

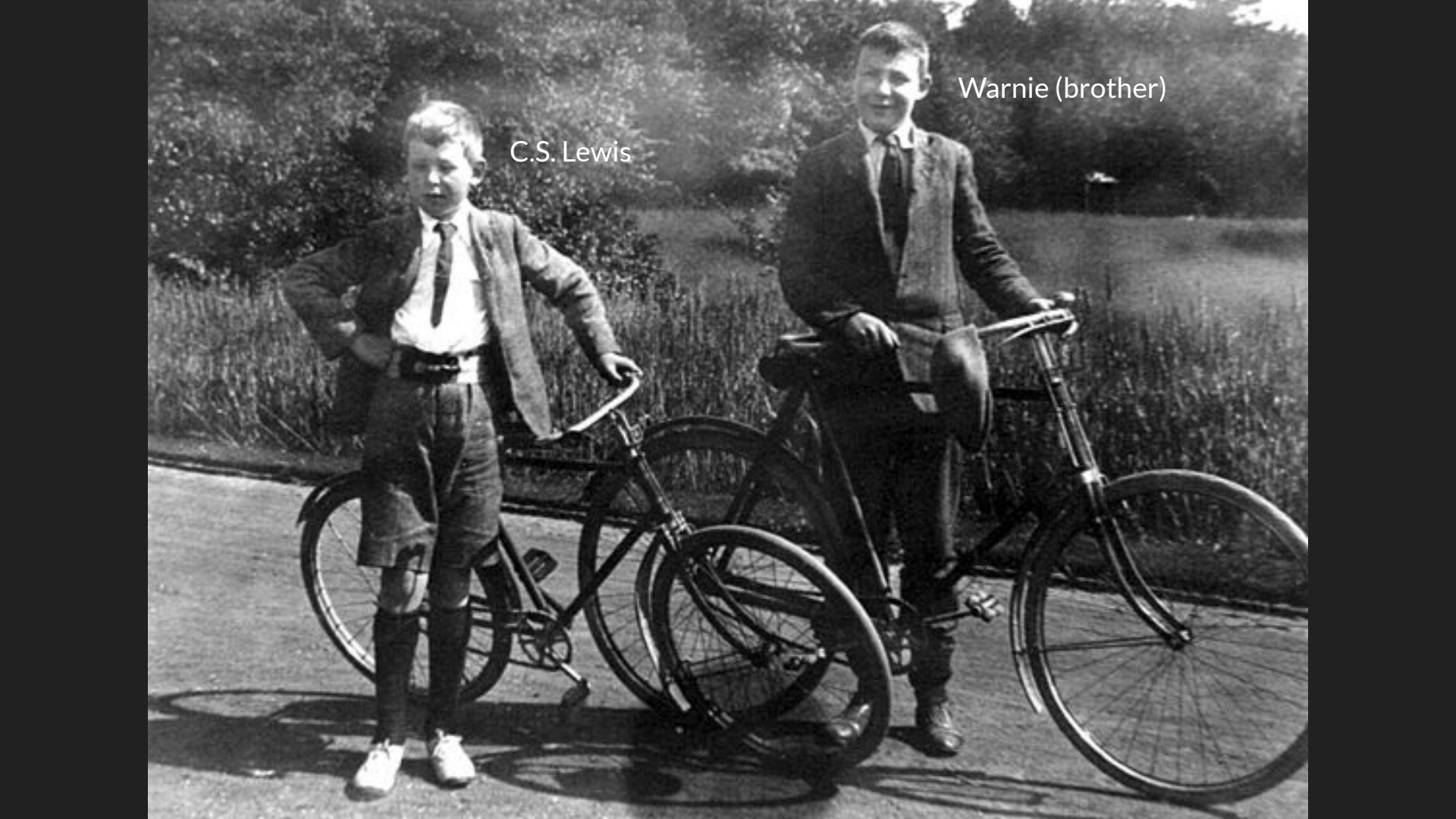


Warnie  
(brother)

