

## MARK 3:20-22

## MY LORD, AND MY GOD

<sup>20</sup> Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. <sup>21</sup> When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, "He is out of his mind." <sup>22</sup> And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul ! By the prince of demons he is driving out demons."

In *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis states that there are really only three options when it comes to evaluating Jesus Christ. The first is that he was absolutely nuts. Jesus' uniqueness is not to be found in his claim to be God; our mental institutions have ever been populated by those making a similar claim. The second is that he was the devil incarnate. Anyone who would knowingly mislead people away from God in such a radical way, and even convince many of them to die for him, would be the embodiment of evil. But if those two options are eliminated as possibilities, then the only other is that Jesus' is who he said he is – the incarnate Son of God – our Messiah.

Early in his ministry, people lined up behind one of these three banners. His family thought Jesus was crazy. The religious leaders thought he was the devil. The people who were experiencing his authority and healing touch believed he was something else; perhaps the Messiah.

We all come to Jesus with our culturally informed opinions of his nature, but Jesus does not allow us to remain there. His claims, his proclamations and his actions demand a decision. There is no easy synthesis available to us. He does not allow us to proclaim him simply a great and enlightened teacher or the ultimate icon of a good person, because he claims to be God. If the latter is not true, then he is a false teacher and an evil person. So, if it comes down to a yes or no decision, how can we know? We know he is who he says he is because he did what he did and God raised him from the dead. What he did was consistent with what God had been doing with Israel since the call of Abram, and God's approval was demonstrated for us through his resurrection.

Eliminate the first two options and you are left with only the third – Jesus is who he claims to be.

**Jesus, clear the fog from my mind that I might come to see you as you really are. Convince my heart that what I say with my mouth is what I live out in my life. Help me not to sit silently by as others misrepresent you, but give me the courage, the words and the love to gently challenge the error in their thinking. Amen.**