

The Screwtape Letters Questions
Chapters Prologue-3
CrossView Church

Prologue

- 1) What does Lewis mean about the dangers of having too little or too much interest in devils?

Chapter 1

- 1) Why does Screwtape tell Wormwood that Jargon and not argument is the best way to keep his "patient" out of church?
- 2) Screwtape argues against awakening the patient's "reason" by argument. Why does he do so?
- 3) How did Screwtape win the battle with his former patient? What was his strategy?
- 4) Screwtape says that it is all but impossible to believe in the unfamiliar while the familiar is before their eyes...keep pressing home on him the ordinariness of things. What does he mean?

Chapter 2

- 1) What does Screwtape mean when he talks about the visible and invisible church?
- 2) Read page 6. Has the devil used distractions like this on you before?
- 3) Have you experienced disappointment in the church?
- 4) Why does Screwtape tell Wormwood that his patient's confession of his own sinfulness is all "parrot talk"?

Chapter 3

- 1) Why does Screwtape tell Wormwood to attack the patient's relationship with his mother?
- 2) How is Wormwood to influence the patient's prayer life?
- 3) Have you seen Wormwood work in your own marriage or life in the way he does with his patient (ie. exacerbating annoying traits and causing you to sin)?

The Screwtape Letters Questions
Chapters 4-6
CrossView Church

Chapter 4

- 1) What does Screwtape mean on page 16 when he says "It is funny how mortals always picture us as putting things into their minds: in reality our best work is done by keeping things out."?
- 2) Why does the devil want to produce feelings more than cogent thoughts?
- 3) Read the first paragraph on page 17. Do you ever gauge your successes or failures on how you feel?
- 4) How might satan cause us to direct our prayers to someone or something other than God?

Chapter 5

- 1) What does Screwtape say is the "reward" of all his "labours"?
- 2) Why does the devil try to make his patient either an extreme patriot or an ardent pacifist?
- 3) How does the temporal suffering of the Saints frustrate Screwtape?
- 4) How does Lewis look at WWII here on page 23&24?
- 5) Why does Screwtape want humans to die in nursing homes?

Chapter 6

- 1) What does Screwtape mean at the end of the first paragraph on page 25?
- 2) How does the devil try to fix our attention outward or inward depending on the circumstance? (pg 26-27)
- 3) Does our benevolence extend to imaginary people only or to real people as well?

THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS QUESTIONS

Chapters 7-9

CrossView Church

Chapter 7

- 1) What is Screwtape's dilemma? Why does he either want magicians or materialists? And how do we see these two extremes played out today?
- 2) How is the devil portrayed in our culture?
- 3) Why does Screwtape try to encourage factions and how have we seen them within the church for centuries?
- 4) Why is it beneficial to the devils to make patriotism or pacifism a part of the man's religion?

Chapter 8

- 1) What does Screwtape mean when he writes that humans are amphibians?
- 2) Why do we undulate so much?
- 3) Screwtape says that God withdraws from the Christian. Do you agree with this assessment?

Chapter 9

- 1) How does the devil twist the pleasures that God has designed and use them for evil?
- 2) Why is sexual temptation most effective when the Patient is downcast?
- 3) Why does the devil want the patient to think that his joy or sadness will be permanent?
- 4) What does Screwtape mean when he says "a moderated religion is as good for us as no religion at all – and more amusing."
- 5) Why does Screwtape like "phases" in the patient's life?

The Screwtape Letters Questions

Chapter 10

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Chapter 10

- 1) Why is it advantageous to the devils if we keep poor company?
- 2) What does Screwtape mean when he says the patient would be silent when he ought to speak and laugh when he ought to be silent?
- 3) How has the devil corrupted the word “Puritanism”?
- 4) Are we different people depending on which circles we happen to be in at the moment? How should we be?
- 5) What is the difference between ministering to unbelievers and partaking in their lifestyle?

