



# THE LENEXA EDIFIER

John 8:32 And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.

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## A CAREFUL BIBLE STUDENT

Wayne Goff

Robertson L. Whiteside (1869-1951) was an excellent Bible student, preacher, college president and writer. His books were some of the very first in my library, and are among my greatest treasures because of the brevity and simplicity with which he wrote. His commentary on Romans was the one I depended on most when I first taught the book of Romans in a Bible Class.

Foy E. Wallace said of brother Whiteside that he was able to get more out of a Bible verse and stop right there than any man he knew. I want to introduce an article which first appeared in the Gospel Advocate and then was reprinted by bro. Whiteside's daughter in a book titled "Reflections." It illustrates what brother Wallace was saying about him, and it is an excellent model for the careful Bible student.

### The Question Asked

A sister in our Bible class asked this question: Did Paul receive the Holy Ghost before, or after, his baptism? If before, was he not saved before baptism? If after, did John say what he meant in **John 14:15-17**?

### Brother Whiteside's Answer

The word "ghost" these days has come to mean a disembodied spirit, or spook. It is better, therefore, to use the term "Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit is not a ghost.

If Saul received the Holy Spirit before he was baptized, the record does not say so. Why not abide by the record? If we do, we will know that Saul was not saved till he was baptized. (**Read Acts 22:16.**)

John did not say anything in **John 14:15-17**. In these verses he gave us a part of the speech made by the Lord on the night of the betrayal. Let us not hint that the Lord did not say what he meant — that sounds too much like a reflection on the Lord. — *Reflections*, p. 67.

### My Observations

It is interesting to note that bro. Whiteside eliminated any *superstition* from the question by explaining the use of the phrase "Holy Spirit" over the phrase "Holy Ghost."

Secondly, he very carefully and simply pointed out that John's Gospel contains the words of the Holy Spirit and not the words of the apostle himself. When anyone handles the Word of God, he should do so carefully, respectfully and sincerely. Bro. Whiteside seemed to have sensed a careless, opinionated handling of the Bible text and mildly rebuked the querist.

Too many Bible readers read **John 14:15-17** and **assume** that they are applicable to every disciple of the Lord. These verses contain the **promise** of the Holy Spirit given to the apostles, and should not be applied to every disciple of the Lord today! John's record should be consulted carefully and when you go back to **John 13:1** you learn that Jesus was eating the Passover with His apostles, and when it ended Jesus began to wash the feet of His twelve. The text specifically refers to Judas Iscariot (**13:2**), Simon Peter (**13:6-10**), the disciple "*whom Jesus loved*" (**13:23**), and Thomas (**14:5**). Therefore, it is easy to see that it was the twelve apostles to whom Jesus made the promises found in John 14-16 concerning the Holy Spirit.

The apostle Paul himself said that he was an apostle as "*one born out of due time*" (**1 Cor. 15:8**). He was not present at the Passover Feast of **John 14**, but he explained and defended his apostleship throughout the New Testament (**see 1 Cor. 15:9-10; Gal. 1 & 2; etc.**)

Thirdly, bro. Whiteside noted what the inspired text **did say**, and **did not say**. He pointed out that Saul was saved at the point of baptism when he was baptized to wash away his sins, having called on the name of the Lord, **Acts 22:16**. Be careful with the biblical text!  
**Taken from the Roanridge Reader**

## ....Who do men say the Son of man is?

### Mat. 16:13

This week I have been doing an unannounced series about Jesus. We have looked at several different ways that people saw Jesus. Not everyone saw Him as God on earth.

- On Monday, Cornelius knew of the Jesus who went about doing good (**Acts 10:38**)
- On Tuesday, the Jews said that Jesus was a Samaritan (**John 8:48**)
- On Wednesday, the centurion at the cross declared, "truly this was the Son of God" (**Matthew 27:54**)
- On Thursday, His family came to take Him away because they thought He had lost His senses (**Mark 3:21**)

Just who is Jesus? Different impressions. Different reasons for their answers. The Jews, who claimed that Jesus was a Samaritan, already had their minds made up. There is no way that this Jesus would be the Messiah. Our verse today, adds even more suggestions and ideas. Who do people say? Jesus knew. He wanted His disciples to understand. He wanted them to make a claim on their own faith.

The answers that the disciples give to Jesus' question is interesting. Some claimed He was Elijah. Others, John. Some thought He was Jeremiah. Some thought other prophets. Several suggestions. Several names.

First, other than Elijah, all the names given were of people who had died. John the Baptist was dead by this time. Jeremiah, dead. Other prophets, dead. All of them dead, except Elijah who was taken to Heaven in a fiery chariot. What were people thinking? Did they think these prophets had come back? From the dead? Did they think that somehow Jesus had the spirit of these people in Him?

Second, all the names submitted were prophets of God. No one repeated the "Samaritan" claim. Others had said that Jesus had a demon. That didn't make this list either. I don't know if the apostles "cleaned up" the list to make Jesus feel good or if this was the totality of what people said.

Third, all the names submitted were wrong. Jesus wasn't Elijah, John, Jeremiah or one of the prophets. Jesus was the Son of God. These guesses were all human. Jesus is God. No one saw Him as He

really was.

Fourth, Jesus then asked the apostles. "*But who do YOU say that I am?*" Now the question becomes personal and relevant. Now, it doesn't matter what others say. What do you say. Who were they going to stand with? Were they going to speak from faith, or hide behind a safe answer?

The question that Jesus asks the apostles, is the question that each of us must answer. Who is Jesus? This is not an academic question, but a question of the heart and of faith. What do you believe? That is what Jesus is asking.

