

A stylized illustration of a torch with a flame, rendered in a layered, paper-like style. The flame is primarily orange and yellow, with a small red-orange core. The torch's handle is dark blue. The background is a gradient of dark blue at the bottom and reddish-brown at the top.

Special Topic

The Subtle Trap Blocking Your Spiritual Growth

Stew's General Outline

Prepping for "Spiritual Disciplines" Class

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1. The Elder Brother's Tale
 2. Satan's Trap Door
 3. Putting to Death the *Self Life*
 4. Adopting Wise Habits...

Luke 15:22-32

The Other Son

Let's Read It & Summarize His
Perspective...

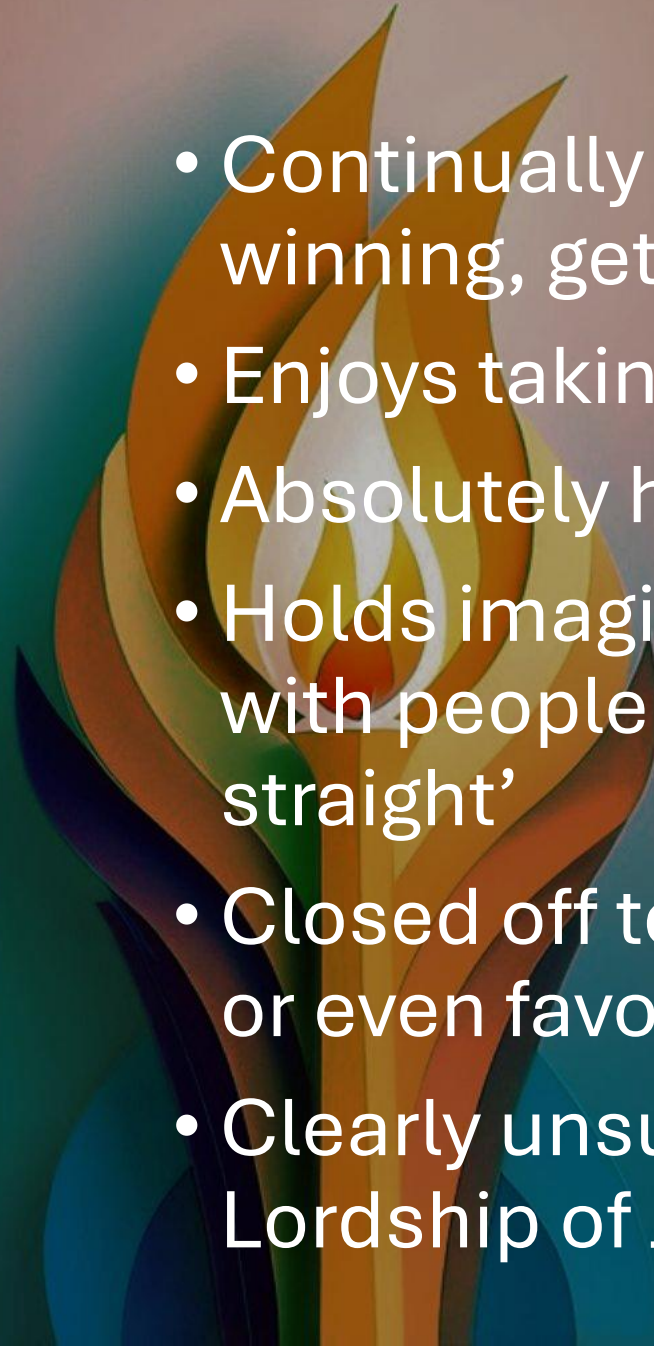
- Angry, offended
- Refuses to celebrate / “go in”
- Envious... or jealous?
- Stuck on the injustice
- Doesn't feel like a true son
 - “All these years I have been slaving for you...”
 - “You never gave me [even] a kid...”

How much of your daily life is exposed to envy and offense? AKA ‘the triumph of the offended self.’

Who Is 'That Guy'?

In our culture?

- Continually making demands – winning, getting his way
- Enjoys taking offense
- Absolutely hates correction
- Holds imaginary conversations with people who need to be 'set straight'
- Closed off to seeing God's mercy or even favor/generosity
- Clearly unsubmitted to the Lordship of Jesus Christ





Yes, there is a religious version!

Who Is That Guy

In our church?

- Upset about worship style, can't ever really enjoy worship
- Irritated when church or prayer event runs long
- Tired of others using up time during small group sharing
- No thought about Jesus' return
- Doesn't grasp sonship at all; always adding to the work of the cross
- Acts in vain, stupid, pompous, mean, hateful ways!

Leaders fueled by the Self Life seem good for years, but then suddenly get taken down

Satan exalted himself over God

What is the Source?

Isaiah 14:12-14 / Ezek 28:1 etc.

