



A White Horse Inn Survey of Biblical Literacy

Approximately seventy people were interviewed for this survey at the 2010 International Christian Retail and Sales convention in St. Louis, Missouri. The majority of the results were obtained by questionnaire, and a limited number of individuals agreed to an "on air" recording of their responses to these survey questions (broadcast date: Dec 12, 2010).

Children are not born guilty of Adam's sin. They only become guilty after the age of accountability.

11% Agree
89% Disagree

** According to David in Ps. 51:5, Children are not only born sinners, but are sinful from the moment of conception. See also Ps. 58:3, Eccl. 7:20, Eph. 2:4-5, Rom. 3:10-20.*

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.

75% Agree
23% Disagree
2% Unsure

** This is a direct quotation of the King James translation of Jeremiah 17:9.*

There is no one who does good, no not even one. There is no one who seeks God.

47% Agree
49% Disagree
4% Unsure

** This is a basic summary of Ps. 14: 2-3, and Ps. 53:2-3, which Paul restates in Rom 3:10-12.*

The message of the gospel isn't primarily about historical information, but is rather about experiencing God today.

73% Agree
27% Disagree

** Gospel means good news. The Christian gospel is the news / historical information about the death burial and resurrection of Christ in history. Paul makes this clear in 1Cor 15 when he reminds his readers of the gospel that he preached, and then proceeds to tell them about Christ's death (15:3), his burial and resurrection (15:4), and his resurrection appearances (15:5-9). The gospel of Christ does have effects, but those effects are not the gospel.*

The doctrine of justification teaches that we become acceptable to God over time by the work of his indwelling Spirit.

21% Agree
67% Disagree
12% Unsure

** This is the traditional Roman Catholic definition of justification. Protestants have argued that we are not justified on the basis of our life-long conformity to the Spirit, but rather, justification is an instantaneous declaration on the basis of the life and death of Christ, granted to us by faith alone: Luke 18:8-14, Rom 3:21-26; 4:4-5; 5:1-9; 8:1.*

We're saved by grace, after doing all that we can do.

22% Agree
73% Disagree
5% Unsure

**This is Joseph Smith's definition of grace, taken from the Book of Mormon (2 Nephi 25:23). The Apostle Paul says it a little differently: "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast" (Eph 2:8-9).*

"Blessed are the poor in spirit," is a famous line from Peter's Pentecost sermon in Acts 2.

27% Agree
71% Disagree
2% Unsure

** This quote is taken from Jesus in Matt 5:3, during his Sermon on the Mount. This is arguably one of the most famous sections in all of Scripture, yet 1 in 4 of those surveyed were not able to correctly identify it.*

More than anything, Jesus is a great moral example who shows us how to live.

38% Agree
62% Disagree

** More than anything, Jesus came to save us from our sins: John 1:29; 12:27, Luke 19:10, 24:44-48.*

The primary thing Jesus was doing on the cross was demonstrating how much he loved us.

42% Agree
56% Disagree
2% Unsure

** The cross of Christ was primarily a 'propitiation' or atoning sacrifice: Rom 3:20-26, Col 1:20, 2:14, Heb 2:17, Is. 53.*

Jesus was fully divine and only appeared in human form.

44% Agree
52% Disagree
4% Unsure

** This is an example of an early church heresy known as docetism. Jesus was both fully divine and fully human: Rom 1:3-4, 2John 7.*

Following Jesus in the way I live my everyday life is the heart of Christianity.

70% Agree
28% Disagree
2% Unsure

** The heart of Christianity is Christ. He lived the life we should have lived, and died the death we should have died. Following Jesus is our reasonable service (Rom 12:1-2) and grateful response, not the center of our faith.*

We're not saved by works, but rather by the one act of choosing to accept and live for Jesus.

83% Agree
13% Disagree
4% Unsure

**Is it really possible to distinguish 'works' from 'acts'? Also, the Bible teaches that we're not saved by decisions, choices, or anything at all that we can boast about: Rom 9:16, John 1:12-13, Acts 13:48; 16:14, Eph 2:8-9.*