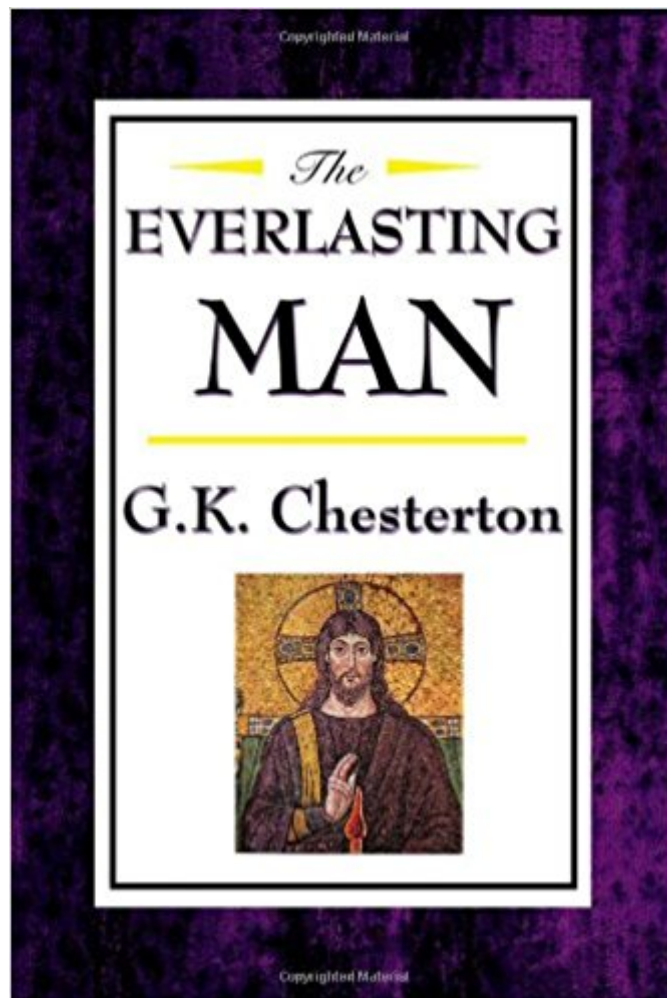


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The Everlasting Man



Synopsis

Here is the book that converted C. S. Lewis from atheism to Christianity. This history of mankind, Christ, and Christianity is to some extent a conscious rebuttal of H. G. Wells' Outline of History, which embraced both the evolutionary origins of humanity and the mortal humanity of Jesus. Whereas Orthodoxy detailed Chesterton's own spiritual journey, this book illustrates the spiritual journey of humanity, or at least of Western civilization. A book for both mind and spirit.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

What, if anything, is it that makes the human uniquely human? This, in part, is the question that G.K. Chesterton starts with in this classic exploration of human history. Responding to the evolutionary materialism of his contemporary (and antagonist) H.G. Wells, Chesterton in this work affirms human uniqueness and the unique message of the Christian faith. Writing in a time when social Darwinism was rampant, Chesterton instead argued that the idea that society has been steadily progressing from a state of primitivism and barbarity towards civilization is simply and flatly inaccurate.

"Barbarism and civilization were not successive stages in the progress of the world," he affirms, with arguments drawn from the histories of both Egypt and Babylon. As always with Chesterton, there is in this analysis something (as he said of Blake) "very plain and emphatic." He sees in Christianity a rare blending of philosophy and mythology, or reason and story, which satisfies both the mind and the heart. On both levels it rings true. As he puts it, "in answer to the historical query of why it was accepted, and is accepted, I answer for millions of others in my reply; because it fits the lock;

