

# “Who Do Men Say That the Son of Man Is?”

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Jesus once asked the apostles the question of our title (Mat. 16:13). They replied with the opinions they had heard expressed among the people. Likewise, in our time, if Jesus is being discussed, one almost has to ask, “Which Jesus?” The identity of Jesus has become much confused in the minds of the masses. It is imperative for us to understand who He really is and is not. It does no good to merely believe in “some Jesus”: “for except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins” (John. 8:24),

To some, Jesus is the original long-haired social crusader. Illustrative of this is the graphic material inserted between the New Testament books of *The Jesus Book* and *Reach Out* editions of *The Living Bible Paraphrased*. In these books, Jesus is depicted as a hippie, a leader of a “peace” demonstration, and the champion of the “Jesus People.”

- **In the first place**, it is strictly a guess that Jesus even had the shoulder-length hair He is almost always depicted as having. Historically, the evidence is much stronger favoring a hair style much more masculine in length than that of the rebellious hippie movement. How could Paul have written that long hair on a man is dishonorable if the Lord Himself had worn long hair (1 Cor. 11:14)?
- **In the second place**, Jesus was neither a social crusader nor a political activist. Despite living under the often-cruel government of Rome and among less-than-ideal social conditions, he never incited a riot, advocated overthrow of the government, or crusaded for equal rights or a guaranteed annual income. Rather, he told his followers to pay their taxes, (Mat. 22:21), acknowledged Pilate’s political authority, (John. 19:11) and submitted meekly to unjust arrest and execution (Mat. 26: 47–56), although he could have prevented such. Those who follow the “hippie” Jesus are following one of their own invention.

To others, Jesus is a religious “superman.” This is the irreverent concept that spawned the blasphemous play and movie, “Jesus Christ, Superstar.” The Unitarians and Jehovah’s Witnesses have always contended that He was only an unusually good man, but not the Son of God in any exclusive sense. They must be happy that much of the world has now adopted their position of infidelity. If Jesus is only a superman and not the only begotten Son of God, then He has no more power to save than the next man. This is the Jesus of unbelief rather than of the Bible.

Still others view Jesus as a weak, effeminate compromiser who never experienced righteous indignation or spoke a word that might be offensive to anyone. The real Jesus was either the real Son of God or He was an evil liar unworthy of a following.

**Whom do you say Jesus, the Son of Man, is?**

[**Note:** I wrote this article for and it was published in the October 25, 1979, edition of *Granbury Gospel*, weekly bulletin of the Church of Christ, Granbury, Texas, of which I was editor.]

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