

In 2018, I wrote a study guide to Mere Christianity, a book written by the British theologian C.S. Lewis in the years following World War Two and one I highly encourage you to read for your walk of faith. I may publish the study guide which I titled Mere Christians someday; in the meantime, though, I will share it with you as a series of twenty-four blogs in our newsletter rather than have a lengthy book study, particularly under our pandemic conditions. I do so because I promised last week to explain why I choose to say and write “disciples of Jesus Christ” instead of use the noun *Christian*. That topic is precisely what Lewis deals with in the Preface of the book (Lesson 1 in the study guide).

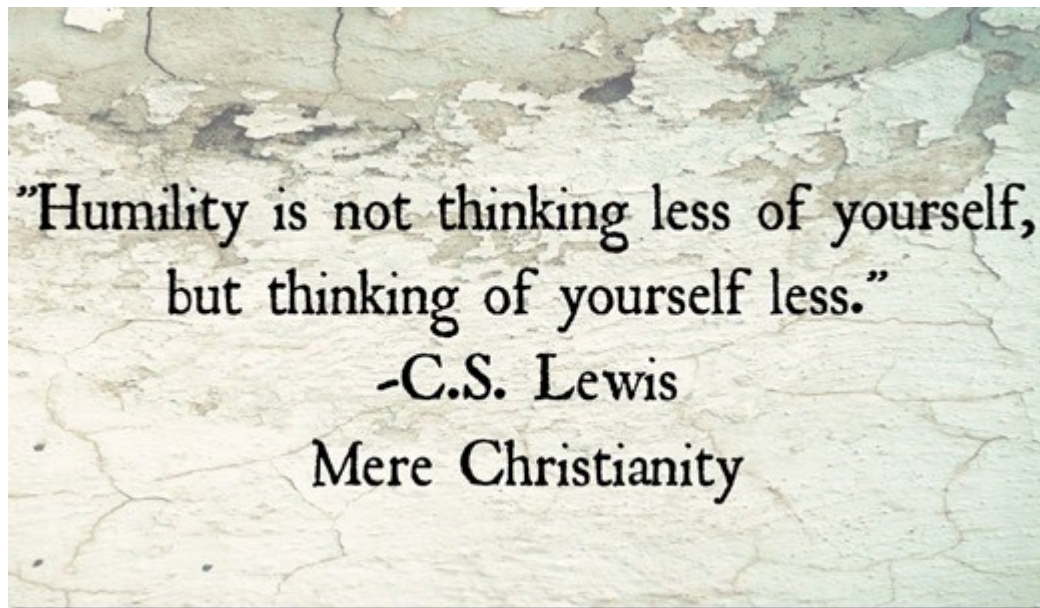
For some, being a Christian means simply having a membership in a Christian congregation. For Lewis, however, Christianity is mere in respect to “being in the spirit of Christ”—nothing more, and nothing less. He does not, and will not, purport to suggest that any one brand of Christianity, whether Catholic, Orthodox, or the dozens of versions of Protestantism, is better or worse than any other. I take his thought a step further than he intends at this point of the book but which he comes back to later. Being in Christ Jesus our Lord is believing He who is given by God, came to earth to become human, where he lived and taught, then was put to death because he challenged the religion of his day, and was risen for our sake to forever conquer the power of hell and death. Being in the spirit of Christ is all about faith in our risen Lord and Savior—not simply membership in a community of faith that is then disassociated with one’s actions and words the rest of the week. Immediately, then, our conventional thinking about what constitutes being a Christian is challenged when an ethical dimension is added. The institutional domain is where discussion and debate about practices distract us from true discipleship (faith) in Christ Jesus. More tragically, such animosity within Christianity results in a breaking of the body of Christ, and thus damages our evangelism and mission to our community. In short, we cease to be in the spirit of Christ.

