

## *Who Do Men Say That I Am?*

David Halbrook

In Matthew 16:13, Jesus asked His disciples “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?”. All the answers they gave revealed that many people had false ideas about Jesus. The same problem exists today:

“We cannot know anything about Jesus because we cannot trust the Bible,” some say, despite the fact that the Bible’s credibility is established by fulfilled prophecies historically known to have been written before Jesus’ birth (Isaiah 7:14; 11:1; Micah 5:2; Matthew 1:1, 18; 2:1; 1 Peter 1:16, 19).

“Jesus was a created spirit being, just as angels...” ([http:// watchtower.org/e/ti/article\\_05.htm](http://watchtower.org/e/ti/article_05.htm); Jehovah’s Witnesses). How could Jesus be created since “by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth” (Colossians 1:16)?

“Jesus Christ and Lucifer are indeed offspring of our Heavenly Father and, therefore, spirit brothers” ([www.lds.org/ensign/1986/06/i-have-a-question?lang=eng](http://www.lds.org/ensign/1986/06/i-have-a-question?lang=eng); Mormon Church). How can Jesus be the offspring of the Heavenly Father when the Father called Jesus “God” and “LORD” (Hebrews 1:8, 10)?

Open your Bible to learn about Jesus. For help in that study, read “Who Is Jesus?” at our website.

Editor’s Note: Possibly many people you know would agree that these various ideas about Jesus are false, but fewer of them hear these false teachings identified and answered with Scripture, like Jesus and the apostles often did. Use our *Arkansas Weekly* article to inform someone of these dangers present in our community and of the importance of knowing the true identity of He who is the source of salvation.

### Simple opportunities to teach the lost and assist each other.

Pray for: Janice White, The Ledgerwoods, Novela Puckett, Samuel Southall, others with ongoing trials, our brethren who are travelling, and new Christians among us.

*Join us each Sunday at 10AM (classes), 10:45AM, & 5PM and Wednesday at 7PM.*

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# The Exhorter

Acts 11:23 *Exhorted them all... cleave unto the Lord*

Church of Christ--Quail Valley

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## *Two Men Can't Agree on Religion*

Bill Hall

Two men are religious, and both seem to be sincere, but they never seem to agree on religious questions. A brief look at their applications of the Bible helps to explain their problem.

The first man views the Bible as the complete and final answer to all religious questions pertaining to salvation. For him, a clear statement from the Bible ends all controversy. His simple approach is well stated by a bumper sticker we have seen: "God said it; I believe it; that settles it." In fact, he would agree that God's word "settles it" whether he believes it or not.

The second man relies on several sources for his religious beliefs. He believes the Bible and many of his convictions are based on what the Bible says. But he also is convinced that he has been "led" into certain beliefs by the Lord. Some of those beliefs he could not defend by the Bible, and in fact, some of them seem to contradict the Bible, but he is sure that they are true, for the Lord would not have so "led" him had they not been true. One man frankly said to this writer, "I read the Bible, but I mostly just depend on the Spirit to lead me in what I believe." He has also had his beliefs verified by knowledgeable preachers, who might not be right in everything, but would hardly be wrong on any serious question of truth.

The first man reads the Bible seeking for answers from God. The second man reads the Bible for the same reason, but his perception is affected by what he has been "led to believe." He has difficulty being objective, and, in fact, he might hold to what he has been "led to believe" ahead of plain teaching of scripture. He frankly finds his likeness in the man of Colossians 2:18-19 who takes "his stand on visions he has seen" and is "not holding fast to the head" (NASV). His religious practices may be different from the man described in Colossians, but his approach to authority in religion is the same.

We do not hesitate to side with the first man in his approach. God indeed "leads" us into truth, but He does so through His inspired word. Consider the following passages: "Your word is like a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105); Sanctify them by Your truth, Your word is truth" (John 17:17); "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (II Timothy 3:16-17).

The two men of our article will come to remarkable agreement when they both approach the scriptures as the final word of God, but not until then. Religious differences are not the product of scripture, but of varying attitudes toward what constitutes final authority in religion. True unity is desirable, and it can be enjoyed by those who humbly submit to God's word and will.

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### *Some Scriptures Discussed: Ephesians 6:10-20*

*Robertson Whiteside*

“And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” Read about the armor of God in Ephesians 6:1-20 It is well to keep in mind that the armor of God is not the armor that God puts on, but the armor he furnishes his soldiers. And yet often you hear some one say that the word is the sword which the Spirit uses. Often I have heard it argued that the word is effective if the Spirit uses it, but not at all effective when man uses it—the sword of the Spirit must be used by the Spirit! Such arguers do not notice that Paul commands the brethren to take “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” Why take it if they cannot use it effectively? The phrase “sword of the Spirit” does not mean the sword which the Spirit uses any more than “armor of God” means the armor which God uses, or puts on. It is the armor God furnishes his soldiers just as the armor of Rome was the armor the Roman government furnished its soldiers. The sword of the Spirit, the word of God, is the sword which the Spirit forged for us and gave to us to be used in our warfare. Yes God’s soldiers are to use that sword. “Preach the word.” The word of God is a sharp sword, “sharper than any two-edged sword.” And if a professed-Christian will not use that weapon, he is not a soldier in God’s army. “Fight the good fight of the Faith.” The Holy Spirit furnished the sword; God’s soldiers are commanded to use it.

*(Doctrinal Discourses; p337; published by Inys Whiteside, Denton, Tx)*

### *Ten Questions About The Holy Spirit and His Word*

1. Is it possible for the direct operation of the Holy Spirit to save a sinner without the preaching of the word?
2. Is it possible for a sinner to be saved by the influence exerted through the word without the direct operation of the Spirit?
3. Does the direct operation of the Spirit precede or follow the preaching of the word?
4. What does the direct operation of the Spirit do for a sinner that can not be accomplished by the preaching of the gospel?
5. Is the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit the same as the direct operation of the Holy Spirit in conversion?
6. Does the Holy Spirit in its (His, *dh*) direct operation on the sinner speak to the sinner?
7. If the Holy Spirit does not speak to the sinner, what does He say that He has not already said in the word of truth?
8. If the Holy Spirit does not speak to the sinner, then in what way does he exert power upon him?
9. How does the sinner know the Spirit is operating directly upon him?
10. What does the sinner do when he resists the direct operation of the Holy Spirit?

*(Porter-Tingley Debate; Dehoff Publication, 1947; p15-16)*

Editor’s Note: These ten questions were asked by W. Curtis Porter (gospel preacher) to Glenn V. Tingley (Missionary Alliance) as they debated the subject of the Holy Spirit’s role in converting sinners. These ten questions, when asked alongside the Scriptures which teach of the Holy Spirit’s work, help us to identify several common, modern errors. Many people today are taught to “wait” for the Holy Spirit to come work a miracle in their heart so they can be saved. Many other people are taught that once they are saved, the Holy Spirit is miraculously or inexplicably helping them to understand the Bible yet somehow, most of the people teaching this disagree with each other about various Bible subjects—why isn’t the Holy Spirit inwardly guiding them to the same teachings? Be sure to read “Some Scriptures Discussed: Ephesians 6:10-20.” By studying what Paul taught, we can have the same knowledge Paul had concerning the wonderful work of the Holy Spirit in equipping us to fight the good fight of faith (Eph. 3:4).