

# “My Beloved Son”

(Luke 3:21-22)

## Introduction

➤ Contrary to what many people think today, there are relatively only a few times in the Bible where it is explicitly stated that God spoke audibly. To sure, the Bible records thousands of occasions where God spoke to people – especially prophets, kings, and leaders – but only a precious few occasions in which Scripture states unambiguously that God spoke audibly. Here are some examples:

**Ex 3:2-5** ~ “And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. <sup>3</sup>And Moses said, ‘I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned.’ <sup>4</sup>When the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, ‘Moses, Moses!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’ <sup>5</sup>Then he said, ‘Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.’”

**1 Kings 19:11-14** ~ “And [the LORD] said, ‘Go out and stand on the mount before the LORD.’ And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. <sup>12</sup>And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper. <sup>13</sup>And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a voice to him and said, ‘What are you doing here, Elijah?’”

**Matt 17:5-8** ~ “[Peter] was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, ‘This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.’ <sup>6</sup>When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified. <sup>7</sup>But Jesus came and touched them, saying, ‘Rise, and have no fear.’ <sup>8</sup>And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.” (see Mk.9:7; Lk.9:34-36)

**John 12:28-29** ~ “‘Father, glorify your name.’ Then a voice came from heaven: ‘I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.’ <sup>29</sup>The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, ‘An angel has spoken to him.’”

**Acts 9:3-8** ~ “Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. <sup>4</sup>And falling to the ground he heard a voice saying to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?’ <sup>5</sup>And he said, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ And he said, ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. <sup>6</sup>But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.’ <sup>7</sup>The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one.”

Acts 22:9 ~ “Now those who were with me saw the light but did not understand the voice of the one who was speaking to me.”

Acts 26:13-14 ~ “At midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, that shone around me and those who journeyed with me. <sup>14</sup>And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’”

➤ Today, it is relatively common for people to claim that God spoke audibly to them, or that they have directly received a “word” from the Lord. Many (if not most) of the self-proclaimed “prophets” today, have been exposed as false prophets and/or heretics. While there is no biblical reason to believe that God does not (or cannot) speak to people today, there is an inherent danger in believing a “God spoke to me” revelation. For any word from God must be absolutely inerrant and infallible. It cannot be partially true or even mostly true, and it must never contradict God’s written (inspired) Word.

In the Old Testament, prophets who falsely declared the Word of God were to be put to death (Deut.13:5; 8:20; Jer.14:15) – a fitting punishment as they were no longer trustworthy as God’s messenger. As we see exemplified in Christ and His apostles, the prophetic word must be grounded in and consistent with the written Word of God.

- In the Bible, we are exhorted to know and cherish God’s Word above any other revelation. While God can communicate with His creation anyway He chooses (visions, dreams, audibly, etc.), He has given us His Word in the form of Scripture – written, inspired, inerrant. Jesus often quoted Scripture, and He expected and exhorted people to know Scripture, and even rebuked people for not knowing or understanding Scripture (Matt.12:3, 5; 19:4; 21:16, 42; 22:31; Jn.3:10; 5:39).

**Luke 24:27, 44-45** ~ “And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, [Jesus] interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. ... <sup>44</sup>Then he said to them, ‘These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.’ <sup>45</sup>Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures” (see Lk.16:29, 31; Jn.1:45; 5:46; 17:17)

**2 Peter 1:16-21** ~ “For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. <sup>17</sup>For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, ‘This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,’ <sup>18</sup>we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. <sup>19</sup>And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, <sup>20</sup>knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation. <sup>21</sup>For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”

**Heb 1:1-2** ~ “Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup>but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.”

**Heb 4:12** ~ “For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

**2 Tim 3:16-17** ~ “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup>that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

- To be sure, we see many occurrences in the Bible where God spoke to people – whether audibly or inaudibly (e.g., Gen.3:9; 22:11, 15; Ex.3:14; 33:11; 1Sam.3:4ff; Job.38:1; 40:1, 6; Is.6:8; Jon.1:1; Acts 9:10; Rev.1:10-11). But hearing the audible voice of God does not seem to be a normative experience for God’s people – and it certainly was not for ordinary events or trivial reasons.

In the passage before us this morning, we have a clear and glorious account of a time when God spoke audibly. This marked the incredibly unique and awesome occasion of Jesus’ baptism. In fact, while all Scripture is equally true and inspired (Jn.17:17; 2Tim.3:16), some Scripture is more important for us to know and understand (e.g., it is more important for us to understand the person and work of Christ (i.e., the Gospel), than it is for us to understand size and dimensions of Noah’s ark). Throughout the Bible we see topics and themes emphasized for their importance by repetition or emphatic reference (e.g., “*Truly, truly I say to you ...*”)].

