Medieval literature. His critical works exhibit his interest in how metaphors provide contexts within which we can reason about and handle a certain abstract concept even to the point of arguing, in his essay "Bluspels and Flalansferes: a Semantic Nightmare," that truths cannot be separated from the metaphors that explain their meaning.

III. A Student of Metaphor

C.S. Lewis provides us with two general topics of study within which he both communicates his interest in metaphor and offers thoughts about how metaphor and human thought are inextricable from each other. Briefly, the two general topics consist of Medieval and Renaissance literature and basic linguistic theory. In both instances Lewis cites metaphor as central to the understanding of abstract truth and to the creation of meaning.

As a career student of Medieval and Renaissance literature, Lewis found Edmund Spenser and Dante particularly interesting. The title of his book dealing with Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, *The Allegory of Love*, in itself speaks to the interest he has in portraying abstract truths in more concrete ways. A.N. Wilson writes in his biography of Lewis, "...in showing us what he loves about *The Faerie Queene*, he shows us in embryo what he hardly knows at this point himself: the sort of books which he himself will excel at" (145). The same might be said for what Lewis finds interesting in other works of literature.

The Allegory of Love discusses the connection between Medieval treatments of courtly love and the allegorical method. In the book, Lewis gives a history of how metaphor has, from the earliest man to the present, been used to discuss and understand truth. The development of an allegorical method grew out of this practice. Therefore, he concludes that there is a connection between allegory and thought: "Allegory, in some sense, belongs not to medieval man but to man, or even to mind, in general" (*AL* 44). In other words, humans think allegorically; it is a way of making sense of intangible ideas and experiences. Lewis comments on an example he gives comparing religion to courtly love:

> That very element of parodied or, at least, of imitated religion which we find in the courtly code, and which looks so blasphemous, is rather an expression of the divorce between the two. They are so completely two that analogies naturally arise between them; hence comes a strange reduplication of experience. (*AL* 42)

One naturally makes connections between experiences, not to come to truth, but to create meaning. In the case of courtly love, Lewis believed that poets were attempting to grant the prestige of religion to "courtesy" (*AL* 111); as a result, they supplied a context within which to reason about the courtly code. In like manner, Lewis' apologetics and fiction contain metaphors which facilitate thinking about what many think are outmoded religious ideals.

Lewis makes an interesting argument that as history has moved on, allegory has become less a mere conveyer of specific morals and virtues and more an expression of the "indefinite realities of inner experience" (*AL* 260). This statement relates to his discussion of *The Faerie Queene*, an example of a work that contains allegorical enchanted lands based on this "inner experience." Therefore, Lewis' studies have revealed to him that allegory and metaphor can assist in explaining and understanding difficult-to-explain inner experience.

Furthermore, Lewis devotes a chapter to simile in Dante's *Divine Comedy* in his *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Literature*. The essays in this posthumously published book contribute more evidence for his interest in metaphor and the way it is used. He discusses Dante's "position in the history of simile as an important one" (*SMRL* 64). Lewis considers Dante's simile as the third and most impressive class of three general classes of simile traditionally used in poetry, the first being the regular simile used to illustrate, the second being the "metaphysical" simile of Donne, and finally the Dantesque similes which themselves are divided into four classes. The fourth class concerns us the most:

> The principle [behind this simile] is that the things compared are not yoked together by a momentary poetic analogy, like Vulcan and the old woman--an analogy which disappears the moment you step out of that particular poetic context--but by a profound philosophical analogy or even identity. *Like*, in these similes, is always tending to turn into *same*. (*SMRL* 71)

A simile of this sort becomes a structure within which one may think about a certain philosophical or religious notion. The philosophical or religious idea, as a result, becomes completely tied to the simile. In essence, when we think about the idea, we think in terms of simile or metaphor. Lewis provides an example from *The Divine Comedy*:

> In *Purgatorio*, xv, 64-75 Dante re-states Aristotle's distinction between goods that are, and goods that are not, objects of competition. He uses the image of light which gives more of itself in proportion as the body it falls on is more highly polished, with the consequence that the greater the number of such bodies the more light there is for all. There are two things to notice about this simile. In the first place, though it is excellent poetry, it is the sort of simile that could equally well occur in philosophical prose. In the second place, the use of light as a symbol for what is here symbolized is almost a part of nature, not of art, for nothing else will do and it is almost dictated, as Dr. Edwyn Bevan has shown, by the shape of the human mind. God is, or is like, light, not for the purposes of this bit of poetry but for every devotional, philosophical, and theological purpose imaginable within a Christian, or indeed a monotheistic, frame of reference. (*SMRL* 71)

Here, Lewis gets at a notion that Lakoff and Johnson discuss in their book *Metaphors We Live By* and that Lewis makes use of in his apologetics and works of fiction. Concepts become dependent on metaphor for their meaning. The metaphors themselves do not create the truth behind the concept, but the concept would be impossible to reason about were it not for the metaphor.

But his most obvious jaunt into the area of metaphorical theory is his essay "Bluspels and Flalansferes: A Semantic Nightmare." Near the beginning of the essay, Lewis writes about the creation of new metaphors and their relation to understanding:

> ...there is another way in which we invent new metaphors. When we are trying to explain, to some one younger or less instructed than ourselves, a matter which is already perfectly clear in our own minds, we may deliberately, and even painfully, pitch about for the metaphor that is likely to help him.... [We] are often acutely aware of the discrepancy between our meaning and our image. We know that our metaphor is in some respects misleading; and probably,...we warn our audience it is "not to be pressed." ("BFSN" 253)

Lewis views new metaphors as aids in understanding concepts, which are not easily grasped, but at the same time, he admits their limitations. He is very aware that while the connection between an abstract idea and its corresponding metaphor is sometimes incomplete, it is, nonetheless, necessary for understanding the concept.

In this essay, Lewis again has developed a connection between thought and metaphor. He insists even that "The man who does not consciously use metaphors talks without meaning" ("BFSN" 262). By the end of the article, Lewis claims that writers who use the highest percentage of admitted metaphors are those whose works contain the most meaning:

> It will have escaped no one that in such a scale of writers the poets will take the highest place; and among the poets those who have at once the tenderest care for old words and surest instinct for the creation of new metaphors. But it must not be supposed that I am in any sense putting forward

> the imagination as the organ of truth.... For me, reason is the natural organ of truth; but imagination is the organ of meaning. Imagination, producing new metaphors or revivifying old, is not the cause of truth, but its condition. ("BFSN" 265)

Little wonder, then, that Lewis makes so much use of metaphor in his works, a usage which will be demonstrated shortly. To his mind, there is an unquestionable connection between meaning and metaphor. For one to truly understand concepts, especially abstract ones, metaphor is necessary.

Thus, in his criticism and language studies, Lewis addresses the ways that authors make sense of abstractions or "insensibilities" through metaphor and how meaning and understanding depend on metaphorical language. His Christian works are, in essence, attempts to do just what his objects of study did. Ideas of God and faith are very abstract to the average person, and his metaphorical and analogical writing style clearly and demonstrably shows his concern for his readers' being able to understand Christian doctrine. In our analyses of Lewis' *Mere Christianity* and *Till We Have Faces*, we will see how, in scholarly works such as *The Allegory of Love* and "Bluspels and Flalansferes," Lewis does indeed show us in embryo the type of language he himself employs.