To illustrate how the word *Christian* has not changed for the better over the centuries, Lewis says the same thing has happened to another word—gentleman. Today, when we say that a person is a gentleman, we are paying that person a compliment; that he is a nice person, or kind, or courteous. In other words, we form an opinion about that man, in this case, a positive opinion, based on our observation of that person. That has not always been the case. At one time, saying that a man was a gentleman was stating a fact, not an opinion. A gentleman was one who had a coat of arms and owned property. To say that a man was a gentleman was a description of who they were, not an evaluation of their character. Lewis puts it this way. “*If you said he was ‘not a gentleman’ you were not insulting him, but giving information,*” in this case, that he was not landed gentry. In contrast, if you were to say that a man is not a gentleman today, you would be insulting him because you are describing what you deem to be his lack of character.

C.S. Lewis writes that the same thing has happened to the word *Christian*. It no longer is a description of one who is in the spirit of Christ but rather as a badge of honor given to a person. In these cases, *Christian* is used as more as an adjective and less as a noun. It is as if the evaluator has the power to see into their heart and judge whether they indeed meet a standard that is determined by the evaluator and not by scripture. To this, Lewis writes, “*We do not see into men’s hearts. We cannot judge, and are indeed forbidden to judge. It would be wicked arrogance for us to say that any man is, or is not, a Christian in this refined state. ...When a man who accepts the Christian doctrine lives unworthily by it, it is much clearer to say he is a bad Christian than to say he is not a Christian.*”

My take-away from the Preface to Mere Christianity is that the only person we are in any position to judge is ourselves—the person we see in the mirror when we first wake up in the morning and are getting ready for our day. When we strive to be genuine and humble about ourselves, the closer we get to being in the spirit of Christ Jesus and change *Christian* back to an internal description based on the fruits of the Spirit rather than an external judgment given to us. Until that happens, I will talk about us simply as disciples of Jesus Christ in place of the noun *Christian*, and I will structure my sentences in such a way to avoid using *Christian* as an adjective.

*Pastor Tom*





*This is the last Sunday to  
Donate to Festival Of  
Sharing 2020, we will be  
purchasing blankets with  
all funds collected.*

*Please give with a  
CARING HEART  
to this project!*



**Collecting Now  
through September 6th**



The  
Merida  
Foundation  
will give these glasses to the poor,  
visually impaired Mayan people living in  
the rural villages in the state of Yucatan.

Place your unused  
Rx and Reading  
eyeglasses in the  
basket found in our  
Connect Area

# 2020 ELECTRONICS / METALS RECYCLING

LAKE LOTAWANA COMMUNITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

28901 NE COLBERN ROAD LAKE LOTAWANA, MO 64086

**SAT, SEPT 12th 9:00 AM - Noon**

**Computers - TVs  
Large & Small Appliances  
Car/Boat Batteries & MORE**

We accept almost anything with a cord or battery. As small as a cell phone to as large as a refrigerator- and everything in between! It does not matter what condition it is in or if it works or not.

Our recycling vendor - Midwest Recycling Center will collect fees on some of the electronics and appliances.

- TVs & CRT monitors - \$5 to \$50 each [See fee schedule llcumc.org](http://llcumc.org)
- All computer equipment, accessories, and cables
- Medical, dental, and laboratory equipment - no biohazards!
- All telephones, cell phones, PDA's, digital cameras, and related items
- Batteries (except alkaline batteries)
- All appliances - small and large Items with freon - \$10.00 each
- AV equipment, speakers, etc.
- Lawn and garden equipment (gas and oil must be drained prior to drop off)

**DRIVE-THRU  
DROP-OFF**

**See complete list  
and fee schedule  
at [llcumc.org](http://llcumc.org)**







Heart and Soul Children's Christian Learning Center needs our help. Summer is here and that means outside activities for our H&S children. H&S needs our donations of any of your sporting equipment that you no longer use (preferably baseball, tennis and basketball), but anything will work. If you have any of these items collecting dust in your storage areas please bring them and drop them off in the basket in our CONNECT area.