because it is like life." Here, as so often in Chesterton, we sense a lived, awakened faith. All that he writes derives from a keen intellect guided by the heart's own knowledge. --Doug Thorpe --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I've reread this book after ten years and found it just as astonishing a work as I did the first time around. Chesterton is a consummate apologist, combining a sincere reverence for his subject matter with a devastating sense of humour and a true generalist's erudition. He has a wonderful ability of taking accepted secular dogmas, turning them completely on their heads, and in the process making Catholic dogmas, rejected for their lack of congruence with modernism, look sensible and enlightened. This polemical mastery is one of the enduring qualities of *The Everlasting Man*. --A Customer This is a book that everyone ought to read two or three times at least. It is a crime that such nonsense as *Conversations With God*, or better but still relatively shallow introductions to comparative religion like *Religions of Man*, seem to be better known. Here you will find a description of Christianity and its relation to other faiths strong and fine as aged wine. I don't know of anyone who writes with this much class in the modern world. Having ordered the book for our college library, I tried not to mark it too much, but found myself putting ink dots on paragraph after paragraph of material I wanted to quote. He rambles a bit, but I think there is more wisdom, humor, and insight in a single page of this book than in whole volumes that are better known in our days. --David Marshall *Everlasting Man* had a decisive role in one of the most important conversions of the this century. C.S. Lewis described reading it in 1925 when he was still an atheist: "Then I read Chesterton's *Everlasting Man* and for the first time saw the whole Christian outline of history set out in a form that seemed to me to make sense . . . I already thought Chesterton the most sensible man alive; apart from his Christianity; Now, I veritably believe, I thought that Christianity itself was very sensible; apart from its Christianity." (Surprised by Joy p.223) When asked what Christian writers had helped him, Lewis remarked in 1963, six months before he died; "The contemporary book that has helped me the most is Chesterton's *The Everlasting Man*." (God in the Dock p.260.) --Fr. Phil Bloom (hfs@brigadoon.com) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

But what an enjoyable task it is. It is all too easy to draw the parallels between Chesterton and Lewis, but here we go. Both make you pay attention to every word and every line to grasp the concepts they introduce and follow the arguments they string together. But both have the skill of a poet in thrilling you as you go. Chesterton takes on the task of counteracting popular opinion that man is just another animal and that Christianity is just another religion. He does so with both wit and

wisdom. He challenges the assumptions of many learned thinkers by turning their arguments on their heads and showing how much better they then represent reality. Highly recommended for those interested in apologetics as well as anyone investigating Christianity. Chesterton provides a convincing case for orthodox Christianity with humor, intelligence, and beauty.

An amazing book! For a fundamental understanding of Christianity, you must read this book. Of course, it helps if you have a basic understanding of Christianity to start with, and in that case I recommend starting with CS Lewis and *Mere Christianity*. GK influenced CS Lewis, but CS Lewis wrote his books for us who were not necessarily scholars. Now ratchet it up a notch and read GK Chesterton *The Everlasting Man*. One of the most important things you understand from this book is that Christianity is nothing like a myth, it is not a philosophy, and it stands alone in the world. There is a good reason why religion is religion and Christianity is not. Read this book and be challenged on your very core assumptions about world, life, happiness and God.

Ah, that we had the gift of understanding and the ability to relate it in today's authors to the extent of Mr. Chesterton. With the plethora of modern inspirational works available - it's sometimes worth one's while to step back in time to see that things haven't changed. This book is well worth "the read". His interpretation of Christ's burial, the morning after and what it meant to the world is just plain beauty.

In my view, in this book (which is a wonderful book), we can peer into Chesterton's penetrating wisdom and amazing word-smithing and see how one can build truth on error (air), but only, and I emphasize only, in a few places. Those few places, I believe, exist due to a wonderful rationality that grasps, and possibly possesses, but might not have succumbed to a power more powerful that makes wisdom more wise by making it seem foolish. I suggest it is no accident nor a mere trifling detail that God's presence among mankind in the wilderness did not enter the Holy of Holies through the East gate.

In his usual way Chesterton says better than anyone else what anyone else would have been thinking already had he been as insightful as Chesterton. Or, stuff so profound and clear you wonder why you hadn't thought of it before. The man is a prophet-artist and this is one of his masterpieces. The first half can get a bit repetitive if you have A.D.D. Or are new to GKC Push through to get a birds eye view. Consider reading the final chapter which is a summary. As you

come to appreciate his genius, you will want to go back and take it all in. I recommend this book and especially the second half as a good primer on GKC non-fiction. I think it is easier to follow than Orthodoxy, Heretics or many of his essays. Especially for someone not acquainted with the popular thinkers, writers and politicians of his day or just generally not well read (i.e. a product of the American public school system) and not able to pick up on the references he tends to make in most of his other work.

It's amazing that such timeless wisdom comes forth from a mind from generations past. His musings are as relevant today as they were in the early days of the twentieth century. Perhaps more so.

I have listened to his book several times as an audio book. I find something new to inspire and delight me every time. I both recommend this book and G. K, Chesterton. His insight, style and breath of understanding are a national treasure. Please do your self a favor and make Mr. Chesterton your new favorite author. He can put a solid foundation under your understanding of what is important in this world and the next.

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