Jack

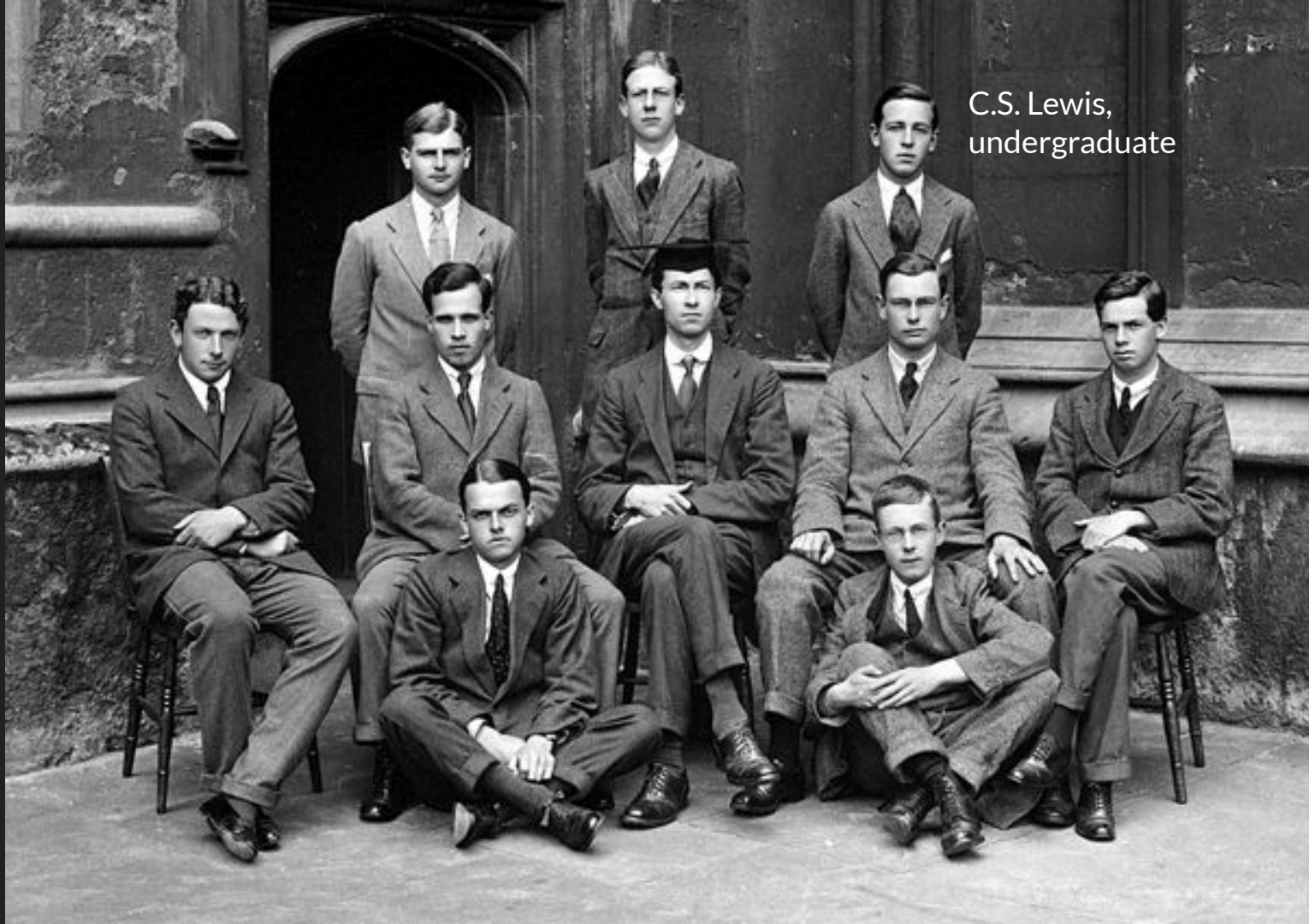
Mom

Dad




C.S. Lewis

Warnie (brother)