Chapter 11

- 1) Why does Screwtape divide laughter into 4 categories? Do you understand each?
- 2) Why is “Joyful” laughter discouraged by Screwtape, and why does he say it is not in the devil’s favor?
- 3) How is fun laughter sometimes used by the devil?
- 4) Why are some jokes ok but others not?
- 5) What does Screwtape mean by “flippancy”? Why is this the worst kind of laughter?

The Screwtape Letters Questions
Chapters 12-13
CrossView Church

Chapter 12

- 1) Why is Screwtape almost glad that the struggling Christian is still going to church? (bottom of 57)
- 2) Have you ever had a “vague, uneasy feeling” that you are not doing well in the Christian life?
- 3) Why does the Patient have an uneasy feeling when thinking about God? How does Satan exploit that?
- 4) Read the top of pg 59. Have you ever felt that way?
- 5) What is Screwtape talking about on pg 60? How does he flip the word “Nothing” and why is it “strong”?
- 6) Why does Screwtape say that “Murder is no better than cards if cards can do the trick”?

Chapter 13

- 1) Why is the Christian’s repentance called a “Second Conversion” by Screwtape?
- 2) What is the “Asphyxiating Cloud” referred to on page 63?
- 3) Why doesn’t Screwtape like real pleasures? And how do they remind the patient of Reality?
- 4) What does Screwtape mean when he says that when Christians give themselves wholly to God they are “more themselves than ever”?
- 5) Read the middle of pg 66. What does he mean here?
- 6) Why does the Devil try to keep us from “acting” on our feelings?

The Screwtape Letters Questions

Chapters 14-15

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Chapter 14

- 1) Why does Screwtape think it is bad that the Patient has stopped making resolutions?
- 2) What does it mean that "all virtues are less formidable...once man is aware that he has them...but especially humility"?
- 3) What is God's purpose and what is the devil's purpose with "self-contempt"?
- 4) How does the devil try to make us have false humility?
- 5) Read the second half of pg 71. Why is it hard to look at our talents in this way?

Chapter 15

- 1) Screwtape (the devil) says that "tortured fear and stupid confidence are both desirable states of mind..." Are you drawn toward either extreme? How should we be?
- 2) What does Screwtape mean when he says that in the present alone, "freedom and actuality" are offered to us?
- 3) Why does the devil sometimes tempt us to live in the past?
- 4) Why does Screwtape say that the future is the thing that is least like eternity? (Read the bottom of page 76).
- 5) What is the difference between the temporal future and the eternal future?
- 6) Read the first paragraph of page 78. Does this encourage you to live in the present?

The Screwtape Letters Questions
Chapters 16-17
CrossView Church

Chapter 16

- 1) What are the reasons that Christians may become “tasters or connoisseurs of churches”?
- 2) Screwtape says that “The search for a ‘suitable’ church makes the man a critic where the Enemy wants him to be a pupil.” How does this statement affect you?
- 3) How were the two churches nearest to the patient not very good? What is a “party church” according to Screwtape?
- 4) What does Screwtape mean when he says that “All the purely indifferent things – candles and clothes and what not – are an admirable ground for our activities”?
- 5) What does it mean that the human without scruples should always give in to the human with scruples (The dictionary definition of scruples is “an ethical consideration or principle that inhibits action”)?

Chapter 17

- 1) Gluttony means either excess in eating or drinking, or “greedy or excessive indulgence.” With that definition, what does Screwtape mean by the word on page 87?
- 2) Look at the first half of page 88. Why doesn’t the mother recognize her sin as gluttony?
- 3) What is the ‘All-I-Want’ state of mind?
- 4) Read the middle of pg. 89. Do we rationalize our sins like that?
- 5) Does a denial of our particular indulgence ‘put us out’ like Screwtape wants? What are things that particularly bother you if you don’t get them?

