

## Letter 19 – Using Love

Screwtape has become a little concerned by Wormwood’s previous letter. In his previous letters, Screwtape blundered by uttering that the “Enemy really loves His creatures.” This would be considered heresy in the devil’s world, and Screwtape feels it best to explain it away through cynicism. However, he continues his talk on the subject of love, noting that either the acceptance or rejection of “falling in love” can be useful if focused in the right way.

1. ¶ 2 (p.99-101)– Screwtape displays his cynicism of God’s love when he says, “He is one being, they are distinct from Him. Their good cannot be His. All His talk about Love must be a disguise for something else—He must have some real motive for creating them and taking so much trouble about them.” Why is it hard for some people to believe there is a God who is not motivated by anything other than pure love for His creation?
2. There are obviously those who, if given the opportunity, would choose to take advantage of others for personal gain. But if we are not careful, having a constantly cynical attitude will harden our hearts, and eventually we will trust no one. How do you find a balance between healthy skepticism and hard-hearted cynicism?
3. Read Genesis 1:27 and John 3:16. According to these verses, why do you think God loves the world, and how did He show His love?
4. ¶ 2 (p.99-101)– From Screwtape’s perspective, what was the “chief cause of our Father’s quarrel with the Enemy”? What do Isaiah 14:12-15 and Ezekiel 28:12-19 say about this “quarrel”?
5. ¶ 3 (p.101-2) – What is Screwtape’s response to Wormwood on whether he “regards being in love as a desirable state for a human or not?”
6. ¶ 3 (p.101-2) – Screwtape provides a couple of options for exploiting the patient based on whether he is an arrogant or emotional man. The patient’s character will determine whether “being in love” is good or bad. Describe those below.
  - a. Arrogant Man -
  - b. Emotional Man -
7. ¶ 3 (p.101-2) – If neither of those options works, how is Wormwood to steer his patient in regards to marriage?
8. Read 2 Corinthians 6:14. What does it mean to be unequally yoked in marriage? Do you think this is a common occurrence in marriages? How does 1 Corinthians 7:12-13 instruct us to handle this matter?

## Letter 20 – Sexual Taste

For the time being, the patient has been able to withstand Wormwood's attacks on his chastity. Screwtape suggests that Wormwood try another route: fill the man's thoughts with the idea that chastity is unhealthy. Wormwood can best accomplish this by capitalizing on a particular culture's taste in women as often manipulated by the media. Screwtape says that if they cannot use the man's sexuality to make him unchaste, then using it to find the wrong woman to marry is also desirable.

1. ¶ 1 (p.105) – Screwtape chastises Wormwood for directly attacking the patient's chastity. Through this attack, what "dangerous truth" did the patient learn about sexual temptation?
2. ¶ 1 (p.105) – According to Screwtape, temptation loses its power once God intervenes. What does 1 Corinthians 10:13 say regarding temptation? Why do you think God allows temptations?
3. What is the difference between chastity and abstinence? How can we effectively teach the importance of chastity and not just abstinence?
4. ¶ 1 (p.105) – What does Screwtape say is a demon's best weapon regarding temptation?
5. ¶ 3 (p.106) – According to Screwtape, there is a demonic strategy in twisting "sexual taste" through the ages. He gives reference to past ages and to the current "age of jazz". What do you think is the ideal "sexual taste" for a man or woman in today's culture? How does the media influence what we find desirable?
6. ¶ 3 (p.106-7) – At the end of paragraph 3, we learn that Screwtape seeks to make the "role of the eye in sexuality more and more important." If the role of the eye (physical appearance) in sexuality is exaggerated, what will be its inevitable outcome? Should we discount physical appearance as a part of sexual attraction?
7. ¶ 4 (p.107-8) – Screwtape says that each man loves a terrestrial and infernal Venus. Describe these "two imaginary women" below. How would you describe the male version of each of these "Venus types"?
  - a. Terrestrial Venus —
  - b. Infernal Venus —
8. Read 1 Corinthians 6:15-20. What does this passage tell us about the effects of sexual sin?

## Letter 21 – Entitlement

In this letter, Screwtape explores the concept of how humans relate to the ownership of their time, money, bodies, and souls. Screwtape instructs Wormwood to employ a strategy that encourages the patient to believe that his time is his own and, when unexpected demands encroach on his time, he has the right to become angry, exasperated, and impatient.

1. ¶ 1 (p.111) – Why would Screwtape suggest a strategy that involved darkening the patient's intellect prior to moral attack?
2. ¶ 2 (p.111-2) – What does Screwtape mean when he talks about people making claims on their own life? How do you respond when your plans are intruded upon? Why is it hard for us to accept that claims over our lives are not ours to make?
3. Read Mark 5:21-34. In this passage, Jesus is interrupted by a synagogue leader named Jairus who is seeking help for his sick little girl, and then, almost immediately, he is interrupted again by a woman seeking help for a long-term illness. How did Jesus handle these unplanned intrusions on His time?
4. ¶ 3 (p.112-3) – Why did Screwtape say that man assumes he owns his own time and would be relieved if the hardest thing God asked him to do in any given day were to listen "to the conversation of a foolish woman"?
5. ¶ 4 (p.113) – Read James 4:13-17. As a Christian, why is having a personal "sense of ownership" of our time "equally funny in Heaven and in Hell?"
6. According to Screwtape, what are some arguments against chastity when considering ownership of our body? In what ways do you see this demonstrated in today's culture?
7. ¶ 5 (p.114) – Screwtape manages to go from ownership of "my boot", to "my dog", to "my wife" and eventually to "my God". How can this tendency towards possession be related to the sin of pride and idolatry?
8. ¶ 6 (p.114-5) – Why does Screwtape say the word "Mine" cannot be uttered by a human being about anything? Screwtape hopes to claim victory in the end. How is this different from our hope?