

SEPTEMBER 2004—*Jesus Christ*

C. S. Lewis wrote with remarkable clarity and insight on a number of themes, but none are more illuminating than his writing on the person of Jesus Christ:

“What are we to make of Christ?” There is no question of what we can make of Him, it is entirely a question of what He intends to make of us. You must accept or reject the story.

The things He says are very different from what any other teacher has said. Others say, “This is the truth about the Universe. This is the way you ought to go,” but He says, “I am the Truth, and the Way, and the Life.” He says, “No man can reach absolute reality, except through Me. Try to retain your own life and you will be inevitably ruined. Give yourself away and you will be saved.” He says, “If you are ashamed of Me, if, when you hear this call, you turn the other way, I also will look the other way when I come again as God without disguise. If anything whatever is keeping you from God and from Me, whatever it is, throw it away. If it is your eye, pull it out. If it is your hand, cut it off. If you put yourself first you will be last. Come to Me everyone who is carrying a heavy load, I will set that right. Your sins, all of them, are wiped out, I can do that. I am Re-birth, I am Life. Eat Me, drink Me, I am your Food. And finally, do not be afraid, I have overcome the whole Universe.” That is the issue.¹

Jesus . . . told people that their sins were forgiven. . . . This makes sense only if He really was the God whose laws are broken and whose love is wounded in every sin.

... I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: “I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept His claim to be God.” That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronising nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.²

Who do *you* say that Jesus is? There is no more important question in life.

*Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them,
“Who do the crowds say I am?”
They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah;
and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life.”
“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”
Peter answered, “The Christ of God.”
Luke 9:18-20 NIV*

¹ C.S. Lewis, *God in the Dock* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1996), p. 160.

² C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: Touchstone/Simon & Schuster, 1996), pp. 55-56.