IV. *Mere Christianity*: Metaphor at Work

Mere Christianity is the most popular of C.S. Lewis' apologetics works. In this work, Lewis uses metaphor and analogy in explaining religious doctrines. This book combines three series of radio talks entitled *The Case for Christianity*, *Christian Behavior*, and *Beyond Personality*; in essence, *Mere Christianity* is the compilation of talks given for the masses with an intended "'popular' or 'familiar' tone" (*MC* 5). Lewis' purpose in these talks was to make clear the basic tenets of Christianity to as many people as possible at a time when many were despairing in part because the country was in the throes of World War II. His convincing method of argument places the book high on the list of must-reads for evangelical Christians who have difficulty articulating their beliefs. This method of argument has at its base the manipulation of metaphors in our conceptual system in many of the ways George Lakoff and Mark Johnson mention in their book.

In this chapter we shall look closely at some examples of how Lewis explicates Christian doctrine and tenets by way of metaphor. Lewis uses structural and new metaphors, making connections between abstract concepts and physical objects and experience, in order to make his arguments. First, Chapter 1 of Book 1 of *Mere Christianity* introduces how Lewis will ground in concrete experience his explanations of abstract concepts. After looking at chapter 1, "The Law of Human Nature," we will examine key, over-arching metaphors and how Lewis uses them to illustrate Christian beliefs and doctrines. These metaphors include a mathematical metaphor, a war metaphor, an adult-child metaphor, a machine metaphor, and an "infection" metaphor.

The first chapter of Book 1, *Right and Wrong as a Clue to the Meaning of the Universe*, demonstrates how Lewis uses everyday experience to acquaint his readers with theoretical concepts. In this chapter, Lewis acquaints his reader with the "Law of Nature" or the "Rule of Decent Behaviour." The final paragraph of the chapter states the points Lewis set out to make in the first chapter:

> These, then, are the two points I wanted to make. First, that human beings, all over the earth, have this curious idea that they ought to behave in a certain way, and cannot really get rid of it. Secondly, that they do not in fact behave in that way. They know the Law of Nature; they break it. (*MC* 21)

The way in which he makes these points is nearly completely analogical. Lewis appeals to human experience, first to the act of quarreling and then to our propensity to make excuses, in order to demonstrate these two points.

First, Lewis cites the act of quarreling as proof that humans, by nature, believe that there is most often a "right" and a "wrong." By invoking "quarrelling," Lewis cites a human experience, it is safe to say, that all have experienced. Thus, the reader faces the fact that there are times when he or she has believed that a definite right and wrong exists. Lewis goes a step further by illustrating how we could not consider Hitler and his Nazis at fault in the giant quarrel that was World War II were there no basic sense of right and wrong. This point is extremely poignant since the war was going on when the talks were being given:

> What was the sense in saying the enemy were in the wrong unless Right is a real thing which the Nazis at bottom knew as well as we did and ought to have practiced? If they had no notion of what we mean by right, then, though we might still have had to fight them, we could no more have blamed them for that than for the colour of their hair. (MC 19)

Thus, in order to prove his first point, Lewis confronts the reader with tangible examples, quarreling and war, when he or she senses definite rights and wrongs. In essence, we all have general ideas of right and wrong--our experience proves this abstract concept.

Lewis goes on to prove his second point that we are guilty of disobeying the law of nature by citing specific excuses people give for failing to live up it. Lewis forces us to examine real life situations, so we can understand that we are fallible even according to our own standards:

> I am only trying to call attention to a fact; the fact that this year, or this month, or, more likely, this very day, we have failed to practice ourselves the kind of behaviour we expect from other people. There may be all sorts of excuses for us. That time you were so unfair to the children was when you were very tired. That slightly shady business about

> the money--the one you have almost forgotten--came when you were very hard up. And what you promised to do for old So-and-so and have never done--well, you never would have promised if you had known how frightfully busy you were going to be. And as for your behaviour to your wife (or husband) or sister (or brother) if I knew how irritating they could be, I would not wonder at it--and who the dickens am I, anyway? I am just the same. That is to say, I do not succeed in keeping the Law of Nature very well, and the moment anyone tells me I am not keeping it, there starts up in my mind a string of excuses as long as your arm. The question at the moment is not whether they are good excuses. The point is that they are one more proof of how deeply, whether we like it or not, we believe in the Law of Nature. If we do not believe in decent behaviour, why should we be so anxious to make excuses for not having behaved decently? (*MC* 20-1)

This quotation demonstrates how Lewis uses immediate experience to prove a point. He showers the reader with example upon example of how we do, basically, intuit a right and a wrong and how we do not live up to this "Law of Nature."

C.S. Lewis, in the first chapter, establishes the way in which he will conduct his arguments: he will use experiential and metaphorical examples as each step in his logic. Furthermore, Lewis states that he is "trying to find out truth" (*MC* 27), therefore, establishing a direct connection between his type of argument and the pursuit of truth. His use of metaphor and experience, to his mind, yield understanding of truth. Having established in the first chapter Lewis' dependence on experience, we will now explore his key metaphors. These metaphors loosely structure Lewis' arguments for Christianity.

First, Lewis uses a mathematical metaphor in a variety of ways to help build the foundation for the book's discussion of religion. He alludes to mathematics to expound on his discussion of a definite right and wrong in the opening chapter of *Mere Christianity*, explaining that the Law of Nature exists in and of itself:

> It seems, then, we are forced to believe in a real Right and Wrong. People may be sometimes mistaken about them, just as people sometimes get their sums wrong; but they are not a matter of mere taste and opinion any more than the multiplication table. (*MC* 20)

By using the mathematical metaphor, Lewis attempts to establish further that we should all accept the Law of Human Nature. The structure the metaphor provides leads to viewing things in a more black and white, or right and wrong, way.

Furthermore, the mathematical metaphor refutes the argument that "'...the Moral Law [is] just a social convention, something that is put into us by education'" (*MC* 24). Lewis addresses this argument in this way:

> The people who ask that question are usually taking it for granted that if we have learned a thing from parents and teachers, then that thing must be human invention. But, of course, that is not so. We all learned the multiplication

> table at school. A child who grows up alone on a desert island would not know it. But surely it does not follow that the multiplication table is simply a human convention. (*MC* 24).

Lewis then demonstrates how the Rule of Decent Behaviour deserves to be equated to mathematics, simultaneously providing his readers with a metaphorical framework within which to deal with the concept of a law of nature.

Lewis uses the mathematical metaphor in a still different way in his discussion of the "Something" that is behind the moral law. If the "Something" is merely an "impersonal mind, there may be no sense in asking it to make allowances for you or let you off, just as there is no sense in asking the multiplication table to let you off when you do your sums wrong" (*MC* 38). By remaining with the math metaphor in this instance, Lewis allows it to become a stronger structural metaphor for Christianity in general. As before, the metaphor parallels the moral law, but now, Lewis contrasts its absoluteness to the implied capacity for mercy that the "Something" has. In one sense, Christianity fits the math metaphor in the idea that it is the only right religion and that there exists an absolute moral law, but in another way, the math metaphor can be contrasted to the Christian notion of a merciful God. Either way, mathematics becomes a starting point from which one may reason about Christianity.

One of the most interesting ways that Lewis employs the math metaphor is in his illustration of why his reader should not be annoyed at him for examining religion:

> If you are on the wrong road, progress means doing an about-turn and walking back to the right road.... We have all seen this done in arithmetic. When I have started a sum the wrong way, the sooner I admit this and go back and start over again, the faster I shall get on. There is nothing progressive about being pigheaded and refusing to admit a mistake. (*MC* 36).