- He located the same weakness in mankind – a desire to place ourself on the throne in place of God
- Gave him inside access to every person – a secret trap door
- He delights more in this internal access than in your specific sins
- It's about your precious self and the older brother's precious self!

While we are busy pampering the Self Life, letting it have its way, we are crowding out the life of God in us!

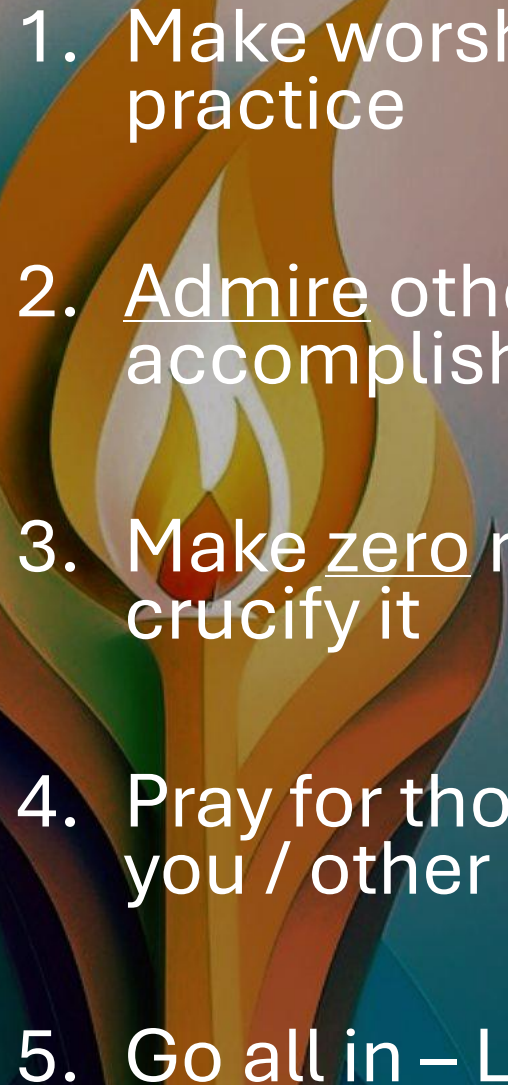
C.S. Lewis's Viewpoint



“Now the self can be regarded in two ways. On the one hand, it is God’s creature, an occasion of love and rejoicing; now, indeed, hateful in condition, but to be pitied and healed. On the other hand, it is that one self of all others which is called *I* and *me* and which on that ground puts forward an irrational claim to preference. This claim is to be not only hated, but simply killed .” ~ *God in the Dock*, pg 210-11

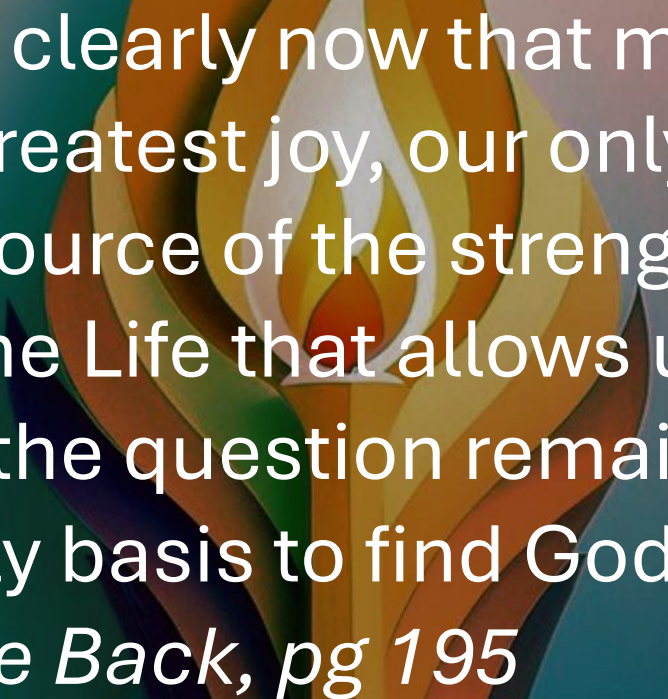
Ways to Kill the Self!

Stolen from John Eldredge

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1. Make worship an in-week practice
 2. Admire others and their accomplishments
 3. Make zero room for offense – crucify it
 4. Pray for those doing better than you / other people's success
 5. Go all in – Luke 17:33

Eldredge's Summation (wildatheart.org)

“I hope that you see clearly now that more of God is our greatest need, our greatest joy, our only rescue. This isn't optional. He is the source of the strength and resiliency we need for this hour, the Life that allows us to enjoy everything else in life. So the question remains: What will you do on a daily and weekly basis to find God and receive more of Him?” ~ *Get Your Life Back*, pg 195



Stew's Consecration Advice

Actively get your mind on God; Abide in Jesus; Swim from the shipwreck of this world! Stop believing in a neutral 3rd option!

