



THE HUMANE SOCIETY  
OF THE UNITED STATES

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*The Humane Society of the United States Presents:*

**Dr. Jerry Root: C.S. Lewis & Animals**

In association with the C.S. Lewis Institute

## INTRODUCTION

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Few authors have left a legacy quite like C.S. Lewis. The academic, critic, poet and Christian apologist has had an impact on countless lives. Perhaps best known for the children's book series *The Chronicles of Narnia* and other titles such as *Mere Christianity* and *The Great Divorce*, Lewis focused on questions of morality, philosophy and good versus evil. Throughout his work, Lewis wrestled with questions about the human condition, which led him to seriously consider the implications it had on animals and the rest of God's creation. This is seen in his magical world of Narnia, where rational animals are some of the main characters. However, he also wrote widely on the topic of animal pain in *Problem of Pain* and on animal testing in various essays.

In this video series, Dr. Jerry Root, a C.S. Lewis scholar at Wheaton College, addresses the concern Lewis had for animals throughout his life. He was a man who truly understood the fullness of God's creation and how the way we interact with the animal kingdom implicates our human condition.

Before watching Video 1, have students name any works of C.S. Lewis they might be familiar with. Discuss common themes found in his writing.

***Kerry Knott is the President of the C.S. Lewis Institute, a training and discipleship program founded in the legacy of C.S. Lewis that endeavors to develop disciples who will articulate, defend and live their faith in Christ in personal and public life.***

## WATCH: VIDEO 1

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*Notes*

## RESPOND

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1. Lewis wrote both fiction and nonfiction. In what ways does his fiction reflect his nonfiction writing or vice versa?

## WATCH: VIDEO 2

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*Notes*

## RESPOND

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1. According to Lewis and his thoughts on General Revelation, what is our purpose as created beings as it relates to the rest of creation?
2. What verses do you know that might support this view?

## WATCH: VIDEO 3

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*Notes*

## RESPOND

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1. Again and again in his writing, Lewis makes the connection that treating animals cruelly leads to the mistreatment of your human neighbor. Do you think this is true? What examples in your life or elsewhere have you seen of this?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Read Colossians 1:15-20. How does this verse apply to our treatment of animals and the way C.S. Lewis would view our relationship with the rest of creation?

*Notes*

## RESPOND

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1. Read Lewis' essay on vivisection. How does Lewis refute the thinking that higher species (humans) are entitled to inflict pain on lower species (animals)? What are the consequences of doing so, according to Lewis?
2. How can we as Christians apply C.S. Lewis' general understanding of life—that God's love extends to all of creation—to our treatment of animals and issues that implicate animals and creation today?