Again, by using the mathematical metaphor, Lewis maintains that there is only one answer in the area of religion and morality. In math one sometimes must start over in order to find the right answer; religion is the same way, according to Lewis.

Throughout *Mere Christianity*, Lewis manipulates the math metaphor in order to make clear various ideas, such as the law of nature and the idea that Christianity claims to be the one true religion. But not only does the mathematical metaphor work to make specific illustrations, it also equips the reader with an over-arching context within which to think about and discuss Christianity. Lewis states that he is concerned with finding truth, and the mathematical metaphor suggests that he is serious about his assertions concerning Christianity:

> ...being a Christian does mean thinking that where Christianity differs from other religions, Christianity is right and they are wrong. As in arithmetic--there is only one right answer to a sum, and all other answers are wrong: but some of the wrong answers are much nearer being right than others. (*MC* 43)

Throughout the remainder of *Mere Christianity*, Lewis describes more Christian doctrines aided by metaphors similar to the mathematics metaphor in that they provide a framework within which Christianity can be conceptualized more clearly.

While continuing the mathematics metaphor throughout the book, Lewis develops another controlling metaphor. When Lewis terms Christianity a "fighting religion" (*MC* 45), he introduces the war metaphor. Lewis uses this structural metaphor to explain the presence of both good and evil in the world, the doctrine of repentance, and the Second Coming.

In his use of the war metaphor, Lewis both hearkens back to the metaphor he used as the setting for his *Space Trilogy* and looks forward to the *Star Wars* saga. He begins with a "Good Power" and a "Dark Power" both of which originally came from the same "Good Power." But the "Dark Power...rebelled." Hence, Lewis considers the war a civil war in which the devil is the "Great Rebel," and we are living in enemy-occupied territory:

> Enemy-occupied territory--that is what this world is. Christianity is the story of how the rightful King has landed, you might say in disguise, and is calling us all to take part in a great campaign of sabotage. When you go to church you are really listening-in to the secret wireless from our friends: that is why the enemy is so anxious to prevent us from going. (*MC* 51)

As the math metaphor is useful in conveying the idea of a definite right and wrong, the war metaphor communicates that one must choose sides. There is a good and a bad side, and if we agree with Lewis' metaphor, we realize that we cannot be passive. Either we are with the "Enemy," or we are allied with God. Lewis presents an initial problem: a rebellion or a turning away from God.

This metaphor of civil war leads directly into the Christian solution for becoming "right before God." In the chapter entitled "The Perfect Penitent," Lewis discusses the centrality of Jesus' death and resurrection to the Christian religion. The problem, in essence, is that "God wanted to punish men for having deserted and joined the Great Rebel, but Christ volunteered to be punished instead, and so God let us off" (*MC* 57). In order to take advantage of Christ's action, we must repent. Lewis explains it in terms of surrendering in battle:

> He [man] had tried to set up on his own, to behave as if he belonged to himself. In other words, fallen man is not simply an imperfect creature who needs improvement: He is a rebel who must lay down his arms. Laying down your arms, surrendering, saying you are sorry, realising that you have been on the wrong track and getting ready to start life over again from the ground floor--that is the only way out of a "hole." This process of surrender...is what Christians call repentance. (*MC* 59)

Lewis, by introducing the war metaphor, has given the reader a new way to look at Christianity, a way that might help make sense of doctrine. When one accepts the war metaphor as a representation of the situation of good and evil in the world, one accepts it as an explanation of repentance and the means by which we can again ally ourselves with the "Good Power."

Furthermore, Lewis turns to the war metaphor to explain why God chose to land on the earth in the disguise of a man in order to undermine Satan instead of "landing in force, invading it" (*MC* 65). Lewis notes that when God invades, He will do so with such power that "it will be too late then to choose your sides" (*MC* 66). An example from World War II supports this assertion: "I do not suppose you and I would have thought much of a Frenchman who waited till the Allies were marching into Germany and announced he was on our side" (*MC* 66). At the point of final invasion, Lewis writes, "it will be the time when we discover which side we really have chosen, whether we realised it before or not" (*MC* 66).

In sum, the war metaphor helps the reader get a large picture of what Christianity is all about: a conflict between good and evil, a need to surrender and to choose to reject our place in the "enemy territory" and accept the "Good Power," and a final invasion by God where His enemies will be separated from his allies. With the war metaphor, Lewis adeptly appropriates what becomes Lakoff and Johnson's notion of a structural metaphor--a metaphor that facilitates thinking about, relating to, and discussing a concept, both in language and in action.

Another key metaphor, occurring approximately in the same section of *Mere Christianity* as the war metaphor, is the adult-child metaphor. This relationship is analogous to the God-humankind relationship. The basis of this relationship provides another context within which one may view the Christian religion.

There are three main aspects of the adult-child relationship, most often portrayed as either a parent-child or teacher-child relationship, that elucidate Christianity. First, the most basic aspect of the parent-child relationship is that the child receives life from the parent. Second, a teacher-child relationship is one in which the child depends completely on the teacher for guidance and understanding. Third, the adult-child relationship is a source for insight on how specific doctrines, such as the doctrine of free will as it relates to God's sovereignty, might work out in practice. Taking all of these properties together provides yet another system of metaphors and analogies by which one can ponder the doctrines of Christianity.

The parent-child relationship mirrors the God-human relationship in Lewis' discussion of the human dependence on God:

> Your natural life is derived from your parents; that does not mean it will stay there if you do nothing about it. You can lose it by neglect, or you can drive it away by committing suicide. You have to feed it and look after it: but always remember you are not making it, you are only keeping up a life you got from someone else. In the same way a Christian can lose the Christ-life which has been put into him, and he has to make efforts to keep it. But even the best Christian that ever lived is not acting on his own steam--he is only nourishing or protecting a life he could never have acquired by his own efforts. (*MC* 64)

This analogy makes a very clear statement about Christian living. The Christian derives his or her spiritual life from God, just as our natural life is completely derived from our parents. As with the mathematics metaphor and the war metaphor, this metaphor does not allow for gray areas in dealing with the Christian faith. The metaphor shows that one's spiritual life depends completely on God.

The second major facet of the adult-child metaphor that sheds light on Christianity helps to illustrate why God had to come to earth and suffer and die. The surrender metaphor Lewis uses describes what our response should be, but the teacher-student metaphor illustrates how we are able to make this response. We are called to perfect surrender before God, yet, in our fallible condition, we are unable to do this. Lewis explains the efficacy of Jesus' submission as a source of guidance to those who also wish to surrender:

> The perfect submission, the perfect suffering, the perfect death were not only easier to Jesus because He was God, but were possible only because He was God. But surely that is a very odd reason for not accepting them? The teacher is able to form the letters for the child because the teacher is grown-up and knows how to write. That, of course, makes it easier for the teacher; and only because it is easier for him can he help the child. (*MC* 61)

Thus, since Jesus has achieved perfect surrender, the only way in which the human can also achieve it and thereby reconcile him or herself to God is to allow Jesus to demonstrate how and walk him or her through it. While Lewis uses the teacher-child metaphor to explain a particular doctrinal issue, he is simultaneously building a context within which one may better understand the relationship between God and humankind.

