

## ***THE MYTH THAT'S A FACT, HEB.11:13-16***

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe #1

◆ **Intro: (show trailer or...)** During WWII, Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy are sent from London to the country home of Professor Digory Kirk for safety. The children find life in the house extremely boring until Lucy discovers a wardrobe that leads to a magical world called Narnia, a world where animals can talk. The land belongs to the great Emperor and his son, a powerful yet benevolent Lion named Aslan, who has not been seen for many long years. The other children don't believe her at first, but soon all of them go through the wardrobe and discover that all is not well in Narnia. The land is being kept in perpetual winter by the evil White Witch, Jadis, who turns anyone who doesn't obey her into stone. For 100 years it has been always winter, but never Christmas. But word is that Aslan is on the move! And an ancient prophecy says that when the 4 thrones at Cair Paravel are filled by the Daughters of Eve and the sons of Adam, the cold of evil will be broken.

◆ Such is the story of the Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, (LWW), by C.S. Lewis. It's a fantasy, a fairy tale, a myth -so to speak. There's one difference: this story is about the True Story.

◆ Let me explain...

◆ **1.** Everyone has deep, inner longings. You might sit by the phone, or next to a lonely window wishing deeply for a boyfriend. Some folks, long to grow up and start out. Others long for something different, better.

◆ **By the way, your longings mean you were meant for something more.**

◆ So wherever you find humans, you find stories, tales, fairy tales, fantasies -these are all about human longing. We thirst for fantasy lands: places

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where mystery, adventure, romance, and dangerous quests are the order of the day. Or maybe places where everything is made out of candy! Even while yawning in class or surfing the Net, we hunger for other worlds. We long to go beyond the streets we know, beyond our familiar woods and fields, and into the land of tales; be it Middle-earth, Narnia, Summerland, Neverland, or a galaxy far far away.

◆ Switchfoot sings it like this:

We were meant to live for so much more  
Have we lost ourselves?  
Somewhere we live inside  
We want more than this world's got to offer  
We want more than this world's got to offer  
We want more than the wars of our fathers  
And everything inside screams for second life

◆ Sometimes we long so much that we actually feel sick inside. Most of us, if we're honest, sense with unease that this world is not all there is. At times we get inner hints and glimpses of something beyond what the eye can see. Do you know why?

◆ *He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end. (Ecclesiastes 3:11, NIV).*

◆ Our own Christmas tales are also a sign of our longings. Think of it...

◆ Colored lights dispel the dark and make our neighborhoods a fairytale land for a few weeks. We long for a world where people love each other, and give to one another happily. We hope for a time

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when family gathers and enjoys each other's presence, where music plays that reminds us of special times long long ago.

◆cf. Amy Grant's song: *Christmas List*

So here's my lifelong wish  
My grown-up Christmas list  
Not for myself  
But for a world in need  
No more lives torn apart  
That wars would never start,  
And time would heal all hearts  
And everyone would have a friend  
And right would always win  
And love would never end  
This is my grown-up Christmas list

◆**B.** Good news is: The world we yearn for, filled with the goodness and holiness we don't fully see here, is real.

◆What we all really long for is life with God, our maker, the one who loves us most. In the Spirit of Christmas, we are all secretly longing for the Spirit of Christ.

◆*Augustine* (or *Pascal*) said in every man is a god-shaped vacuum. We are restless until we rest in him.

◆*Tolkien* argued that all fairy tales echo the gospel of JC in some way because the gospel is the True Story, it's the real "fairy tale" that crashed into the time line of history.

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◆ In LOTR what we really want deep down is the assurance that there is a realm someplace where evil has been conquered once and for all.

◆ *Lewis* wrote, “The heart of Christianity is a myth which is also a fact.”

◆ The kingdom we all long for, beyond the world we know, is real after all.

Check our text...

◆ v13 What people of faith down through human history saw was that this is not all there is. They lived by faith that there was something more. They traveled to unknown places, they left palaces (26) , were thrown into furnaces (34), fed to animals, stoned (37) -willingly endured because they had thier eyes set on a “fantasy world” -the bible calls it the Kingdom of God.

◆ Look at verse 16: Instead, they were longing for a better country-- a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them. (Hebrews 11:16, NIV).

◆ **C.** If you read LWW or see the film, I predict you will be moved. Perhaps by...

◆ the mystery of another land found through the back of a wardrobe.

◆ or perhaps by the playful love the gentle lion shows the children he later lays down his life to save

◆ or perhaps by the crescending triumph as they look at the stone table where his dead body *once* lay, but now see him getting to his feet once again, the table cracked beneath him!