For some, Jesus is the go to person when there is trouble. Mama is in the hospital, go to Jesus. Bills stretching you thin, go to Jesus. Some only see Jesus as the instant help in times of trouble.

Others see Jesus as the divine friend. He's a friend you can talk to. He's a friend that is not going to get on you about stuff. He's there for you. Your buddy from Heaven.

Others find Jesus only in the church building. They believe He belongs there and needs to stay there. Go to worship on Sunday and find Jesus, but keep Him there until next week. Out there in the dog eat dog world of today, there is no room for Jesus. It's mean and nasty out there and to survive you must run with the big boys. This Jesus stuff of kindness, forgiveness, putting others first, is great for church times, but not out there where things are tough. Jesus in the church building is how some see Jesus.

Others see Jesus as good in theory but out of touch when it comes to practical living. What Jesus says about divorce, many think, just doesn't work today. Modesty, sex only in marriage, no lying, pure in heart, just doesn't work today. Love Jesus, but He is hopelessly out of touch and behind the times. Jesus just doesn't fit in today's world of evolution, same-sex marriages and legal pot. Jesus is important, but don't take it too seriously all the stuff He says. Consider the source.

Some want Jesus to be a good ole' boy, who winks at mischief, looks the other way when folks are doing wrong and grades on the curve. Any other way and Jesus seems too stuffy and stiff.

Some want Jesus to be ever evolving. Contemporary. Hip. Into new ideas and new thinking. Global. Environmental. Social awareness. The causes are many. Women's right to abort. One world government. Equality among the social and economic classes.

A bridge builder between the different faiths and different religions. Some don't want to pin a definition on Jesus. He's changing as the times change.

The world still has a place for Jesus, but what have they done with Him? Is it any wonder that so many places do not take the Bible very seriously today. Why should they? Their Jesus is ok with what they are doing. Their Jesus happens to be a different Jesus than what we find in the Bible.

Who do you say that I am? Simple question. The answer that it demands is profound. The answer that we give shapes what we do and how we walk through this life. Some are so busy rewriting the rules of faith that they have forgotten what Jesus is really like. They have made Jesus answer to them.

Who do you say that I am? The answer to that question shapes how I view the Bible.

Who do you say that I am? Any answer can be given, but only one answer is correct. Peter found it. It was revealed to Him by Heaven. Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. That answer calls me to bow before Him. That answer leads me to obeying Him. That answer humbles my heart and silences my lips. That answer puts the rightful crown upon the head of Jesus.

Who do you say that I am? What's your answer?

**Roger Shouse Jump Start 1742**  
**rogshouse@aol.com**

## **Local Church Autonomy**

**Sean P. Cavender**

The New Testament church is described in Scripture as being autonomous, or self-governing. This concept means that each local church acts independently of one another. Churches do not consult with other churches, nor do they make rules or determinations for other congregations. Local churches do not elect representatives to a council for the council to vote and determine what they should practice. Churches did not share financial statements with other churches.

When establishing new congregations in towns, Paul and Barnabas ordained elders in every church (**Acts 14:23**). There was no archbishop that had oversight of several local churches. Each local church had their own set of elders. The apostle Peter confirms this was so when he said, "**The elders which are among you...Feed the flock of God which is among you...**" (**1 Pt 5:1, 2**). The elders over a particular local flock should know what that particular flock needs. There is a great benefit and

wisdom in this plan from God. If one church was overtaken by false teaching then other churches might still be safe from the influence of those false teachers. Autonomy is a blessing from God!

Autonomy does not mean churches of the New Testament never cooperated with each other. However, there are Bible principles which govern local congregation's cooperation with others. For instance, in **Acts 11:26-30** when the church at Antioch determined to send relief to the brethren in Judea, they sent money directly to the elders of the church in Jerusalem for those elders to determine where the funds ought to be distributed. One church sent, the other church distributed. This is one Bible example of church cooperation in benevolent work.

Or in regards to evangelism, churches might send individual preachers and teachers to offer aid in establishing local churches, or to strengthen them (**Acts 13:1-4; 18:23**). These churches never sent money to a missionary society or entered into a sponsoring church arrangement, sending money to another church so they might do evangelistic work. Churches in the New Testament sent gospel preachers and teachers to evangelize. More than one local congregation might be involved in sending aid to a preacher who is committed to doing the work of an evangelist (**cf. Phil. 4:15; 2 Cor. 11:8**). Supporting churches were not doing someone else's work; they were contributing to the spread of the gospel by assisting and supporting these preachers. This arrangement does not permit one church to rule over another church.

The Lord desired for churches to be autonomous and we need to respect and honor that arrangement for local churches. Let's honor the Lord's will through our obedience to Him.

**Taken from the Bald Knob Builder**

*"He wakeneth morning by morning. He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned."* — **Isaiah 50:4**

*"My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips; when I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night watches."* — **Psalms 63:5-6**

**Eph. 2:19** So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, 20 being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; 21 in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord;

**1Pet. 2:9** But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

**Psa. 1:1** Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

## HOURS OF WORSHIP

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Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

**Visitors welcome**

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## OUR ADDRESS IS:

7845 Cottonwood Dr.

Lenexa, Kansas 66216

913-764-9170

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## **What Must I Do To Be Saved?**

**Hear** the gospel - Romans 10:17

**Believe** in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

**Repent** of sins - Acts 17:30

**Confess** Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

**Be Baptized** for remission of sins Acts 2:38

**Be Faithful** unto death - Revelation 2:10