

The
Acts
of the Apostles



**THE SPIRIT EMPOWERS
US TO CONTINUE THE
WORK OF JESUS**

ACTS 1:1-11

BOOK OF ACTS

- Author of the book:
 - Luke is the author of the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts.
 - Luke was a member of the missionary team.
 - Paul uses the word “we” in his epistles which suggests that his traveling companion wrote much of the narrative.

BOOK OF ACTS

- Date of the book:
 - Most likely the book was written before A.D. 64, when Paul was executed.
 - Also, it likely was written before A.D. 70.
 - It was probably written for a wide audience and wanted to tell them how the apostles were enabled by the Holy Spirit to bring the gospel to the world.

STRUCTURE OF ACTS

- Book of Acts in terms of Biblical Theology:
 - Acts 1:1-8 - the mission of the church
 - Acts 2:22-36 - the messiah of the church
 - Acts 28:30-31 - the message of the church

STRUCTURE OF ACTS

- Book of Acts in literary context (Acts 1:8):
 - Acts 1-7 - witnesses in Jerusalem
 - Acts 8-12 - witnesses in Judea and Samaria
 - Acts 13-28 - witnesses to the ends of the earth

PROBLEM PASSAGES

- Most of the so-called “problem passages” can be easily resolved once we understand the difference between normative and descriptive.
- Normative - authoritative practices for all Christians at all times.
- Descriptive - record of God’s activity during the birth of the church not required of all Christians throughout the ages.