Lastly, Lewis uses the adult-child metaphor to explain the doctrine of free will. He uses the following analogy to answer the question, "...how can anything happen contrary to the will of a being with absolute power?" (*MC* 52):

> ...anyone who has been in authority knows how a thing can be in accordance with your will in one way and not in another. It may be quite sensible for a mother to say to the children, "I'm not going to go and make you tidy the schoolroom every night. You've got to learn to keep it tidy on your own." Then she goes up one night and finds the Teddy bear and the ink and the French Grammar all lying in the grate. That is against her will. She would prefer the children to be tidy. But on the other hand, it is her will which has left the children free to be untidy. (*MC* 52)

Whether or not such an argument would stand up against John Calvin's systematic theology, I am not sure; regardless, it does introduce vividly an idea of how God might deal with humans--in just the same way a parent deals with his or her child. The metaphor offers a solution to a particularly difficult concept.

When C.S. Lewis moves into Book III, *Christian Behavior*, he uses a machine metaphor as a base metaphor. He introduced the machine metaphor earlier but did not develop it:

> God made us: invented us as a man invents an engine. A car is made to run on gasoline, and it would not run properly on anything else. Now God designed the human machine to run on

> Himself. He Himself is the fuel our spirits were designed to burn, or the food our spirits were designed to feed on. There is no other. That is why it is just no good asking God to make us happy in our own way without bothering about religion. God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from Himself, because it is not there. There is no such thing. (*MC* 54)

This cleverly planted metaphor develops in the discussion of how the "human machine" might run properly. Lewis introduces the idea of a "human machine" and, with it, the necessity of maintenance and fuel to keep the machine going. As such fuel and maintenance, he discusses Christian morality, for in Lewis' opinion, "Every moral rule is there to prevent a breakdown, or a strain, or a friction, in the running of that machine" (*MC* 69). The machine metaphor, along with a ship metaphor and a journey metaphor, are the key metaphors for Book III. These three roughly related metaphors explain Lewis' views about Christian morality.

Through the lens of these metaphors, we will look at the three areas that Christian morality addresses:

> Morality, then, seems to be concerned with three things. Firstly, with fair play and harmony between individuals. Secondly, with what might be called tidying up or harmonising the things inside each individual. Thirdly, with the general purpose of human life as a whole: what man was made for: what course the whole fleet ought to be on: what tune the conductor of the band wants it to play. (*MC* 81)

Each one of these three points relates to one or a combination of the three main metaphors of the section. First, ships in a fleet must run in concert with each other to prevent collision; secondly, each machine itself must run smoothly; and, finally, the fleet of ships will be on a useless journey if they do not reach the correct destination. Thus, Lewis again highlights certain aspects of Christianity with new metaphors, in this case, the importance of morality. In addition, the metaphors act in much the same way as others that have been cited in this paper by providing a larger context within which to set Christianity.

The first area that the machine metaphor addresses is "Social Morality." Lewis manipulates the machine metaphor to highlight the aspect of Christianity that calls for responsibility in relationships among individuals. In relation to the machine metaphor, Lewis uses the metaphor of a fleet of ships. The first way that the human machine can go wrong is "when individuals drift apart from one another, or else collide with one another and do one another damage..." (*MC* 70). Lewis writes: "You can get the idea plain if you think of us as a fleet of ships sailing in formation. The voyage will be a success only...if the ships do not collide and get in one another's way..." (*MC* 70). Within this setting, Lewis couches his discussion of social morality. Lewis does not use the ship metaphor in the chapter devoted to what a Christian society might be like, but he does use the machine metaphor to explain how a purely Christian social order might not be welcomed by most:

> Each of us would like some bits of it [a Christian society], but I am afraid very few of us would like the whole thing. That is just what one would expect if Christianity is the total plan for the human machine. We have all departed from that total plan in different ways, and each of us wants to make out that his own modification of the original plan is the plan itself. (*MC* 80)

In this quotation, Lewis not only invokes the machine metaphor, but he also subtly hearkens back to the war metaphor in which the rebel component was so important. Also, the mathematical metaphor enters again in the idea that there is one right plan for the human machine. The dominant analogy is still that of the human to a machine; in some way, we have corrupted the divinely ordained specifications for the machine by attempting our own modifications. Consequently, a purely Christian social order runs against our grain, because we have modified the "human machine" contrary to God's plan, according to C.S. Lewis.

Furthermore, Lewis uses the machine and ship metaphors to address the second sphere of Christian morality: individual morality:

> The voyage will be a success..., secondly, if each ship is seaworthy and has her engines in good order. As a matter of fact, you cannot have either of these two without the other. If the ships keep on having collisions they will not remain seaworthy very long. On the other hand, if their steering gears are out of order they will not be able to avoid collisions. (*MC* 70-1)

This connection between the mechanical workings within the ship and the ship's smooth operation in relation to other ships is analogous to Lewis' position that "A Christian society [one which best facilitates smooth running of the human machine] is not going to arrive until most of us really want it: and we are not going to want it until we become fully Christian" (*MC* 82). Therefore, Lewis sets about the task of explicating "the Christian specification for the human machine" in his chapters on specific Christian virtues (*MC* 83). Lewis does not relate his discussion on the Christian virtues such as sexual morality, forgiveness, charity, hope, and faith, directly to the machine metaphor. Still, the framework is already established within which the reader may view them as necessary in maintenance of the ship or machine. The most obvious way that the virtues contribute to the proper running of the human machine is that, by practicing them, one becomes more like God. (Later we shall see that Lewis uses a metaphor that speaks to becoming more like God by practicing the virtues.) As one becomes closer to God, he or she comes to see God as the "spiritual fuel" mentioned above.

Finally, the virtues that Lewis extols as the specifications for the human machine will send a person in the right direction, thus fulfilling the final demand of Christian morality: right "relations between man and the power that made him" (*MC* 73). The journey metaphor is implicit in this third requirement of morality that the fleet of ships sail to the right place. Given this journey metaphor, Lewis can more easily handle matters of faith that are "directions for dealing with particular cross-roads and obstacles on the journey..." (*MC* 126).

For example, Lewis' discussion of Christian marriage touches on how the thrills of "being in love" will fade "into that quieter interest and happiness that follow" (*MC* 100). The journey metaphor allows Lewis to discuss morality with a long-range purpose. In the same chapter on Christian marriage, Lewis expresses his belief that if one does not adhere to the Christian view of marriage, it will not only affect married life, but life in general:

> But if you decide to make thrills your regular diet and try to prolong them artificially, they will all get weaker and weaker, and fewer and fewer, and you will be a bored, disillusioned old man for the rest of your life. It is because so few people understand this that you find many middle-aged men and women maundering about their lost youth, at the very age when new horizons ought to be appearing and new doors opening all round them. (*MC* 100-01)

The journey metaphor aids Lewis in his explication of the third facet of Christian morality. In the above quotation, he describes people who are, in essence, going in the wrong direction.

By manipulating and relating the three metaphors, Lewis was able to be more poignant in demonstrating the three points of Christian morality: the "harmony between individuals," the "tidying up...the things inside each individual," and the importance of living with the correct "general purpose." Shifting from the machine metaphor to the ship metaphor facilitated his move into the journey metaphor and allowed Lewis to cover sufficiently each of the three parts of Christian morality. Lewis fits them together to address different points more fully than each metaphor by itself could have. Lakoff and Johnson call this overlapping of metaphors "metaphorical coherence"--each metaphor works together to add more precise meaning to a concept.