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- ◆ or perhaps by the wild roar of the Lion when he has had enough of the Witch's evil in his land, and leads his forces into battle.
- ◆ But if you are moved, I suggest to you, that it is because your really hope for such a world with all your heart & soul. And here is the truth. It does exist and you were designed for it.
- ◆ LWW is after all the Bible's story: earth, cursed, fallen, frozen, ruled by a pseudo-ruler and her/his demons. The real ruler, the Lion of Judah comes back and faces off with evil, in love giving his life for his subjects, melting the winter of sin and frustration, and all that is wrong with us, rising above the last enemy of death, and thus rescuing them for all eternity. That is the True Story. It is God's story.
- ◆ **2.** It is indeed simple, child-like faith that can hear the True Story. Of course that suggests that **I need to become child-like and humbly accept the truth of Christmas.**
- ◆ **A.** Many of our Christmas stories hint this same truth:
  - ◆ Charlie Brown has a sense that the commercialism of the adult world isn't really it. In other stories a *grown-up* who's *given up* on love and peace meets Santa who all the children seem to know, and becomes a believer in the magic of it all again. How many times haven't we run into that story line? Why? Think it over. *Grown-ups* are making the movies, about grown-ups who know better and have to believe in Santa again. They keep making them, even though those grown-ups know the truth about Santa! Why? Because they, like everyone else, have a longing for a real home, the heavenly one. They just don't know it fully.

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◆ The Christmas tales are fairytales, with a hint of the True Story:

◆ That there is a man coming to town.

◆ Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?” “I am,” said Jesus. “And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.” (Mark 14:61,62, NIV).

◆ He does know when your sleeping and when your awake.

◆ *O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. (Psalms 139:1-3, NIV).*

◆ He knows if you've been bad or good. He does want to shower your life with his gifts of grace and love.

◆ *“Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. (Revelation 22:12, NIV).*

◆ He can keep track of every household in the whole world at the same time.

◆ *The eyes of the LORD are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good. [Pr 15:3 ]*

◆ You see, it's all there! Everyone who wants Christmas really is looking for Christ!

◆ **B.** Now, children humbly and easily believe that there is a better story, a beautiful world beyond the one we see. Maybe that's why Jesus said unless we become as a little child we cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

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◆ Fredrick Buechner put it:

◆ “When Jesus is asked who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven, he reaches into the crowd and pulls out a child with a cheek full of bubble gum and eyes full of whatever a child's eyes are full of and says unless you can become like that, don't bother to ask.”

◆ It takes humility of a child to grasp the Kingdom. Those who think they are too grown up for all that simple faith business are missing the mark. Those who think they are too scientific to believe in religion aren't even very good students of humanity. It takes the humility of a child to enter the Kingdom because God's kingdom is a gift given to those who cannot reach it for themselves.

◆ **C.** Let your longings lead you to the Lord. Consider them. Follow them back to their origin. It's the same thing with the beauties of life.

◆ CS Lewis, author of LWW was an atheist for much of his life. He suffered the premature death of his mother at age of 10.

◆ He was the most brilliant student of his class at Oxford, and became a professor there. He was exposed to other writers such as Tolkien -get this- who knew the True Story: they were Christians! He learned, in his own words, to see a sunbeam, and in his mind “run back up the sunbeam to the sun!” That is, we see the results, the created realm, the phenomena of life, and we simply and intelligently infer, or work our way back to the creator, the life-giver.

◆ **Conclusion:** In the LWW, Lucy finds the mysterious land of Narnia first through the back of the wardrobe. She meets a nice faun (part man, part faun) named Mr. Tumnus with whom she has a delicious tea. When she

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gets back to her world her siblings hear her story and think she's lost her mind. Yet when she says "Come and see for yourself" and leads them into the wardrobe, they do come.

◆ How curious! Why should they look, seeing that they are quite certain she is crazy. Could it be that they would really like to know that there was another world beyond this one?

◆ Later at the end of the story, the children have been in Narnia many years. The White Witch is long since dead and gone. The 4 have ruled as Kings and Queens in a peaceful kingdom, when, (I won't tell you just how) they suddenly step through into their own world again. It was the same day, the same hour of the day on which they had gone into the wardrobe.

◆ What if there really is a door to another world, one intersecting ours, going on even as our is? What if another kingdom really does exist? That would mean...

◆ Life is a bigger adventure that we ever expected.

◆ You, my friend, are far more intended than you can imagine.

◆ And the full meaning of your life is not to be found only here.

◆ Better to take a look.