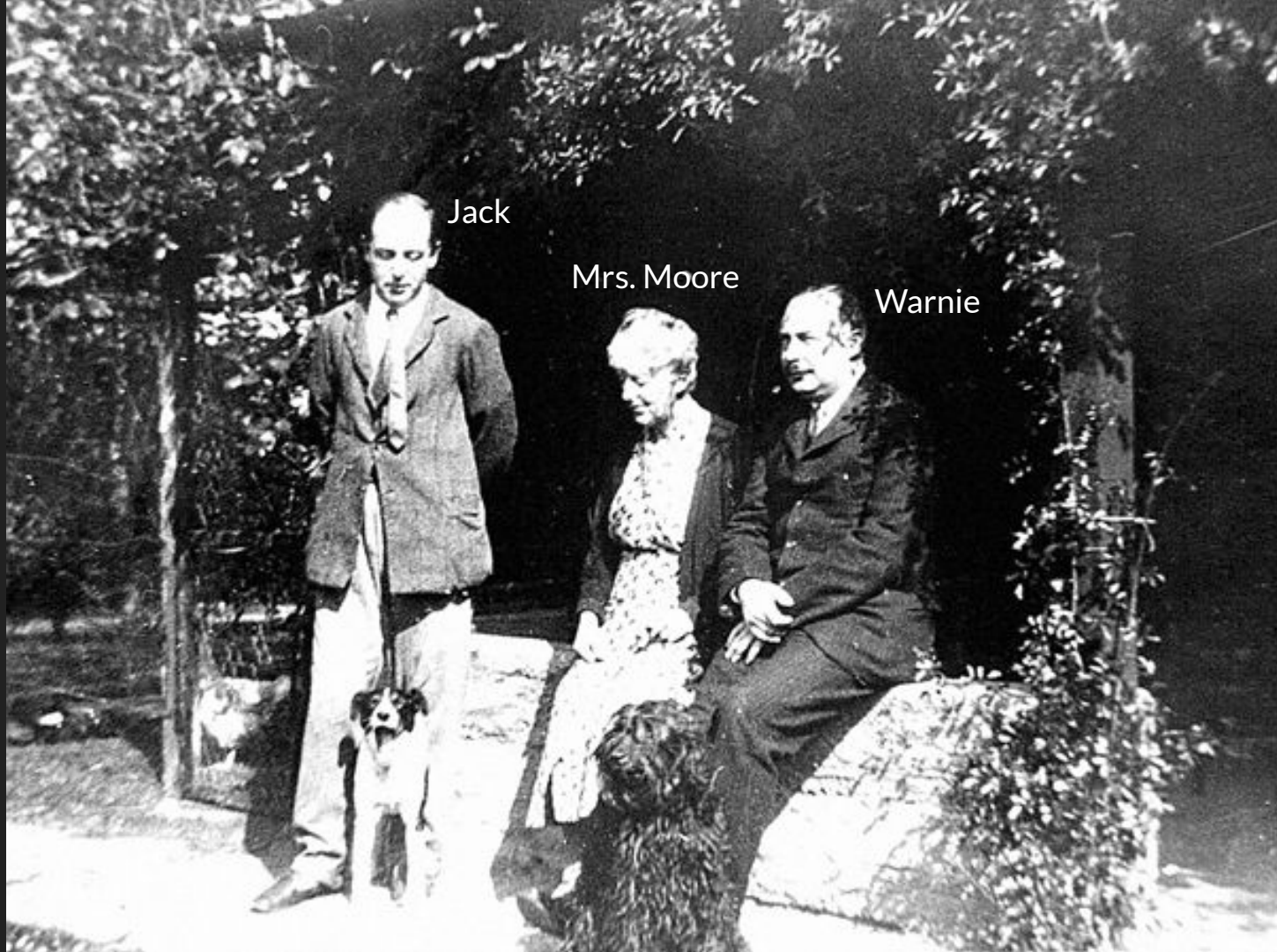
C.S. Lewis,  
undergraduate

A black and white photograph showing three people and a dog on a porch. On the left, a man wearing a hat and a sweater sits in a wicker chair, looking towards the camera. In the center, a woman in a light-colored dress and dark vest stands behind a large, dark, shaggy dog. On the right, an older woman in a dark dress sits on a chair, looking towards the camera. The porch has a lattice railing, and buildings are visible in the background.