In Book IV, *Beyond Personality*, Lewis addresses some of the most difficult points of Christian theology. To do this, he again relies on a variety of metaphors and analogies. Lewis writes, "Christianity claims to be telling us about another world, about something behind the world we can touch and hear and see" (*MC* 137). Subsequently, Lewis must use many different metaphors to help his reader grasp, through things in this world, that which is "behind the world." The four main metaphors we will look at are the map metaphor, the infection metaphor, the toy soldier metaphor, and the "playing pretend" metaphor. Taken together they demonstrate how Lewis believes that Christianity is a religion of transformation.

Lewis opens *Beyond Personality* with a map metaphor. This metaphor could be considered a structural metaphor because it gives an overall view of the purpose of theology, and one could possibly place other parts of Lewis' argument within the context of the map metaphor. But most importantly, it introduces this section of *Mere Christianity* with a statement of its purpose:

> The map is admittedly only coloured paper, but there are two things you have to remember about it. In the first place, it is based on what hundreds... of people have found out by

> sailing the real Atlantic. In that way it has behind it masses of experience just as real as the one you could have from the beach; only, while yours would be a single isolated glimpse, the map fits all those different experiences together. In the second place, if you want to go anywhere, the map is absolutely necessary. As long as you are content with walks on the beach, your own glimpses are far more fun than looking at a map. But the map is going to be more use than walks on the beach if you want to get to America.
>
> Now, Theology is like the map.... (*MC* 136)

This introductory idea helps the reader to understand that Christianity is (1) more than experience and (2) a religion that requires reason, understanding, and learning in order to be transformed by it. This metaphor adds weight to the ensuing discussion, which involves more intricate doctrines than the previous sections, *Christian Behavior* and *What Christians Believe*. If a person has the desire to grow in and be transformed by the Christian faith, Lewis, by using this metaphor, makes it mandatory to learn at least rudimentary theology.

Next, Lewis provides another structural metaphor in the "good infection" metaphor. The thrust of some kind of otherworldly thing, a "good infection," into this world which spreads slowly from person to person incorporates the whole notion of God's being Someone "beyond personality." According to Lewis, God has offered humans a way to partake in his state of being; subsequently, Lewis uses the metaphor of an infection to demonstrate how God's life might be passed from person to person.

The infection metaphor grows out of Lewis' explication of the Trinity. This explication consists solely of other metaphors and analogies. Thus, one of the most central Christian doctrines, according to Lewis, may be understood by making comparisons to earthly things. We must note, however, that Lewis admits the occasional insufficiency of analogy or "anything we try to substitute" for the straightforward words of the Bible. In order to see how the infection metaphor develops, we must look first at Lewis' explanation of the doctrine of the Trinity.

Lewis returns to his mathematical metaphor in order to give his readers a general idea about the possibility of a Trinity. In this instance, he uses geometry and the idea of dimensions as his analogy for how God can be a triune being--something we have no experience of:

> The human level is a simple and rather empty level. On the human level one person is one being, and any two persons are two separate beings--just as, in two dimensions (say on a flat sheet of paper) one square is one figure, and any two squares are two separate figures. On the Divine level you still find personalities; but up there you find them combined in new ways which we, who do not live on that level, cannot imagine. (*MC* 142)

Lewis reasons that this explanation should give a sufficient idea of the Trinity because metaphor is the only way to deal with such intangible concepts. According to Lewis, talking about the Trinity is not so important as "being drawn into the three-personal life" (*MC* 142). The above use of dimensions, at least, demonstrates the *possibility* of a triune God. The metaphor claims no more than that. But given the possibility of such a being, Lewis proceeds to paint a picture of what the relationship among the three persons of God might be like and to describe how to be drawn into this life. The "good infection" metaphor comes into the picture in the description of how to be drawn into the "three-personal life."

The two most prominent persons of the Trinity are the Father and the Son, so Lewis sets about illustrating the relationship between these two first. He attempts to explain how God the Father was the cause of God the Son, yet neither existed before the other. He uses three basic metaphors to explain this idea. First, he uses the analogy--Father : Son :: imagination : mental picture. The imagination is the cause of the mental picture, but the imagining and the picture appearing occur at the very same time:

> If there were a Being who had always existed and had always been imagining one thing, his act would always have been producing a mental picture; but the picture would be just as eternal as the act.
>
> In the same way we must think of the Son always, so to speak, streaming forth from the Father, like light from a lamp, or heat from a fire, or thoughts from a mind. He is the self-expression of the Father--what the Father has to say. And there never was a time when He was not saying it. (*MC* 151)

Here, the second two metaphors support the first in explaining the Father and the Son's relationship--the lamp/light and fire/heat analogies. Each one of the three analogies gives an idea of how it is possible for one part of a two-part being to create the other part, yet not exist before the other.

After establishing the relationship between the Father and the Son, Lewis undertakes the task of demonstrating where the third person of the Trinity comes into the picture. The proof for the Holy Spirit is grounded in two simple metaphors. First, the metaphor "God is love" describes the interaction between the Father and the Son, and, according to Lewis, this interaction, this "love" actually becomes the third person of the Trinity. Love is the basis of the union of the Father and the Son; this union assumes an identity of its own:

> The union between the Father and Son is such a live concrete thing that this union itself is also a Person. I know that among human beings, when they get together in a family, or a club, or a trade union, people talk about the "spirit" of that family, or club, or trade union. They talk about its "spirit" because the individual members, when they are together, do really develop particular ways of talking and behaving which they would not have if they were apart. It is a sort of communal personality came into existence. Of course, it is not a real person: it is only rather like a person. But that is just one of the differences between God and us. What grows out of the joint life of the Father and

> the Son is a real Person, is in fact the Third of the three Persons who are God. (*MC* 152)

Furthermore, Lewis likens the whole relationship between the three to a dance or drama in which the Father and the Son are the dancers or the players and the Holy Spirit is a kind of living production. This production, according to Lewis, offers all that supports the human machine. Thus, Lewis brings this metaphor together with other metaphorical ideas which have been woven into the book. Throughout the first three books, Lewis demonstrates how we as humans rely on God for sustenance. The above passage describes how God's three-personed makeup creates such sustenance, such life. To Lewis, God is the center of reality, and the dance that represents this reality produces "a fountain of beauty and energy spurting up at the very centre" (*MC* 153). Lewis introduces the infection metaphor in that by getting close to this "fountain" one may catch the "beauty and energy" that is flowing from it. "Good things as well as bad, you know, are caught by a kind of infection" (*MC* 153), and "joy, power, peace, eternal life" are received by standing near the "fountain" that is the source of these "good things."

In sum, Lewis uses a series of metaphors in order to explain the doctrine of the Trinity; and, at the same time, he shapes the argument in such a way as to introduce a metaphor, the "good infection" metaphor, that will be helpful in understanding how Christianity is a transforming religion.

Lewis then uses two metaphors that explicate the transforming command, "Be ye Perfect." Like the doctrine of the Trinity, this command can be difficult for many people to deal with because of it's seemingly impossible imposition. Both of these metaphors describe how humans come to partake of the life God offers as the overflow of the dynamics of the Trinity and how they, in turn, can grow in this life and, as a result, spread the "good infection" to others. The metaphor of the tin toy soldier portrays the prerequisites for obeying the command to be perfect: one must first be "brought to life." The second metaphor, the game of dress-up or "playing pretend," provides a picture of how to actually go about obeying the command.