- This is certainly the case with the biblical accounts of Jesus’s baptism. For the narrative of Jesus’ baptism is recorded in all three of the synoptic gospels, and mentioned in all four Gospels (Matt.3:13-17; Mk.1:9-11; Lk.3:21-22; Jn.1:32-34). In addition, we find that at Jesus’ baptism God spoke audibly – giving His divine and sovereign approval over that which just took place.

**Luke 3:21-22** ~ “Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, <sup>22</sup>and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.’”

➤ This two-verse passage of Scripture (Lk.3:21-22) can be divided into three major scenes.

### 1. The baptism of God the Son (vs.21a)

➤ As the divinely appointed forerunner to the Messiah (see Lk.1:13-17, 76-79; 3:2-6), John the Baptist began preaching and baptizing in order to prepare the people to receive Jesus as the Christ. Both John’s message and his ministry were centered upon the need for repentance (and forgiveness of sin), and many of the people responded by *“being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins”* (Mk.1:5).

It was at this time that Jesus too came to be baptized by John: *“Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized”* (vs.21). This, of course, is immediately problematic for us. For John’s baptism was a baptism for repentance, and Jesus did not need to repent because He was (and is) sinless. If Jesus had sinned – even if Jesus had only one sin – He could not be our Savior because He Himself would need a Savior.

**1 John 3:5** ~ “You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin.” (2Cor.5:21; Heb.4:15; 7:26; 1Pet.2:22)

➤ According to the Gospel of Matthew, this dilemma was also a problem for John the Baptist:

**Matthew 3:13-16** ~ “Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. <sup>14</sup>John would have prevented him, saying, ‘I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?’ <sup>15</sup>But Jesus answered him, ‘Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.’ Then he consented. <sup>16</sup>And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water ...”

➤ John tried to stop Jesus from being baptized (somewhat similar to why Peter tried to stop Jesus was washing his feet; Jn.13:6-9), because John knew that he was unworthy to baptize Jesus (*“I need to be baptized by you”*; Matt.3:14; cf. Lk.3:16). More importantly, John also knew that Jesus did not need to repent of sin, and that Jesus was the one to save us from our sins (Jn.1:29). But Jesus was not coming to be baptized out of a need for repentance, but out of obedience – not for unrighteousness but *“to fulfill all righteousness”* (Matt.3:15).

In other words, as baptism is a command of God Jesus needed to be baptized in order for Him to be obedient to God. Through His baptism, Jesus not only identified Himself with sinners but also separated Himself as sinless – illustrating His perfect righteousness and our unrighteousness (2Cor.5:21).

➤ In Mark’s Gospel, we find another important detail about Jesus’ baptism that is not recorded in the Gospel of Luke:

**Mark 1:9-10** ~ “In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup>And when he came up out of the water ...”

➤ Notice the narrative language that is used to describe the act of Jesus’ baptism: *“went up from the water”* (Matt.3:16) and *“he came up out of the water”* (Mk.1:10). This signifies that Jesus was baptized by immersion, being fully dunked in the water, and not sprinkled. Not only does this accurately convey the meaning of the word *“baptized”* (vs.21; *baptize*, “to put under water”), but it also accurately illustrates what it means to be buried and raised with Christ (see Rom.6:3-4; Col.2:12). In fact, every baptism recorded in the New Testament was by immersion. There are no “sprinkling” or “pouring” baptisms in Scripture, and no infant baptisms mentioned in Scripture either.

People often debate whether or not baptism is required for salvation. Scripture teaches that a person is saved by God’s grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone – not by any merit or work – not by good works but unto good works (Eph.2:5, 8-10; Gal.2:16; 2Tim.1:9; Tit.3:5). So, the answer is: Baptism is not required for salvation, but it is required for the believer (Matt.28:18-20; Acts.2:38; Col.2:12). For believers are those who obey the commands of God (Lk.6:46; Jn.14:15; 15:14; 1Jn.5:3).

- It is important to note (and relatively easy to overlook) that Luke told us that, seemingly after His baptism, Jesus *“was praying”* (vs.21). In his Gospel, Luke repeatedly mentioned times in which Jesus prayed and recorded many of Jesus’ prayers (3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 28; 10:21f; 11:1; 22:32, 41-44; 23:46). This, of course, was not accidental or inconsequential. Jesus is our perfect example, and specifically the example for us with regard to prayer: that we would pray *“often”* (Lk.5:16 [HCSB]); that we would pray for our enemies (Lk.6:28); that we would pray at different places and for various reasons (Lk.5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 28; 11:1; 22:41); that we would *“always to pray and not lose heart”* (Lk.18:1).
- Like Jesus, we should be faithfully devoted to prayer – in continual communion with God (Rom.12:12; Col.4:2; 1Thess.5:17). Since Jesus found time to pray, how much more should we? If Jesus (the sinless Son of God) needed to pray, how much more do we?