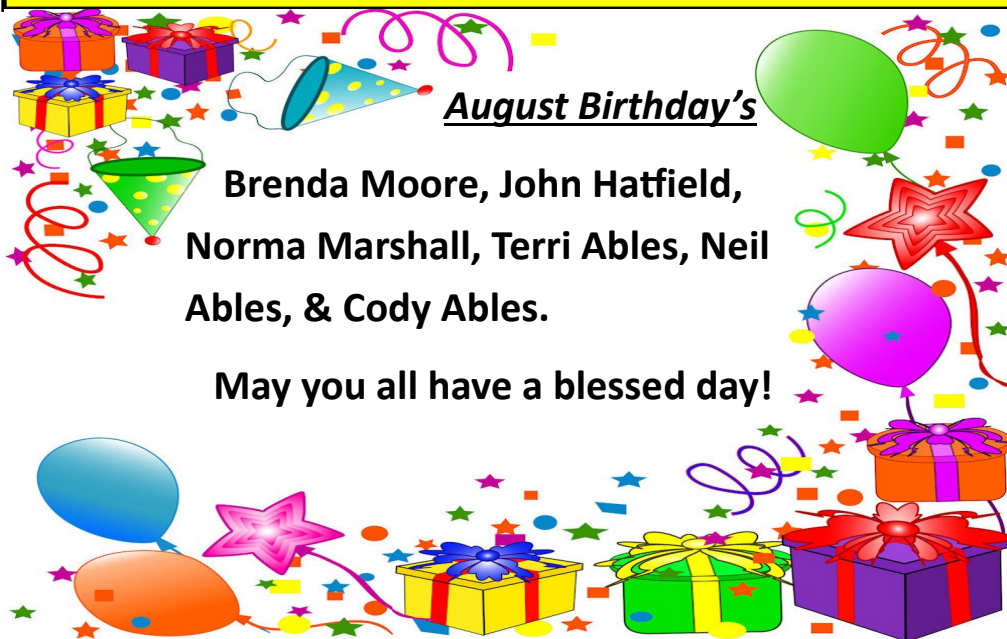
Thanks from the Heart and Soul Staff

**On Going:** Les Case, Wade Davis, Roger Grable, Richard Fuerst, Winnie Fuerst, Harvey Geary, Michael Hatfield, Linda Koley, Nancy Rowe

**Strength and Healing:** Ken McDaniel

**Missions:** Africa Chicks for Change, Hillcrest Transitional Housing, Harvester's Food Bank, Lazarus Ministries, Tarsney Lake Families, Congregation de Mellier, Heart and Soul Children's Learning Center

**Please contact the office to update or add prayer requests**



### August Birthday's

**Brenda Moore, John Hatfield,  
Norma Marshall, Terri Ables, Neil  
Ables, & Cody Ables.**

**May you all have a blessed day!**

## Inviting Seamstresses to Join Our Efforts



The Lee's Summit based Mask Brigade, a group of dedicated volunteers, has been sewing cloth face masks since late March to donate to area hospitals, first responders, medical and dental offices, health clinics and nursing homes. Over 22,000 have been distributed so far!

As back-to-school plans begin to take shape, we are already receiving requests from individual schools to donate cloth face masks for students. If you are interested in joining our efforts, please contact me at [sendmail2me@comcast.net](mailto:sendmail2me@comcast.net) or 816 210-4048. Pre-cut masks, sewing supplies, and sewing instructions will be provided.

*We thank you very much - Elaine Raymond*

# August 2020

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<b>2 Services</b> <b>8:00 &amp; 10:00</b>	3	4 PPRC Meeting 7:00	5	6	7	8
<b>9 Services</b> <b>8:00 &amp; 10:00</b> <i>Last day to donate to Festival of Sharing</i>	10	11	12	13	14	15
<b>16 Services</b> <b>8:00 &amp; 10:00</b>	17	18	19	20	21	22
<b>23 Services</b> <b>8:00 &amp; 10:00</b>	24	25	26	27	28	29