The first metaphor is appropriately found in the chapter entitled "The Obstinate Toy Soldier." Here, Lewis equates the progress from human life to divine life with the progress of a tin toy soldier to normal human life. To allude back to his geometric metaphor of the dimensions upon which another could possibly be added, Lewis takes the idea of a toy soldier progressing to human life and adds to it a divine dimension. But he also points out that the analogy breaks down in that it does not explain how one toy soldier coming alive can help bring other toy soldiers back to life. Christ, when he became man, thus introducing divine life into the world, affects "the whole human mass" (*MC* 156). Lewis writes, "If you could see humanity spread out in time, as God sees it, it would not look like a lot of separate things dotted about. It would look like one single growing thing--rather like a very complicated tree" (*MC* 156). Therefore, the new man, Christ, has introduced an element that can spread throughout this "very complicated tree" via the "good infection." This chapter uses the metaphor of the toy soldier to show how Jesus Christ was the first man to experience a new kind of life. But Lewis also uses the deficiency of the metaphor, the fact that the tin soldier could not spread the new life while Christ could, to introduce a metaphor about how this "new life" may be spread.

Lewis develops his discussion of how man should respond to the command "Be ye perfect" with the metaphor of "playing pretend." Lewis treats this command much the same way he handles morality issues in the previous book--even if perfection is impossible, we should still strive for it. In this chapter on practical Christian living, Lewis uses the children's game of "playing pretend." This metaphor connotes the maturing process. He writes,

> They [children] are always pretending to be grown-ups--playing soldiers, playing shop. But all the time, they are hardening their muscles and sharpening their wits, so that the pretence of being grown-up helps them to grow up in earnest. (*MC* 161)

This metaphor is extremely apt in that when one is pretending to be a soldier, there are things that one should and should not do; in the same way, "There are a lots of things which your conscience might not call definitely wrong...but which you will see at once you cannot go on doing if you are seriously trying to be like Christ" (*MC* 162).

This "dressing up like Christ," as Lewis puts it, matures one beyond mere pretension about adhering to a set of rules:

> Now, the moment you realise "Here I am, dressing up as Christ," it is extremely likely that you will see at once some way in which at that very moment the pretence could be made less of a pretence and more of a reality....
>
> You see what is happening. The Christ Himself, the Son of God who is man (just like you) and God (just like His Father) is actually at your side and is already at the moment beginning to turn your pretence to reality.

As a result, Lewis can show how the transforming "new life" that was injected into humans can find its way to other humans. When a human catches the "good infection," he or she can pass it to others--just like Christ passes it: "Men are mirrors, or 'carriers' of Christ to other men" (*MC* 163). Men, who are only mirrors, or likenesses, of the true "new man," are carriers of the "good infection" of peace, power, and eternal life.

In conclusion, Lewis offers a statement that works as a summary for his purposes in Book IV:

> In the last chapter I compared Christ's work of making New Men to the process of turning a horse into a winged creature. I used that extreme example in order to emphasize the point that it is not mere improvement but Transformation. (*MC* 183)

Throughout *Beyond Personality* Lewis uses metaphors and analogies to describe a "Transformation" that is spiritual in nature. In Book IV more than in any other in *Mere Christianity*, Lewis relies on a wide variety of concrete and easily identifiable abstract ideas in order to explain a Christian doctrine. In the end, though there is no empirical evidence for this assertion, it is very likely that someone could take some of Lewis' metaphors into his or her conceptual system given the difficulty of the doctrines with which Lewis deals. Most readers need a way to relate to certain theological dogma, and Lewis provides it for them.

Mere Christianity not only offers a thorough treatise on basic Christianity, but also a fine example of how one might use metaphor effectively. Lewis practices highlighting and hiding and the use of certain types of metaphors to give an overall context for particular doctrines so that one can manage them. In this work, he displays how his own original writing makes use of the conventions he found so intriguing in his literary criticism. Furthermore, *Mere Christianity* presents many new metaphors that purport to act the same way as a Lakoff example such as "Argument is War." Granted Lakoff and Johnson deal mainly in metaphors that have become ingrained in individuals' conceptual systems, their theories relate almost directly to Lewis' conscious manipulation of metaphor.

In the next chapter, the discussion will move on to show why religious matters must be treated metaphorically. *Till We Have Faces* portrays fictional characters faced with questions about how the gods work. Through their conflicts, Lewis illustrates why conventional, logical speech and reasoning fall short, leaving metaphorical, or "holy," language as the most effective means of understanding religious truth and holy things.

IV. Why Metaphor: A Study of *Till We Have Faces*

In this chapter, we will examine how Lewis uses *Till We Have Faces* as a platform for discussing why metaphorical language is necessary in explaining truth. One source of the novel's complexity is the constant tension between the metaphorical language of the Priest and the rational language of the Fox. Perhaps the best demonstration of the problem of language within the novel is found in Psyche's speech to Orual when Orual attempts to "rescue" Psyche from the god of the Grey Mountain:

> The only thing that did me good...was quite different. It was hardly a thought, and very hard to put into words. There was a lot of the Fox's philosophy in it--things he says about gods or 'the divine nature'--but mixed up with things the Priest said, too, about the blood and the earth and how sacrifice makes the crops grow... It seemed to come from somewhere deep inside me, deeper than the part that sees pictures of gold and amber palaces, deeper than fears and tears. It was shapeless, but you could just hold onto it; or just let it hold onto you. Then the change came... And then--at last--for a moment--I saw him. (*TWHF* 109-10)

By examining three interchanges between characters, I will show how Lewis uses the novel to demonstrate the difficulty in expressing things that "come from somewhere deep inside." The interchanges, which focus on matters religious, illustrate Lewis' belief that metaphorical language is indispensable in understanding spiritual truth.

Through the three interchanges, Lewis expounds on the themes of faith, reason, and understanding truth. The interchanges present two different methods for understanding truth. While the use of pure reason, of seeing things, in the Fox's words, "according to nature," embodies one approach, the Priest's use of metaphorical, or "holy," language represents another. In *Mere Christianity*, Lewis deals with matters of faith very metaphorically, and in this novel, he provides a fictional portrayal of why metaphorical language works to make sense of matters of faith. The three interchanges in the novel aid in understanding absolute spiritual truth when "nothing is yet in its true form" (*TWHF* 305). We will examine the following three interchanges: the Fox and the Priest's argument about the existence of the Shadowbrute, Psyche and Orual's meeting in prison, and the confrontation between Psyche and Orual in chapter ten. The interchanges will delineate the connection between metaphorical language and understanding spiritual truth.

The first interchange presents a debate between the Priest and the Fox about how one might understand the religious idea of the Shadowbrute and the "Great Offering." The Fox tests each of the Priest's metaphorical statements, asserting how each is, or is not, "according to nature." By so doing, he finds it simple to explain away the existence of the "Shadowbrute" spotted behind a torch-illuminated lion by a sleepy shepherd:

> "By the King's permission," said the Fox, "the shepherd's tale is very questionable. If the man had a torch, of necessity the lion would have a big black shadow behind it. The man was scared and new waked from sleep. He took a shadow for a monster." (*TWHF* 48)

The Fox demonstrates "Greek wisdom" in his analysis of the shepherd's sighting. He examines any hole in logic and tests the story against any possible "natural" explanation.