## 2. The descension of God the Spirit (vs.21b-22a)

- Immediately after Jesus was baptized, presumably while He was still praying, *“the heavens were opened”* (vs.21). This expression is a physical (visible) and spiritual (symbolic) reality.

**Matthew 3:16** ~ “And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him ...”

**Mark 1:10** ~ “And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open ...”

- In simple terms, the opening of *“the heavens”* (*ho ouranos*; or “the skies”; Gen.7:11) represents a portal between heaven and earth in which God enables humanity to see, hear, or access Him, or for Him to engage humanity.

To Nathanel, Jesus said:

**John 1:51** ~ “And he said to him, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.’” (see Gen.28:12; Lk.23:44-46; Heb.10:19-20; 1Tim.2:5)

Just before Stephen’s martyrdom we read:

**Acts 7:55-56** ~ “But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. <sup>56</sup>And he said, ‘Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.’”

During Peter’s vision we read that:

**Acts 10:11-12** ~ “[he] saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth. <sup>12</sup>In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air.”

In the book of Revelation, when Christ comes again, we read:

**Rev 19:11-13** ~ “Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. <sup>12</sup>His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. <sup>13</sup>He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God.”

- In the event of Jesus’ baptism, God opened the heavens for two reasons. First, we see that *“the heavens were opened, <sup>22</sup>and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove”* (vs.21-22). This was more than merely a theatrical entrance – it was a supernatural visitation!

**Matthew 3:16** ~ “And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him”

**Mark 1:10** ~ “And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open [*schizō*] and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.”

**John 1:32-34** ~ “And John bore witness: ‘I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. <sup>33</sup>I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ <sup>34</sup>And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.’”

- Never before had the Holy Spirit appeared in this form: the form of a dove. In Biblical times, much like today, doves were a symbol of peace, purity, and gentleness (cf. Gen.8:8-12; Ps.55:6). In addition, doves were associated with sacrifice – for the impoverished and needy (cf. Lk.2:24; 4:17-19). It should be no surprise that all four Gospels record the fact that a dove from heaven descended on the Son of God.

But it is important to note that Scripture does not say that a dove came out of heaven and landed on Jesus’ shoulder. Nor does Scripture say that the Holy Spirit became a dove. Notice what Scripture actually says, “*and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like* [*hōs*] *a dove*” (vs.22; Matt.3:16 [*hōsei*]; Mk.1:10 [*hōs*]; Jn.1:32 [*hōs*]; Acts 2:2 [*hōsper*]; 2:3 [*hōsei*]). This manifestation of the Holy Spirit of God descended upon Jesus in the appearance and manner as a dove. This symbolically illustrates, and actively implements, the anointing of Jesus as the Christ – the one and only Son of God and one and only Savior from God.

### 3. The affirmation of God the Father (vs.22b)

- While God does not need to open the heavens in order to be heard here on earth, symbolically the fact that heaven was open gives dramatic emphasis on what happened next: “*and a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased’*” (vs.22). The glorious event of the baptism of the incarnate Son of God was highlighted by audible voice of God the Father!

**Ps 18:13** ~ “The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Most High uttered his voice, hailstones and coals of fire.”

**Ps 29:4** ~ “The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.”

**Rev 1:12-16** ~ “Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, <sup>13</sup>and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. <sup>14</sup>The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, <sup>15</sup>his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. <sup>16</sup>In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.”

**John 12:28-29** ~ “‘Father, glorify your name.’ Then a voice came from heaven: ‘I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.’ <sup>29</sup>The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, ‘An angel has spoken to him.’”

- God’s voice emphatically and authoritatively confirmed that Jesus is the Christ (Messiah) of God, and the Son of God. In fact, not only was His voice an affirmation but so were His words: “*and a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased’*” (vs.22). God’s affirmation of the Son is recorded in all three synoptic Gospels:

**Matthew 3:17** ~ “... a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.’”

**Mark 1:11** ~ “And a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.’”

- God’s verbal affirmation of Jesus was an undeniable declaration of Jesus Messiahship. In it, God alluded to two remarkable Messianic texts of the Old Testament to show that Jesus was indeed the Christ. Specifically, these two prophetic (Messianic) passages revealed that 1) Jesus was the reigning Messiah (“*You are My Son ...*”) [Ps.2], and 2) Jesus was the suffering Messiah (“*with You I am well pleased*”) [Is.42].