- Have daily habits that prepare you for testing ahead of time and insulate you from envy and offense
- Choose your level of “Grounding” to do first thing each day + periodically during the day
 1. Most Basic – “Jesus, I trust in you.”
 2. Desert Fathers – “Jesus Messiah, Son of God, have mercy on me...”
 3. Signpost Inn – next slide
 4. St. Patrick's Breastplate – 2nd slide
 5. Wild at Heart Daily Prayer – Stew handout
 6. Mark Bubeck *The Adversary* / Roundup Prayer from 2024 Prayer Conference

Starting a New Habit*

- Write down your commitment & share it – make it visible
 - “I will [behavior] at [time] in [location]”
- Stack the new habit onto an established habit
 - “After [current habit] I will [new habit]”
- Use temptation bundling – make it attractive
 - “After [new habit] I will get/do [reward]”
- Make it easy – eliminate points of friction against doing it; increase points of friction for anything that competes with it
 - Cut out something else to make room
 - Master the decisive moment, and the small choices
- Use a habit tracker to create a “streak” / Get an accountability partner
 - Never miss twice in a row!

* Advice from James Clear, *Atomic Habits* @ atomichabits.com/cheatsheet

Signpost Inn Morning Prayer



Almighty God, merciful Father, who created and completed all things, on this day when the work of my calling begins anew, I implore you to create its beginning, direct its continuance, and bless its end, that my doings may be preserved from sin, my life sanctified, and my work this day be well pleasing to you.

In Jesus' name, AMEN

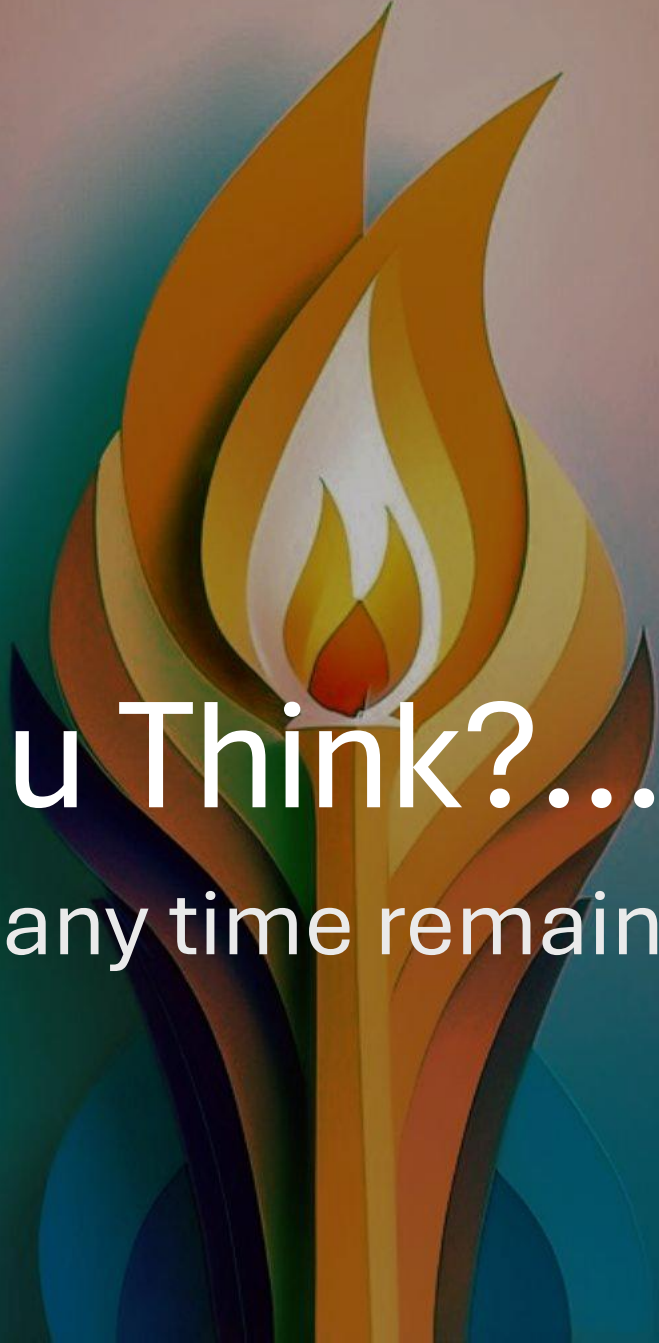
St. Patrick's Breastplate / The Deer's Cry

I arise this day through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity,
through belief in the Threeness, through confession of the oneness of the
Creator of Creation.

I arise this day through the strength of Christ's birth with his baptism,
through the strength of His crucifixion with His burial, through the
strength of His resurrection with His ascension, though the strength of
His coming descent for the sentence of judgement.

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me, Christ
beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down, Christ when I arise.

Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of
everyone who speaks of me, Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in
every ear that hears me.



What Do You Think?...

(if by some fluke any time remains)