The Screwtape Letters Questions
Chapters 18-19
CrossView Church

Chapter 18

- 1) Why does God require either complete abstinence or unmitigated monogamy from us?
- 2) Read the bottom half of pg. 93. Is this still true today?
- 3) What is the "Whole philosophy of Hell" according to Screwtape?
- 4) How is Love rooted in the Trinity?
- 5) How do organisms illustrate Love?
- 6) What is the transcendental relation that is set up when two people lie together?
- 7) Read page 97. How are those things perhaps more proper intentions for marriage?

Chapter 19

- 1) Why does Screwtape apologize and backtrack what he said before on page 99?
- 2) Read the top of pg 100. Why does he say this?
- 3) Why cant Screwtape understand Love?
- 4) Read the first paragraph of pg. 101. Screwtape lies here about reentering Heaven. Why does he do so?
- 5) Why doesn't Screwtape care about whether "love" is good or bad?
- 6) Read the bottom of 102. How often do people die because of adultery?
- 7) What does it mean that "falling in love" is mainly "raw material."

The Screwtape Letters Questions
Chapters 20-21
CrossView Church

Chapter 20

- 1) Why does Screwtape say that his best weapon is the belief by humans that there is no hope of getting rid of demonic temptation except by yielding?
- 2) How do popular artists, dressmakers, actresses and advertisers determine what is attractive? Have you seen this at work in our day?
- 3) Screwtape tries to make the "eye" in sexuality more and more important and at the same time make its demands more and more impossible. How does he accomplish this? And why is it effective?
- 4) What does Screwtape mean by "irresistible and all-excusing 'Love'?"

Chapter 21

- 1) Screwtape writes on page 111, "The more claims on life...that your patient can be induced to make, the more often he will feel injured, and as a result, ill-tempered." What does he mean?
- 2) Why do we think that our time is our own? How is this a delusion?
- 3) Do you see time as a gift to you? How do you spend it?
- 4) Read the bottom of page 113-114. Is this a good illustration of our bodies?
- 5) What are the two senses of the word "My" or "Mine"?
- 6) To whom does the universe really belong?

The Screwtape Letters Questions

Chapters 22-23

CrossView Church



Chapter 22

- 1) What was your reaction to Screwtape's description of the patient's girlfriend on page 117-118? How is she the picture of a Christian woman?
- 2) Screwtape says "everything has to be twisted before it's any use to us." What does this mean?
- 3) How does 2 Corinthians 2:14-17 apply to what Screwtape says on page 119? ¹
- 4) What does Screwtape mean when he says, "We will make the whole universe a noise in the end"?
- 5) What is the meaning of Screwtape's "transformation" that is "from within"?

Chapter 23

- 1) Why does a spoiled saint, a Pharisee, an inquisitor or a magician make better sport in hell than a mere common tyrant or debauchee?
- 2) Why does the devil encourage a search for the "historical Jesus"?
- 3) What were the earliest converts converted by?
- 4) What does it mean to treat Christianity as a means to an end?
- 5) Read page 127. How is this played out in our day?

¹ **14** But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. **15** For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, **16** to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things? **17** For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.

The Screwtape Letters Questions
Chapters 24-25
CrossView Church

Chapter 24

- 1) What does the girlfriend believe about non-Christians or Christians who hold different opinions than her? Why does she believe this?
- 2) What does Screwtape call the “most beautiful of the vices”?
- 3) What does the patient believe about his own place in this “new society” in which he belongs?
- 4) How does Screwtape want the patient to think about the people with whom he relates as opposed to outsiders?
- 5) Why isn't Screwtape interested in the War?

Chapter 25

- 1) What is “Christianity And...” How do we sometimes fall into this trap?
- 2) What is the “horror of the Same Old Thing”? Why is it the source of so many problems?
- 3) What does it mean that God has balanced a love of change with a love of permanence?
- 4) Read the top half of page 138. How does the devil work like that in our day?
- 5) What are the questions God wants us to ask rather than the questions the devil wants us to ask?