**Ps 2:7-12** ~ “I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, ‘You are my Son: today I have begotten you.’<sup>8</sup> Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. <sup>9</sup>You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.’ <sup>10</sup>Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth. <sup>11</sup>Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. <sup>12</sup>Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled.”

**Isa 42:1-4** ~ “Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights [or “*in whom I take pleasure*” (NET)]; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. <sup>2</sup>He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; <sup>3</sup>a bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. <sup>4</sup>He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his law.”

➤ From heaven, God audibly declared Jesus to be His Son and the Christ. God also did this at Jesus’ transfiguration:

**Luke 9:28-36** ~ “Now about eight days after these sayings [Jesus] took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. <sup>29</sup>And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white. <sup>30</sup>And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, <sup>31</sup>who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. <sup>32</sup>Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. <sup>33</sup>And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, ‘Master, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah’ – not knowing what he said. <sup>34</sup>As he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. <sup>35</sup>And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!’ <sup>36</sup>And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.”

**Matt 17:5-8** ~ “[Peter] was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, ‘This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.’<sup>6</sup> When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified. <sup>7</sup>But Jesus came and touched them, saying, ‘Rise, and have no fear.’ <sup>8</sup>And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.” (see Mk.9:7)

**Heb 1:3-5** ~ “[The Son] is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, <sup>4</sup>having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. <sup>5</sup>For to which of the angels did God ever say, ‘You are my Son ...’” (see Ps.2:7; Col.1:15-16)

➤ In essence, the baptism of Jesus was the coronation of His public (Messianic) ministry – His sinless life, His substitutionary death, His supernatural resurrection (1Cor.15:3-4). God audibly affirmed Jesus as His one and only Son, and as the one and only Savior. Because God is “well pleased” with Christ, God is well pleased with those who are truly in Christ – for their sins are completely forgiven and they are dressed in Christ’s righteousness (2Cor.5:21).

✓ Illust: “There is a rich mine of comfort, in these words, for all Christ’s [disciples]. In themselves, and in their own doings, they see nothing to please God. They are daily sensible of weakness, shortcoming, and imperfection in all their ways. But let them recollect that the Father regards them as members of His beloved Son Jesus Christ. He sees no spot in them. He beholds them as ‘in Christ,’ clothed in His righteousness, and invested with His merit. They are ‘accepted in the Beloved’ [Eph.1:6], and when the holy eye of God looks at them, He is ‘well pleased’” (J.C. Ryle; *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels*; Mk.1:9-20).



## Conclusion

- We see all three persons of the Trinity present at Jesus' baptism: God the Father (spoke from heaven), Jesus (the incarnate Son of God), and the Holy Spirit of God (in the form of a dove). What an encouragement this must have been for Jesus to hear His Father publicly declare His love and approval for Him. What a confirmation this must have been who heard these words, or heard the testimony of those who did. And yet, sadly, we know that many – despite God's heavenly declaration, and Jesus' own words and miraculous works – refused to receive Jesus as Lord and Savior (Jn.1:10-12).
- As the old saying goes, “Jesus is either Lord of all, or He is not Lord at all.”
  - ✓ Illust: C. S. Lewis wrote these incredibly profound and helpful words:

“I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about [Christ]: ‘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 must make your choice*. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool; you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come up with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great moral teacher. *He has not left that open to us*. He did not intend to” (*Mere Christianity*, 1960, pp. 40–41; italics mine).
- Today, critics and atheists often boldly (and wrongly) declare that Jesus never claimed to be God.

**John 10:30-33** ~ “‘I and the Father are one.’”<sup>31</sup> The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. <sup>32</sup> Jesus answered them, ‘I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?’ <sup>33</sup> The Jews answered him, ‘It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God.’” (Jn.5:18; 8:58-59; 10:24-26; Mk.14:60-64)
- Everyone, when facing the reality of the claims of Jesus Christ, must make a decision about Him (for truly a “non-decision” is a decision against Him). With the help of C.S. Lewis, we can determine four – and only four – possible responses to Jesus Christ as the One and Only Son of the Living God:
  1. Jesus claimed to be God but knew he was not: Therefore he was a liar.
  2. Jesus thought he was God but he was not: Therefore he was a lunatic.
  3. Jesus never claimed to be God but his followers created the idea: Therefore he (it) is a legend.
  4. Jesus claimed to be God because he was God: Therefore He is Lord.
- Scripture is abundantly and emphatically clear: Jesus declared Himself to be the Son of God. In His descension, the Holy Spirit declared Jesus to be the Son of God. From heaven, God the Father declared Jesus to be the Son of God.

**John 3:18** ~ “Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.”

**John 3:36** ~ “Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.”