Preface

THIS BOOK EXAMINES THE meaning and significance of myth as understood by Joseph Campbell and C. S. Lewis and its place in the Christian faith in a technological society. My thesis is that, despite the many similarities in their life experiences, the high regard each man had for myth, and their shared belief that myth has an important place in Christianity, they differed considerably on myth's role concerning faith.

Joseph Campbell understood Christianity as comprised of mythical themes similar to those in other myths, religious and secular. Admitting that certain portions of the biblical record are historical, he taught the theological and miraculous aspects as symbolic, as stories in which the reader can find life-lessons for today. Campbell believed that these life-lessons are the heart of Christianity and that taking the theological or miraculous elements literally not only undermines Christianity's credibility, but results in sectarianism and a misunderstanding of the universal themes held in common by all humanity.

C. S. Lewis defined Christianity as a relationship between the personal Creator and his creation mediated through faith in His son, Jesus Christ. As such, Lewis was a supernaturalist who took the theological and miraculous literally. Although Lewis understood how one could see symbolism and life-lessons in miraculous events, he believed miraculous events took place in human history.

Joseph Campbell understood critical doctrines of Christianity as myth and maintained that understanding myth was a key to making sense of key doctrines of Christianity in any society, including a highly-technological one. C. S. Lewis understood myth as one means among many used by God to point people to His Son, Jesus Christ.