GEOGRAPHY



CAESAREA



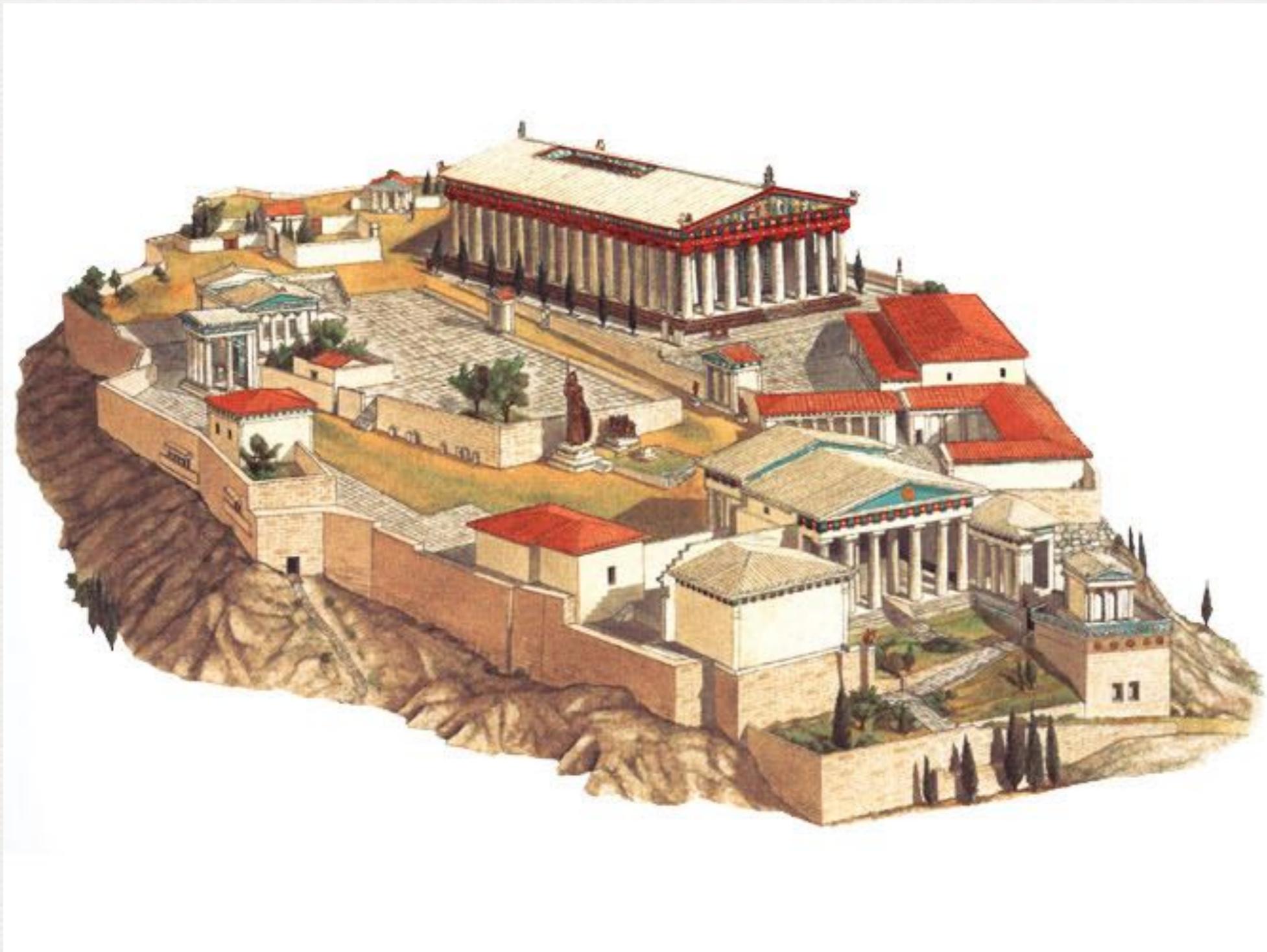
CAESAREA



ATHENS



ATHENS



CORINTH



CORINTH



EPHESUS



EPHESUS



ARCHAEOLOGY



ARCHAEOLOGY



**THE CHURCH CARRIES
OUT THE SPIRIT-LED
WORK OF THE KINGDOM
HERE AND NOW**

ACTS 1:1-5

BACKGROUND

- These few verses introduce the book of Acts.
- It is an incredible history of Christ's victory being activated within the Church as His disciples share the Gospel across all divisions and barriers.
- The book of Acts flows out of its prequel: the gospel of Luke. It is a continuation of what Jesus began during His time on earth.

PROLOGUE (1-2)

- Acts is a sequel to the gospel of Luke: the book of Acts is the second volume of a two-volume work.
- Acts is written to a friend, Theophilus, who was a follower of Christ and financial backer.
- The work and teaching of Jesus will continue through the apostles. The first book in Luke's series dealt with "all that Jesus began to do and teach." Acts is a continuation right up until our day.

PROLOGUE (1-2)

- Verse 2 reminds the reader of the gospel of Luke's closing scene: the Ascension of Jesus into heaven after His Resurrection.
- Before He ascended, Jesus gave two commands to the apostles:
 - Remain in Jerusalem and wait for the arrival of the Holy Spirit.
 - Go into the world as witnesses.

HOLY SPIRIT (3-5)

- Verses 3–5 provide some detail concerning the commands referenced in verse 2.
- Jesus commanded the disciples with a major responsibility: reach the world with the gospel.
- In order to bolster their faith and the legitimacy of their message, Jesus provides the disciples with equipping. He gives them three things.

HOLY SPIRIT (3-5)

- Proofs of His Resurrection (v. 3). It was vital that the apostles be firsthand witnesses of Jesus' Resurrection if they were to be witnesses to the gospel.
- Instruction on the kingdom of God (v. 3). Jesus spent much time teaching on the kingdom of God during His earthly ministry.
- Wait for the Holy Spirit (vv. 4–5). Jesus had already given the instruction in Luke 24:49.

HOLY SPIRIT (3-5)

- In verse 5, Jesus provides a distinction between the baptism of John the Baptist and the spiritual baptism that followers of Christ will experience.
- John's baptism was solely with water and was an outward sign of a repentance.
- The church would "continue to use water baptism as a confession of the name of Jesus on entry into the community of believers (Acts 2:38a).

**THE CHURCH SERVES
OTHERS IN
ANTICIPATION OF JESUS'
GLORIOUS RETURN**

ACTS 1:6-11

KINGDOM (6-8)

- In verse 6, they ask if Jesus will restore the kingdom to Israel.
- Jesus explains that he will not be building a physical kingdom that frees them from the grip of Rome and re-establishes Israel as a unified nation of political, cultural, and economic prosperity.
- Jesus reminds them of their mission to bear witness throughout the earth.