The Priest then gives a description of how the offering is to be made, setting up a kind of Trinity in the process:

> The victim must be given to the Brute. For the Brute is, in a mystery, Ungit herself or Ungit's son, the god of the Mountain; or both. The victim is led up the mountain to the Holy Tree, and bound to the Tree and left. Then the Brute comes. That is why you angered Ungit just now, King, when you spoke of offering a thief. In the Great Offering, the victim must be perfect. For, *in holy language*, a man so offered is said to be Ungit's husband, and a woman is said to be the bride of Ungit's son. And both are called the Brute's Supper. (*TWHF* 48-9, italics mine)

The Priest advances a theory of how the same god has three different personalities in order to make clearer the dynamics of the offering. He must use "holy language," or metaphor, to explain this theory. How the Great Offering works is explained in the process. By using the metaphors, he can demonstrate how the victim is Accursed, or devoured by the Brute, and at the same time blessed, or married to a god. The Fox scrutinizes this description and, as with the sighting of the Brute, dismisses it as nonsense:

> A shadow is to be an animal which is also a goddess which is also a god, and loving is to be eating--a child of six would talk more sense. And a moment ago the victim of this abominable sacrifice was to be the Accursed, the wickedest person in the whole land, offered as a punishment. And now it is to be the best person in the whole land--the perfect victim--married to the god as a reward.... It can't be both. (*TWHF* 49-50)

The paradoxes within the Priest's explanation violate the Fox's sense of reason. To him, the Priest's description contains as much sense as saying that a person can be in more than one place at one time; truth cannot be understood through such nonrational explanations. The Fox believes that truth should be easy to come by and that reason is the only way to discover it. But the difficulty of such a religious situation requires metaphor to convert the abstract concepts into terms of more concrete experience so that the situation can be dealt with.

The problem enters in, so believes Lewis, when the topic of the supernatural is broached. In order to address this topic, Lewis uses the Priest to define the differences between "Greek wisdom" and "Holy wisdom":

> "We are hearing much Greek wisdom this morning, King.... It is very subtle. But it brings no rain and grows no corn; sacrifice does both. It does not even give them boldness to die.... Much less does it give them understanding of holy

> things. They demand to see such things clearly, as if the gods were no more than letters written in a book. I...know that they [the gods] dazzle our eyes and flow in and out of one another like eddies on a river, and nothing that is said clearly can be said truly about them. Holy places are dark places. It is life and strength, not knowledge and words, that we get in them. Holy wisdom is not clear and thin like water, but thick and dark like blood...." (*TWHF* 50)

This speech argues that those who employ Greek wisdom do not understand holy things. If it is accepted that there are gods, entities unlimited by the power of man, we must use something more than conventional wisdom to understand them. The feelings, emotions, and intuitions that religious ideas evoke can only be voiced through metaphor since we have no sensory experience of them. The Fox's wisdom falls short because it does not allow for feelings, emotions, and intuitions.

Lewis' discussion of a "new dimension" in *Mere Christianity* relates to the Priest's words and demonstrates how metaphorical explanations of intuitions are valid and necessary in spiritual understanding. If there are beings beyond what we know as human personalities, we, as humans, can only have a vague understanding of them by examining what we have direct experience of. Lewis uses geometric dimensions to communicate this idea. Since we have direct sensory experience of the first, second, and third dimensions, we can gain a slight understanding of a fourth. Similarly, since we have direct experience of marriage and love and devouring, and have limited knowledge of God, we can relate these experiences to our emotions and intuitions concerning God so that we can reason about Him. For example, in *Till We Have Faces* the Priest intuits that somehow the gods both can make the crops grow and require sacrifices. Therefore, through the Priest's experience of the growing of crops--that they provide life--and of sacrifice--that it requires death--he is able to make clearer the dynamics behind the Great Offering.

In sum, holy language, or metaphor, must be used to explain divine truth that is too difficult to comprehend through logical reasoning or empirical example. Things that are superhuman cannot be explained by merely human means, perhaps as lower animals are unable to understand humans fully. It follows that we can apprehend "holy things" only through connections between direct experience and our sketchy knowledge of the divine.

The second interchange, between Psyche and Orual while Psyche is in prison waiting to be sacrificed, reiterates that the Priest's metaphorical language is key in understanding spiritual truth. Psyche demonstrates an understanding of the Priest's position as complementary to the Fox's arguments:

> "The Priest has been with me. I never knew him before. He is not what the Fox thinks. Do you know, Sister, I have come to feel more and more that the Fox hasn't the whole truth. Oh, he has much of it. It'd be dark as a dungeon within me but for his teaching. And yet...I can't say it properly. He calls the whole world a city. But what's a city built on? There's earth beneath. And outside the wall? Doesn't all the food come from there as well as all the dangers?

> ...things growing and rotting, strengthening and poisoning, things shining wet...in one way (I don't know which way) more like, yes, even more like the House of--" (*TWHF* 70-1)

Orual completes the sentence with "Ungit." Psyche realizes that the Fox's wisdom, though good, is incomplete and that the holy things of the House of Ungit contain more truth than the threesome of the Fox, Orual, and Psyche ever believed. She must resort to the Priest's "holy language" to explain what she "can't say...properly"--the paradoxes she does not understand but senses to be true. She uses the Fox's comparison of the world to a city showing how there is more than just a city; there must be earth upon which to build the city, and there is a place outside the city walls which produces both food and danger. In other words, Psyche sees the truth in the Fox's assertion that the world might be like a city, but she also perceives that there are places other than the city that a knowledge of the workings within the city will not explain. Outside of the city, there are dangers and food, and Psyche realizes that the city cannot stand without what is beyond its walls; the same can be said for the earth beneath. Ultimately, the outside of the city is good because it gives life with its food more than it creates dangers; subsequently, Psyche concludes that the paradoxes inherent in discussing holy things are, on the whole, positive. Thus, she does not seem very frightened of her fate.

Furthermore, she finds the Priest's "holy wisdom" more useful in making sense of these more religious matters to the point of repeating his metaphors and language:

"How can I be the ransom for all Glome unless I die? And if I am to go to the god, of course it must be through death. That way, even what is strangest in the holy sayings might be true. To be eaten and to be married to the god might not be so different...." (*TWHF* 72)

The paradoxes she cannot avoid using reiterate the idea that holy wisdom and holy things are "dark like blood" and that "nothing that can be said clearly can be said truly about them" (*TWHF* 50). Lewis presents Psyche as one who has taken advantage of "Greek wisdom" but has not, as a result, become blinded to the less easily perceived "holy things." She embodies an ideal in which reason is not neglected while faith is maintained.

Finally, the third interchange takes place when Orual travels to the Grey Mountain in an effort to retrieve Psyche's bones. She finds more than Psyche's bones. Beyond the tree where the Great Offering was made lies the "holy part" of the Mountain. It is there that Orual finds Psyche. But at this meeting, communication between the two completely breaks down. The encounter highlights how metaphorical language must be used to discuss holy things and uncovers possible sources of tension between two people when one adheres strictly to straightforward, "denotive" language and the other understands the need for metaphorical language. By the end of this interchange, we find a reason why empirical language is ineffective in discussing spiritual truth: there is a gulf that separates the human and the divine.

Orual is much the foil to Psyche's religious insight in this scene as Lewis presents her as the stereotypical modernist skeptic, frightened of the consequences should these religious things be true: "If this is all true, I've been wrong all my life. Everything has to be begun over again. Psyche, it is true? You're not playing a game with me? Show me. Show me your palace" (*TWHF* 115). In this quotation, Orual reveals two problems. First, the over-arching problem is found in the clause, "Everything has to be begun over again." This notion, to Lewis a root cause of many skeptical dismissals of Christianity, does not appeal to Orual. But Orual's deficiency in dealing with matters religious most clearly comes through in the simple command, "Show me." Psyche's story, the disparity between what Psyche sees and what Orual sees, and Orual's night-time vision of Psyche's palace lead to a more complete understanding of the differences between the Fox and the Priest, a vision of religious experience fuller than the Priest's, and a definitive statement about the language of Lewis' apologetics.

