



Cultivating Wisdom with C.S. Lewis

Yearlong 2023-2024

ELIGIBLE STUDENTS:

Grades 10-12

Cultivating Wisdom with C.S. Lewis is for high school students who like C.S. Lewis or are interested in literature and/or theology. Students will “have a conversation” with Lewis over many of the books he has written, seeking to glean as much wisdom as possible from this winsome and wise fellow. The interested student will be interested and able in reading proficiently, engaging with what is read, and be ready to discuss what is read in a classroom setting.

Class Dates: Monday, September 4, 2023 through Wednesday, May 22, 2024

Class Times: Monday and Wednesday 11:00-12:15 p.m. Eastern Time

Instructor: Nathan Dickinson

Email: nathan.dickinson.scholeacademy@gmail.com

Office Hours: Friday 9:00-11:00 a.m. ET

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Cultivating Wisdom with C.S. Lewis will explore the life and thought of C.S. Lewis. We will engage with many of his works, seeking to understand what he says over a variety of topics (insert some essay titles here) and why his voice remains so influential today.

C.S. Lewis will be our faithful guide while we navigate the complexities of living as a wise and faithful follower of Jesus today. We will “chew” on what he says in the context he said it while also spending much time discussing how his wise words impact our personal pilgrimage with Jesus Christ. We will also take considerable time to discern how his works apply to the issues relevant to Christian faithfulness today.

There is not a more gentle, winsome, and wise guide in our modern world than C.S. Lewis. His fictional works are prolific, but so are his works that engage directly with faith and culture. This course will deal directly with his works that engage faith and culture, using them as a guide to walk with wisdom today.

SCHEDULE

CLASS SESSIONS DATES:

Classes will take place on Monday and Wednesday 11:00-12:15 p.m. (ET) for 32 weeks.

Orientation: Monday August 28 at 11:00 a.m.

Semester 1:

September 4, 6, 11, 13, 18, 20, 25, 27
October 2, 4, 9, 11, 16, 18, 23, 25, 30
November 1, 6, 8, 13, 15, 27, 29
[Thanksgiving Break: Nov. 20-24]
December 4, 6, 11, 13
[Christmas Break: Dec. 18-Jan. 5]
January 8, 10, 15, 17

Semester 2:

January 22, 24, 29, 31
February 5, 7, 12, 14, 26, 28
[Winter Break: Feb. 19-23]
March 4, 6, 11, 13, 18, 20
[Holy Week Break: March 25-29]
April 1, 3, 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, 24, 29
May 1, 6, 8, 13, 15, 20, 22

**Please note that dates are subject to change as the instructor's circumstances might dictate (e.g. illness, family emergency). Any classes canceled by the instructor will be made up in some other way.*

COURSE MAP

QUARTER 1 (Life of Wisdom)

1. Overview of the Life of C.S. Lewis
2. The Narnian
3. Surprised by Joy

QUARTER 3 (Cultural Wisdom)

1. The Cultural Wisdom of C.S. Lewis
2. Weight of Glory
3. Abolition of Man

QUARTER 2 (Spiritual Wisdom)

1. The Spiritual Wisdom of C.S. Lewis
2. Mere Christianity
3. Screwtape Letters

QUARTER 4 (Walking with Wisdom)

1. The Lived Experience of Wisdom
2. The Problem of Pain
3. The Four Loves

COURSE READINGS

COURSE TEXTS TO PURCHASE:

1. *The Narnian: The Life and Imagination of C.S. Lewis* by Alan Jacobs ISBN: 978-0061448720

Each of the following texts required are by C.S. Lewis himself:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2. <i>Surprised by Joy</i> | 5. <i>Weight of Glory</i> | 8. <i>The Four Loves</i> |
| 3. <i>Mere Christianity</i> | 6. <i>Abolition of Man</i> | |
| 4. <i>Problem of Pain</i> | 7. <i>Screwtape Letters</i> | |

EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

1. Students are expected to come to class prepared: with reading assignments completed and contemplated, all materials present, and ready to actively participate.
2. Students are expected to be engaged: listening carefully, asking and answering questions, and thinking about the matters under discussion.
3. Students are expected to take notes on important and relevant content in an organized way so those notes can be consulted for assignments and assessments.
4. Students are expected to submit written assignments on time, completed neatly and thoroughly.
5. Students are expected to act responsibly: to let the teacher know if he or she will be absent and seek a way to make up for the lost class; to keep up with all reading and writing assignments, and ask for guidance and direction from the teacher whenever necessary.
6. Students are expected to be respectful to their teacher, their classmates and the material.
7. Students are expected to submit their work by scanning it and uploading it into the Canvas assignment window.