Maureen Moore

C.S. Lewis

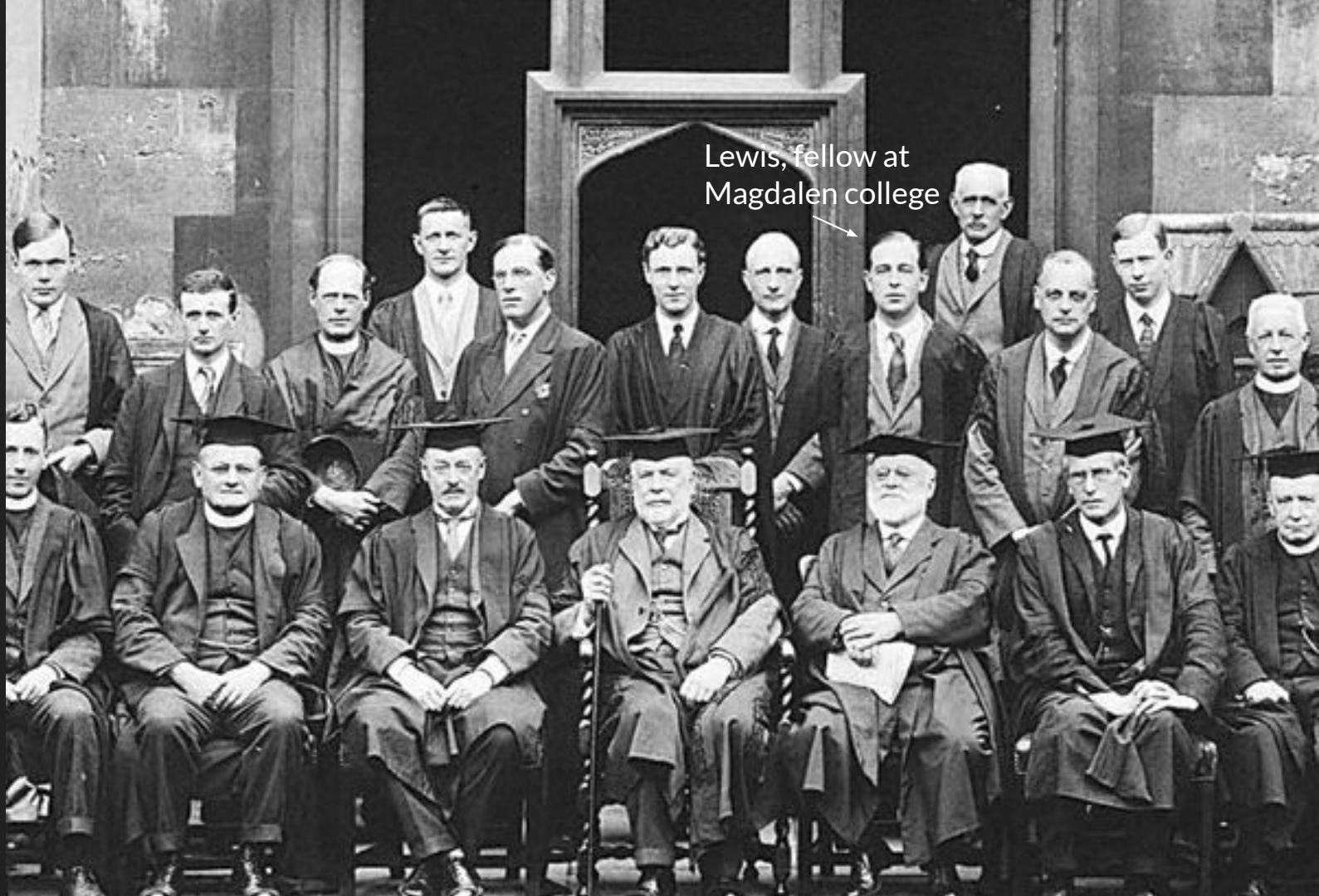
Mrs. Moore



Jack

Mrs. Moore

Warnie



Lewis, fellow at  
Magdalen college





Lewis with some  
members of the  
Inklings



Mr. Tumnus, a faun,  
with Lucy. By  
Pauline Baynes for  
*The Lion, the Witch  
and the Wardrobe*





Joy  
Davidman  
Lewis



“Conscious causes of doubt arose. One came from reading the classics: here, especially in Virgil, one was presented with a mass of religious ideas. And all teachers and editors took it for granted at the outset that these religious ideas were sheer allusion. No one ever attempted to show in what sense Christianity fulfilled Paganism or Paganism prefigured Christianity. The accepted position seemed to be that religions were normally a mere farrago of nonsense, though our own, by a fortunate exception was true. The other religions were not even explained, in the earlier Christian fashion, as the work of devils. That I might conceivably have been brought to believe. But the impression I got was that religion in general, though utterly false, was a natural growth, a kind of endemic nonsense into which humanity tended to blunder. In the midst of a thousand such religions stood our own, the thousand and first, labeled true. But on what grounds could I believe this exception? It obviously was in some general sense the same kind of thing as all the rest. Why was it so differently treated? Need I, at any rate, continue to treat it differently? I was very anxious not to.”