Psyche's story and Orual's reaction to it amplify the differences which hinder communication between the two. Whereas Orual is guided with the principle, "Show me," Psyche's perspective grows from an openness to experience: "It seemed to come from somewhere deep inside me, deeper than the part that sees pictures of gold and amber palaces, deeper than fears and tears. It was shapeless, but you could just hold onto it; or just let it hold onto you" (*TWHF* 110). As a result of Psyche's openness, she is taken into the confidence of the gods. During the course of the interchange, two main instances of misunderstanding are revealing.

Near the beginning of Psyche's recounting of her story, she attempts to describe the "god of the wind" and her sense of personal shame in his presence (*TWHF* 111). In order to make clear the difference in appearance between the god of the wind and a normal human being, she creates an analogy: similar to the difference in the appearance of a leper next to a healthy person is the appearance of a healthy person beside a god. Orual thinks purely physically, asking, "Do you mean this god was so red?" (*TWHF* 111). Orual, ever the student of the Fox, does not comprehend something that, according to Greek wisdom, is not "according to nature." It is as if she does not understand the use of metaphor because she is not conditioned to thinking and talking about such experiences with gods.

Orual's thinking is not on the same level as Psyche's, but Psyche's way of describing her experiences is the only way to do so. Orual's comments demonstrate the lack of understanding of one who does not apprehend truth other than that which can be observed directly. Psyche has experienced the supernatural, and she struggles for the correct metaphor to convey it to Orual. When Psyche tries to make clear her experience by saying that she "felt ashamed," Orual automatically thinks literally, in terms of the physical: "Psyche, they hadn't stripped you naked or anything?" (*TWHF* 111). Orual's use of language is limited to observable and hard fact; thus, she is unable to come to spiritual understanding, while Psyche's has developed so as to be able to deal with spiritual truth.

Psyche's story violates Orual's standards for discussing truth, and in the end, she must be shown some physical thing before she will believe. But Orual's unwillingness to believe prevents her from seeing the palace or tasting Psyche's wine and honeycakes, for when Psyche says that "he will make you able to see...," Orual exclaims, "I don't want it!" (*TWHF* 124).

In the night, Orual catches a vision of Psyche's palace. Orual's reflection on this experience reveals reasons for her inability to believe and insight into Lewis' theories about language used to lead to religious understanding. When Orual sees the palace, she feels very repentant: "I must ask forgiveness of Psyche as well as of the god" (*TWHF* 133). But her repentance fades with the vision. Directly after the vision, Orual addresses the reader, asking whether the gods would make the vision "a part of their defence...say it was a sign, a hint, beckoning me to answer the riddle one way rather than the other" (*TWHF* 133). As she sees the vision, she comes very close to believing in Psyche's story, but when it leaves, she again becomes skeptical. In her reflection on the vision, she comes to several conclusions about how the gods work and how one can gain insight into them:

> It might--I'll allow so much--it might have been a true seeing; the cloud over my mortal eyes may have been lifted for a moment. It might not; what would be easier than for one distraught and not, maybe, so fully waking as she seemed, gazing at a mist, in a half-light, to fancy what had filled her thoughts for so many hours? What easier, even, than for the gods themselves to send the whole ferly for a mockery?

> Either way, there's divine mockery in it. They set a riddle and then allow a seeming that can't be tested and can only quicken and thicken the tormenting whirlpool of your guess-work. If they had an honest intention to guide us, why is their guidance not plain? Psyche could speak plain when she was three; do you tell me the gods have not yet come so far? (*TWHF* 133-34)

She is very negative about these conclusions, wondering why the gods should be so cryptic. But in the end, she concludes that there are reasons why the gods should be cryptic and that we should take hold of these hints. In the closing chapters of the novel, after Orual becomes both literally and figuratively naked before a great assembly, confessing the true reasons for her resentment against the gods, she comes to the realization of why the gods did not reveal themselves to her more clearly:

> When the time comes to you at which you will be forced at last to utter the speech which has lain at the center of your soul for years, which you have, all that time, idiot-like, been saying over and over, you'll not talk about joy of words. I saw well why the gods do not speak to us openly, nor let us answer. Till that word can be dug out of us, why should they hear the babble that we think we mean? How can they meet us face to face till we have faces? (*TWHF* 294)

In the end, Orual comes to an understanding of the way the gods work and why "holy language" is the way it is: metaphorical. The gulf that separates the human from the divine renders fruitless the type of language that explains empirical knowledge among humans; consequently, metaphorical language becomes necessary to give approximations of divine truths. In another of his popular apologetics book, *Miracles*, C.S. Lewis states plainly his stance on metaphor:

> ...it is a serious mistake to think that metaphor is an optional thing which the poets and orators put into their work as a decoration and plain speakers can do without. The truth is that if we are going to talk at all about things which are not perceived by the senses, we are forced to use language metaphorically.... There is no other way of talking, as every philologist is aware.... It is a study for the lifetime and I must here content myself with the mere statement; all speech about supersensibles is, and must be, metaphorical in the highest degree. (*Mir* 72-3)

The novel acts this theory out in the dealings between the Fox and the Priest and between Orual and Psyche. Lewis gives reasons why "holy language" must be metaphorical. For instance, experience tells one that supernatural things are possible and probable--in the novel, that sacrifice causes crops to grow; therefore, that kind of truth must be dealt with and spoken about. Metaphorical language comes into play because it becomes impossible to create a logical argument with points a, b, and c, when points a, b, and c are intangibles. Subsequently, metaphors must be created in order for a logical argument to be made. *Till We Have Faces* demonstrates the differences in the ways one can use language to understand truth and concludes that in matters of religion, metaphor is necessary.

V. Concluding Remarks

In *Mere Christianity* C.S. Lewis writes, "Everything God has made has some likeness to Himself" (139). It seems that each of Lewis' Christian works represents yet another attempt to confirm that statement. To put it simply, Lewis uses God's creation to help people catch a glimpse of God. As a result of his generous use of concrete objects and immediate experience to illuminate religious and other abstract ideas, Lewis has a way of provoking an "Ah-ha, so that's how it might work..." response from readers who struggle with points of Christian doctrine.

George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's *Metaphors We Live By* provides the theoretical backdrop against which we can examine the metaphorical language of C.S. Lewis. In this paper we have seen how Lewis' approach to literary criticism reveals a general understanding of the power of metaphorical argument in explaining abstract truths and how it anticipates his use of metaphor in his apologetics and fiction. We have seen Lewis demonstrate how metaphor can be used extremely effectively in making clear Christianity, a sometimes complex religion. And finally, we have seen in *Till We Have Faces* how Lewis dramatizes why religion necessitates metaphorical explanation.

In sum, the abstract and sometimes paradoxical nature of religion forces us to appropriate the concrete terms that parallel best our intangible religious experiences. We must make such parallels so that we can relate in language and in action to these experiences. Lewis makes these parallels for us in *Mere Christianity* and tells us why one must do so in *Till We Have Faces*. In essence, these are the reasons Lewis has gained such popularity--he brings religion down to earth.

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