



Clive Staples Lewis

By Mary Hennekes

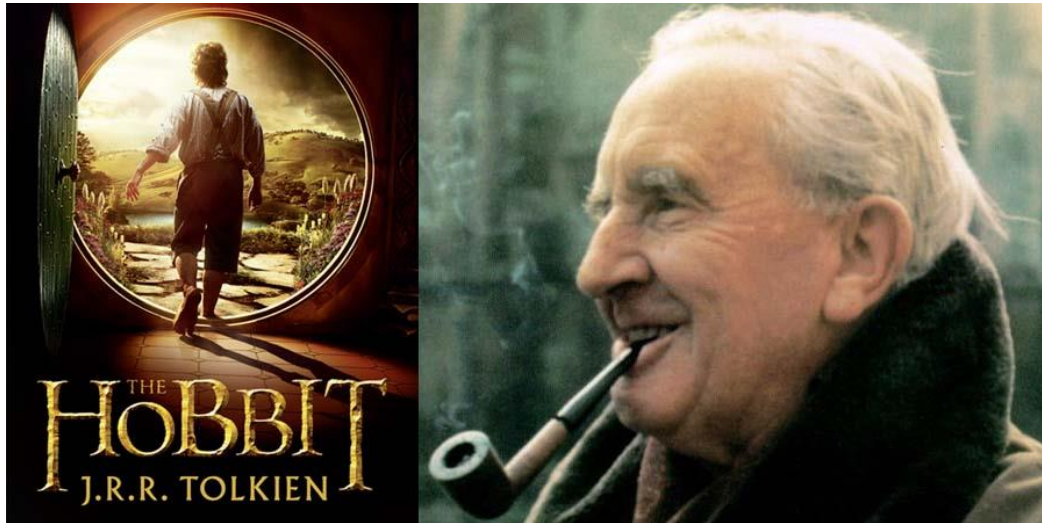
Who is C.S. Lewis?



- ▶ B. November 29, 1898 in Belfast, Ireland;
- ▶ D. November 24, 1963
- ▶ Created a fantastical world full of imaginary animals and tales of feats and heroism as a child
- ▶ **Christian turned atheist turned Christian again**
- ▶ Joined a “informal collective of writers and intellectuals who counted among their members Lewis’s brother, Warren Lewis, and J.R.R. Tolkien” (“C.S. Lewis Biography”) where he reinforced Christian upbringing
- ▶ Cambridge University literature professor
- ▶ Most famous works include *Mere Christianity*, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, and *The Screwtape Letters*, as well as *The Great Divorce* and *The Pilgrim’s Regress*

The Screwtape Letters were dedicated to JRR Tolkien (instrumental in Lewis's conversion) who did not like the dedication...

Lewis became instrumental in Tolkien's publications, but Tolkien did not like the Narnia Chronicles...



C.S. Lewis' Portrayal of Truth in Fiction

- ▶ “For in their hearts doth Nature stir them so\
Then people long on pilgrimage to go\
And palmers to be seeking foreign strands\
To distant shrines renowned in sundry lands”
(The Canterbury Tales)
- ▶ Idea that Christians have conveyed for hundreds of years, the idea that all men need God and innately come to this understanding, undergoing a “pilgrimage” in their growth towards him

C.S. Lewis' Portrayal of Truth in Fiction

- ▶ What characteristics of Lewis' writing style correspond with characteristics of myths and fairytales?
 - Descriptive
 - Lengthy/complicated plot—often dark and gruesome
 - Common motifs—quests, traveler's tales, helpers/guardians
 - Archetypal characters
 - Depict morality
 - Audience—mature/adult



Conclusion

C.S. Lewis' Major Point: Life is a spiritual journey like a pilgrimage filled with necessary growth. One must come to understand his need for God in his life in order to feel complete, just as John in *the Pilgrims regress*, the narrator in *The Great Divorce*, and the patient in *The Screwtape Letters* come to discover. But the spiritual journey won't be without a struggle, just as any long physical journey is arduous and strenuous.



Out of the Silent Planet