KINGDOM (6-8)

- The disciples are to continue the work of the kingdom by bringing the Gospel message of repentance and salvation (Mark 6:12; Luke 9:6).
- Jesus calls them to engage in the ministry of reconciliation to God that will ultimately bear greater fruit for heaven than if they simply set out to bring about great change in their society's structures.

KINGDOM (6-8)

- Notice that Jesus doesn't allow room for empty speculation about His return.
- He repeats what he said in the gospels about the secrecy that surrounds God's timing (Matthew 24:36, Mark 13:32).
- He commissions them to get to work and bring the words and deeds of the gospel to all corners of the world.

KINGDOM (6-8)

- Jesus does promise a glorious homecoming in which His final reign will bring a glorious renewal to all of creation and a victorious reign over all powers and principalities.
- But the hope of His return is to fuel the disciples' Spirit-led work, not cause them to grow anxious or complacent.

ASCENSION (9-11)

- Jesus finishes His last words to the disciples, then ascends to heaven beyond where their sight can perceive Him.
- While they are standing there, angels appear and prompt them to action.
- With a mild rebuke, the heavenly messengers encourage the disciples to get moving and obey Jesus' Great Commission.

ASCENSION (9-11)

- Notice that the command to go is backed by the promise that Jesus will return.
- The disciples have been promised the power of God's Spirit, and now they are prompted to join a mission that culminates in the return of Christ.
- We run toward a finish line we can't fully see.
- The Bible describes this in 2 Corinthians 4 and Hebrews 11.



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GOD'S JUDGMENT?

- Are these hurricanes a judgment of God?

Opinions

Did lesbians cause Hurricanes Irma and Harvey? God knows.



Most Read

- 1 Opinion**
Did lesbians cause Hurricanes Irma and Harvey? God knows. 
- 2 Opinion**
All the worst lies about Brexit are about to be revealed 
- 3 Opinion**
The case for Trump-Russia collusion: We're getting very, very close 
- 4 Perspective**
We can't leave Florida, but we can't stay either. Help us! 

GOD'S JUDGMENT?

- Hurricanes are only a judgment in a general sense. We live in a fallen world under God's judgment.
- Romans 8:20-22 — “For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.”