STUDENT MASTERY

Assessment of students is made in light of the following goals:

1. That they grasp why and how Lewis cultivated wisdom and winsome as a follower of Jesus
2. That they appreciate the virtue of wisdom while engaging with an unbelieving world
3. That they understand the basic criticisms of the Christian faith and can engage confidently themselves with the issues
4. That they are able to give a basic timeline of the life of Lewis
5. That through the testimony of Lewis they understand the relationship between orthodoxy and orthopraxy
6. That they develop the habits of reading with care, listening with attention and writing summaries.
7. That they understand the intersection of story and belief while walking as a pilgrim in this world.

ASSIGNMENTS

Reading/Critical Reading Questions:

Students will be given a reading assignment for each class, accompanied by a few questions intended to direct the student to what is most important in the reading for the purposes of this course. Students will also be directed at times to mark in their text in order to make note of key names or terms. Students should expect to spend almost as much time preparing for class as they will spend in class.

Class Discussion and Note-taking:

Class time will be spent drawing out the essential meaning of the readings through Socratic discussion. Students will be directed to take additional notes as necessary.

Commonplace Journal:

At the end of each class, student will be directed to write a few sentences summarizing one or two of the main points of the reading and discussion in a commonplace journal. This journal will become a helpful tool for the student to write short essays on assigned topics. Whenever possible, there will be some time at the end of class given to the students to work on this.

Writing Assignments:

Students will be asked to write essays at the end of each quarter on selected topics in order to cement and clarify their understanding and to develop their writing skills. They will be given clear instructions about what is expected, and will receive feedback on the content of the composition and on their spelling, grammar, writing style and clarity.

GRADING

Cultivating Wisdom with C.S. Lewis course through the Canterbury House of Studies at Scholé Academy is intended to engage and invite students to read, to think, to question and to express their thoughts in discussion and writing, and these are activities that do not always lend themselves to easy evaluation and assessment. These are not quantifiable activities. Nonetheless, we also recognize the need or desire for grades, so traditional numeric or letter grades will be provided and readily accessed on *Cultivating Wisdom with C.S. Lewis* Canvas page. Additionally, Scholé will provide a transcript of that grade to the requesting parent at the end of the year.

Student grades will be comprised of:

1. Daily Summaries: 20%
2. Class Participation: 25%
3. Writing Assignments: 30%
4. Critical Reading Questions: 25%

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Students will sometimes take assessment tests and/or quizzes privately at home. Students are on their honor to abide by [Scholé Academy's Learning Philosophy](#) which assumes the personal cultivation of Student-Virtues described in the Student-Parent Handbook.

Additionally, plagiarism is a serious and punishable offense. Proper citation of all sources is essential to the academic endeavor. Remember to cite any source if the information is not common knowledge or is an opinion obtained through any source. A plagiarized assignment will

result in a failing grade. Students should consult their chosen style manual (see Student Expectations above) for specific direction on obtaining, quoting and paraphrasing sources.

THE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

We will be using the free online “virtual classroom” software provided by Zoom, one of the leading companies that provides such software. The virtual classroom will provide students with interactive audio, text chat and an interactive whiteboard in which texts, diagrams, video and other media can be displayed and analyzed. We will provide students with a link (via email) that will enable students to join the virtual classroom.

Specific information regarding the technology used by Scholé Academy (including required technology) can be found by visiting the [Technology in the Classroom](#) section of the Student Parent Handbook.

Students will submit documents by scanning and uploading them to their personal computer, then attaching those files as .pdfs to an email. They will submit their work to the *Cultivating Wisdom with C.S. Lewis* Canvas assignment page (access granted after enrollment is secured).

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR

Nathan Dickinson holds a M.Div. from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and currently serves as the planting priest of Church of the Good Shepherd in Summersville, West Virginia. He is a West Virginia native who has had approximately a decade of teaching experiences in local churches and missionary settings. He has taught the Bible in Kenya, Zambia, Myanmar, and Jamaica, and has taught English (among other things) to students in a Christian school setting. He loves helping students see the beauty of God in Holy Scripture and helping students learn to engage in meaningful dialogue.

His two boys (Barnabas and Martin) keep his home life interesting and full of adventure! When he is not adventuring with his wife and boys, he is looking for a good cup of coffee, a good book, and a good conversation.