

“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 [i.e., the Son of God, the Christ, God Incarnate] 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 heretical books, Jesus is depicted as a “hippie,” a leader of a “peace” demonstration, and the champion of the “Jesus People.”

First, 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)?

Second, 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 Pontius 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 with a single word. Those who follow the “Jesus” as many visualize Him are following one of their own invention.

To others, Jesus was merely a religious “superman.” This is the irreverent concept that spawned the blasphemous 1970s rock opera, “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 regarding the Son of God. 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 Biblical Jesus was either the real Son of God and God incarnate, or He was an evil deceiver unworthy of a following.

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

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