The Screwtape Letters Questions
Chapters 26-27
CrossView Church

Chapter 26

- 1) What does Screwtape mean when he says that "Courtship is the time for sowing those seeds which will grow up ten years later into domestic hatred?
- 2) How are people sometimes deceived into thinking that their problems will be solved, but are only postponed by the influence of enchantment?
- 3) What is the difference in the way Screwtape uses the words "Charity" and "Unselfishness"?
- 4) Do you agree with how men and women are portrayed by Screwtape in this chapter?
- 5) Read about the "Generous conflict illusion" on pg. 143-144. Have you ever experienced this? How is Satan crafty here?
- 6) Why is "mutual falseness" something to be avoided?

Chapter 27

- 1) How should we pray when we feel distracted?
- 2) Why does Screwtape say, "Anything, even a sin, which has the total effect of moving him close up to the Enemy, makes against us in the long run..."?
- 3) Read the bottom half of page 148. Have you ever felt this way regarding the object of your prayers?
- 4) What does Screwtape mean when he says that men's prayers are one of the innumerable co-ordinates with which God harmonises the weather of tomorrow..."?
- 5) What does Screwtape mean when he says that God does not "foresee" what humans will do..." Do you agree with him?
- 6) Why don't the learned acquire wisdom by reading old books (but we northern tundra country folk do)?

The Screwtape Letters Questions
Chapters 28-29
CrossView Church

Chapter 28

- 1) Why does Screwtape want to avoid the patient's death?
- 2) How/why has the devil taught humans to regard death as the prime evil and survival as the greatest good?
- 3) Why are the "long, dull, monotonous years of middle-aged prosperity or middle-aged adversity" called "excellent campaigning weather" by Screwtape?
- 4) How does prosperity "knit a man to the world"?
- 5) Are the young generally less unwilling to die than the middle-aged and the old?
- 6) Why, according to Screwtape, do people try to make this earth into a "heaven"?

Chapter 29

- 1) Screwtape says, "To be greatly and effectively wicked, a man needs some virtue." What does this mean?
- 2) Read the top of page 160. How does the devil use our defense of others?
- 3) Why is cowardice not always what the devil wants?
- 4) Read the first half of page 162. Why is despair a greater sin than any of the sins which provoke it?
- 5) Why does the devil want us to have different plans to fall back on?

The Screwtape Letters Questions
Chapters 30-31
CrossView Church

Chapter 30

- 1) What does Screwtape mean when he says that the justice of hell is “purely realistic, and concerned only with results...”
- 2) How does the devil use unexpected demands on someone who is already tired?
- 3) Do we ever approach our trials with the mindset that we will bear them “for a reasonable period”?
- 4) Do you agree that fatigue makes women talk more and men talk less? If so, how could that cause resentment?
- 5) How does the devil make us look at physical things as “real” and spiritual things as “subjective”? Also, do we tend to view bad things that we see as reality, but good things as mere sentiment?

Chapter 31

- 1) How does Screwtape “love” Wormwood?
- 2) Why is Hell called the “Kingdom of Noise” by Screwtape?
- 3) Read the second half of page 172. What caused Screwtape such misery?
- 4) Read the top half of page 173. Do you view death like this?
- 5) What are temptations like to the man now? (Pg 175).
- 6) What are your general thoughts about this book?

The Screwtape Letters Questions
Screwtape Proposes a Toast
CrossView Church

Screwtape Proposes a Toast

- 1) Why did Lewis find it hard to write this book?
- 2) Why does Screwtape say the souls on which they are feasting are of poor quality?
- 3) What did the modern souls taste like to the devils?
- 4) Screwtape says they have never had more souls in hell then currently, why is this?
- 5) Does God "Try" to save anyone?
- 6) Read the second half of page 191. Do you see this taking place today?
- 7) Read the bottom of page 193. How does this happen?
- 8) Why does Screwtape want the devils to use the word "Democracy"?
- 9) Read the bottom of 198. Do you agree?
- 10) Read the second half of page 200. How was the young female misguided?
- 11) Read the bottom of 204-205. Do you see this more and more today?
- 12) Read the bottom of 206. How does this mindset lead to failure?