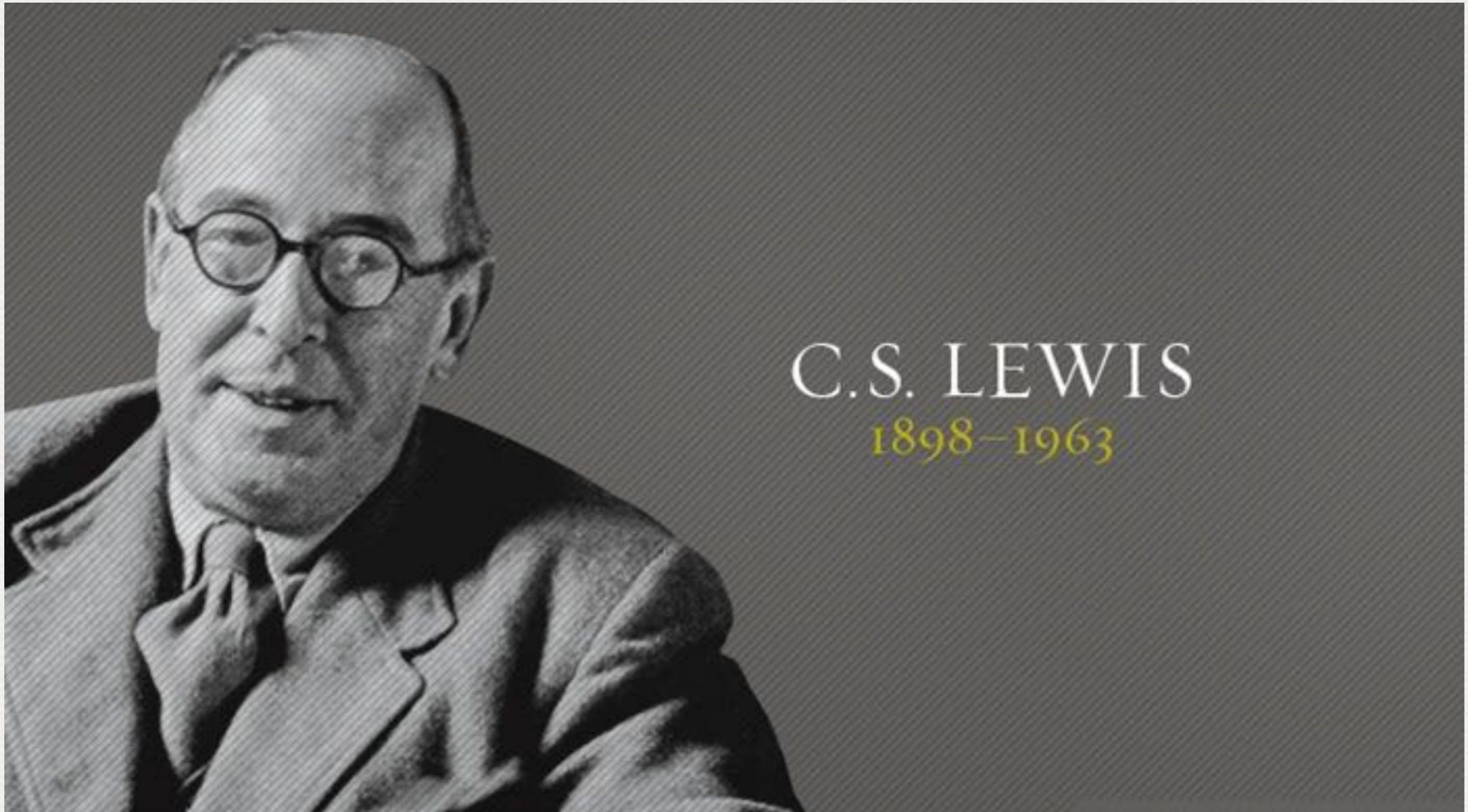
GOD'S JUDGMENT?

- The Bible does record specific judgments of God:
 - Genesis 7 - the worldwide flood of Noah
 - Genesis 19 - burning sulfur rained down on Sodom and Gomorrah
 - Numbers 16 - earthquake, sons of Korah
 - Leviticus 10 - fire rained down on priests

GOD'S JUDGMENT?

- Why is there physical evil in the world?
 - God allows it in His permissive will
 - Satan is in control of earth (Job 1)
 - God can use evil for good (Romans 8:28)
 - God will create a new heavens and new earth

CONVERSION OF C.S. LEWIS



C.S. LEWIS

- Clive Staples Lewis was born in 1898 into an Anglo-Irish family at Belfast.
- After what he calls a blandly Christian childhood, he threw himself heart and soul into a rationalist and idealist atheism that he professed and lived.
- When he became a Christian, he referred to himself as the most reluctant convert in all of England. He explains this in his book, *Surprised by Joy*.

C.S. LEWIS

- “You must picture me alone in that room at 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, chapter 14