—*Surprised by Joy*

“Such, then, was the state of my imaginative life; over against it stood the life of my intellect. The two hemispheres of my mind were in the sharpest contrast. On the one side a many-islanded sea of poetry and myth; on the other a glib and shallow ‘rationalism.’ Nearly all that I loved I believed to be imaginary; nearly all that I believed to be real I thought grim and meaningless. ... Such, then, was my position: to care for almost nothing but the gods and heroes, the garden of the Hesperides, Launcelot and the Grail, and to believe in nothing but atoms and evolution and military service. At times the strain was severe.”

—*Surprised by Joy*

"What mattered most of all was my deep-seated hatred of authority, my monstrous individualism, my lawlessness. No word in my vocabulary expressed deeper hatred than the word 'Interference.' But Christianity placed at the centre what then seemed to me a transcendental Interferer. If its picture were true then no sort of 'treaty with reality' could ever be possible. There was no region even in the innermost depth of one's soul (nay, there least of all) which one could surround with a barbed wire fence and guard with a notice 'No Admittance.' And that was what I wanted; some area, however small, of which I could say to all other beings, 'This is my business and mine only.' ... The materialist conception would not have seemed so immensely probable to me if it had not favoured at least one of my wishes. ... The materialistic universe had one great, negative attraction to offer me. It had no other. And this had to be accepted; one had to look out on a meaningless dance of atoms ... to realise that all the apparent beauty was a subjective phosphorescence, and to relegate everything one valued to the world of mirage. That price I tried loyally to pay."

—*Surprised by Joy*

"The real terror was that if you seriously believed in even such a 'God' or 'Spirit' as I admitted, a wholly new situation developed." What previously was a mere "philosophical theorem, cerebrally entertained," now "stood upright and became a living presence. I was allowed to play at philosophy no longer. ... What had been an ideal became a command; and what might not be expected of one? ... Total surrender, the absolute leap in the dark, were demanded. The reality with which no treaty can be made was upon me. The demand was not even 'All or nothing.' I think that stage had been passed... Now, the demand was simply 'All.'"

—*Surprised by Joy*

"You must picture me alone in that room in Magdalen, night after night, feeling, whenever my mind lifted even for a second from my work, the steady, unrelenting approach of Him whom I so earnestly desired not to meet. That which I greatly feared had at last come upon me. In the Trinity Term of 1929 I gave in, and admitted that God was God, and knelt and prayed: perhaps, that night, the most dejected and reluctant convert in all England."

—*Surprised by Joy*

"The perplexing multiplicity of "religions" began to sort itself out. ... The question was no longer to find the one simply true religion among a thousand religions simply false. It was rather, 'Where has religion reached its true maturity? Where, if anywhere, have the hints of all Paganism been fulfilled?' ... Paganism had been only the childhood of religion, or only a prophetic dream. Where was the thing full grown? ... Here [Christianity] and here only in all time the myth must have become fact; the Word, flesh; God, Man. This is not 'a religion,' nor 'a philosophy.' It is the summing up and actuality of them all."

—*Surprised by Joy*



“I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen, not only because I see it but because by it I see everything else.”

—“Is Theology Poetry?”

"The uncritical acceptance of the intellectual climate common to our own age and the assumption that whatever has gone out of date is on that account discredited. ... From seeing this, one passes to the realisation that our own age is also 'a period,' and certainly has, like all periods, its own characteristic illusions. They are likeliest to lurk in those wide-spread assumptions which are so ingrained in the age that no one dares to attack or feels it necessary to defend them."

—*Surprised by Joy*

“Creatures are not born with desires unless satisfaction for those desires exists. A baby feels hunger: well, there is such a thing as food. A duckling wants to swim: well, there is such a thing as water. Men feel sexual desire: well, there is such a thing as sex. If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.”

—*Mere Christianity*

“Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.”

—“The Weight of Glory”