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TA Online
The Inklings
Reflection
25 September 2000
Word Count: 500

The Weight of Glory

Why do we have a desire for the Inner Ring? What will satisfy it?

According to C. S. Lewis, "Creatures are not born with desires unless satisfaction for those desires exists" (*Mere Christianity* 121). For every desire we have, there is a satisfaction that fulfills that desire. However, many times we do not recognize what our desire is really for, for it is "not yet attached to the true object, and will even appear as the rival of that object" (*Weight of Glory* 28). This is what we see in the case of the Inner Ring. Everyone at some point has a desire to be on the inside, to be part of the gang. Today we would call it "popularity" or "peer pressure." Even these words are confusing, for I am sure that many a man has mistaken this desire for "popularity" as something that dies after adolescence and has gone on trying to be accepted and "in" at his workplace or community. Now, the ring in itself is not evil, but the desire for it leads to all sorts of snobbery, scoundrelism, heartlessness and back-stabbing, turning good men into scoundrels (*Weight* 115). Moreover, merely gaining acceptance into a particular ring does not satisfy this desire, for once a new ring is discovered the desire immediately returns (*Weight* 117). It seems there must be something else to satisfy this desire; what we have now is a case of mistaken identity. The Inner Ring has been mistaken for something else that will satisfy man's desire to be accepted. The question then, is what it is that we really desire. The answer is twofold, and only through breaking our desire for the Inner Ring can we come to the realization of either.

Firstly, what we desire is friendship. We desire not only camaraderie, but also common interest and understanding. Surprisingly, friendship comes to look very much like an "Inner Ring," since an Inner Ring is only a hollow parody of the real thing, real friendship (*Weight* 118). Perhaps the friendships we know presently are only a weak shadow of what is to come with Christ, which will completely fulfill us. Christ says, "I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father" (John 15:15). It seems that we are offered not just sonship with God but also a brotherhood

with Christ. This brings us to the second desire: "Good report with God, acceptance by God, response, acknowledgment, and welcome into the heart of things," what Lewis calls "Glory" (*Weight* 36). It is the welcome into "the heart of things" that fascinates me, for this is that same sort of thing that we find in the desire for the Inner Ring. It is a desire to be within, accepted, and noticed. In both cases, what we really desire is the attention of God. The desire for the Inner Ring is actually a type of desire for Heaven.