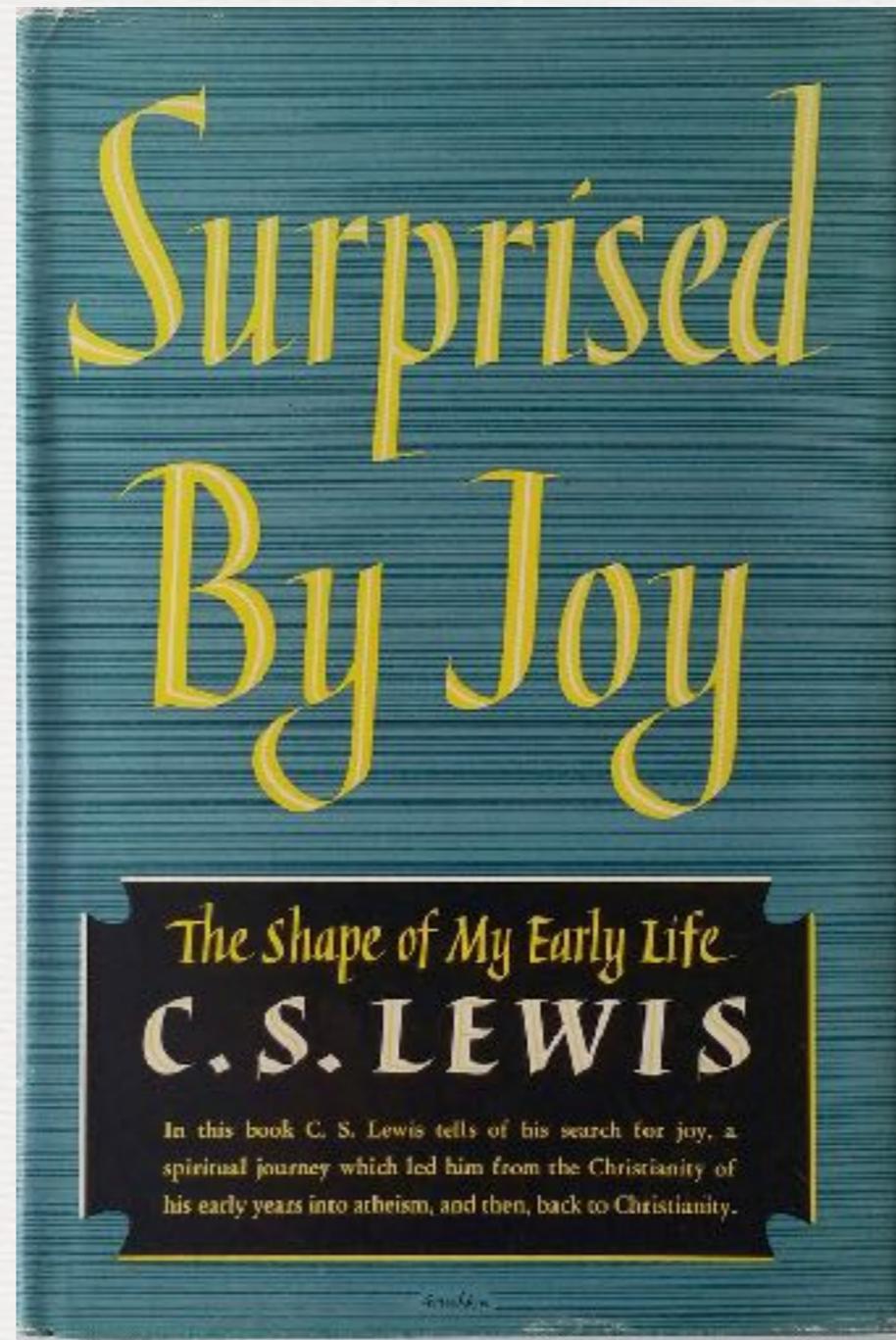
C.S. LEWIS

- Lewis lists what undermined the foundations of his atheism: the beauty of nature and art, the gift of joy with which life regales us in an ever sudden and unexpected manner and then the encounter with others, real people, physically known and those met through the mediation of reading.
- The “dangerous encounters” he writes about were: G. K. Chesterton, George MacDonald and J.R.R. Tolkien.

C.S. LEWIS

- By 1929 he had prayed to God desperately and reluctantly, but it was Tolkien's friendship that brought him to the encounter with Christ.
- They talked until after three o'clock in the morning and a few days later Lewis wrote to his old friend Arthur Greeves, saying: "I have just passed on from believing in God to definitely believing in Christ, in Christianity."

RESOURCE



Surprised By Joy

The Shape of My Early Life
C.S. LEWIS

In this book C. S. Lewis tells of his search for joy, a spiritual journey which led him from the Christianity of his early years into atheism, and then, back to Christianity.