

THINKING CORRECTLY ABOUT JESUS

1 Thessalonians 1:10

by Andy Manning

I. INTRODUCTION

1. When Lydia and I were just beginning our marriage, I wasn't very good at loving her. I had strong affection for her, but I wasn't good at showing her. I tried to show her, but I wasn't good at showing her in a way that made her feel loved. For example, buying her expensive jewelry would aggravate her. Surprising her with a brand new puppy dog would be grounds for divorce. Working hard to build big muscles for her would only make her think less of me. I wasn't very good at loving her because I didn't know her that well. After twenty years of marriage, I've gotten very good at loving her because I know her better than anyone else.
2. The same is true with the Lord. To love God well, we must get to know Him well. This is why the Bible commands us to love God with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind. This means dedicating ourselves to knowing and understanding God correctly, and deeply, so that we can love Him better.
3. So today we're going to look at one verse and grow in our understanding of Jesus.

II. TEXT

1. **1 Thessalonians 1:9-10** "9 for they themselves report what kind of reception we had from you: how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God 10 and to wait for his Son...."

III. SIX FACTS ABOUT JESUS

1. He is the Son of God.

- i. **1 Thessalonians 1:9-10** "9 for they themselves report what kind of reception we had from you: how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God 10 and to wait for his Son...."
- ii. Jesus is the Son of the living and true God.
- iii. All Christians are children of God. Are we equal to Jesus?
 1. We are sons of God through adoption. Before Christ, we were God's enemies, separated from Him by sin. Through the death of Christ, God adopts us as His children (See Jn 1:12).
 2. Jesus is God's "unique" Son.
 - i. **John 3:16** "For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son...."
 - ii. The Greek word behind "one and only" means one of a kind, or unique.
- b. Jesus is God's Son in nature.
 - i. My son shares the same nature as me – human nature. Jesus has the same nature as God – divinity. He shares all the divine qualities as the Father – eternal, immortal, all-powerful, all-knowing.

1. **Hebrews 1:3** “The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact expression of his nature, sustaining all things by his powerful word.”
 - ii. Because my son has the same nature as me, he is equal in dignity and worth and value. Jesus is equal to God in dignity and worth and value.
 1. **Colossians 1:16** “For everything was created by him, in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible... all things have been created through him and for him.”
 - c. Jesus is God’s Son in character.
 - i. My son looks like me. Jesus’ character looks exactly like the Father’s.
 - ii. **Hebrews 4:15** “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin.”
 - d. Jesus is God’s Son in authority.
 - i. My son, even though equal to me in dignity, worth, and value, submits to my authority. Although co-equal and co-eternal, Jesus submits to the Father’s will.
 - ii. **John 7:38** “For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.”
3. Being God’s Son does not mean that:
- a. Jesus had a beginning; or that He came after the Father. Jesus is eternal (see Jn 1:1).
 - b. That we can become like Jesus, since we too are sons. We can never become gods.
 - c. Jesus and the Father are one and the same. Jesus cannot be the Son of God and at the same time be the Father. They are two distinct persons within the Trinity.

2. He is coming back.

- i. **1 Thessalonians 1:10** “and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.”
- ii. Christians are waiting for Jesus from heaven. Why? Because Jesus is coming back.
- iii. **Acts 1:11** “They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up into heaven? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come in the same way that you have seen him going into heaven.”
- iv. Clearing Up the Misunderstandings of Christ’s Second Coming
 1. The time is unknown. You will often hear of Bible prophecy “experts” who claim to have figured out when Jesus is coming back. Don’t be fooled. **Matthew 24:36** “Now concerning that day and hour no one

knows—neither the angels of heaven nor the Son—except the Father alone.”

2. There are only two signs that will hint at His imminent return. Bible prophecy “experts” love to watch the news and then say, “Look! This proves that Christ is coming back soon!” They point to wars, rumors of wars, earthquakes, persecution, false teachers, false Messiahs, etc. But these signs were given by Jesus in Matthew 24 to the early Christians to assure them of His coming in judgment against the Jewish nation, and that was fulfilled in AD 70. But the only two signs that will indicate that Christ’s return is immanent are the great apostasy (when many professing Christians will fall away from Christ), and the appearance of the antichrist (aka “man of lawlessness). **2 Thessalonians 2:8** “Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way. For that day will not come unless the apostasy comes first and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction.”
3. There will only be one Second Coming. There are some Bible prophecy “experts” who teach that there will be two second comings. The first will be a secret coming for the church – called the Rapture – when Christ takes all the Christians out of the world. Then seven years later Christ will return. But the Bible is very clear that the rapture will happen at the same time as the second coming. When Christ comes, it will be an obvious, unmistakable event noticed by all. As He is descending, Christians will rise and meet Him in the air, receive their new resurrected bodies, and then continue the descent with him. **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17** “16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout,, with the archangel’s voice, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are still alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.”
4. The Second Coming will immediately wrap up God’s plan for the end times. He will not reign on earth for 1,000 literal years, and then wrap up God’s plan. His return will usher in...
 - a. The resurrection of the saints (Phil 3:20-21).
 - b. The final judgment (Mt 25:31-32).
 - c. The creation of the new heavens and earth (2 Pt 3:12-13).

3. He is in heaven.

- i. **1 Thessalonians 1:10** “and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.”
- ii. Where is Jesus going to return from? Heaven. Heaven is Christ’s home right now. After Jesus rose from the grave, He ascended into heaven to sit at the Father’s right hand.
- iii. **2 Peter 3:21-22** “Jesus Christ, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God with angels, authorities, and powers subject to him.”

- iv. “At the Father’s right hand” means that the Father has placed Jesus in charge of everyone and everything; Jesus has all of the authority of the Father (Eph 1:20-23).
- v. What is Jesus doing in heaven?
 1. He is praying for us (Romans 8:34).
 2. He is preparing a place for us in heaven (Jn 14:1-3).
 3. He is planting the Holy Spirit inside new believers (Mt 3:11).
 4. He is present inside every believer through the Holy Spirit (Col 2:9-10).

4. He rose from the grave.

- i. **1 Thessalonians 1:10** “and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.”
- ii. Jesus lived about thirty-three years, and then the Jewish leaders arrested Him and convinced the Roman governor Pontius Pilate to put Him to death. But three days later, just as Jesus predicted, Jesus rose from the grave.
- iii. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is a real event in history. 1 Corinthians 15:1-8 says that after He rose from the grave, He was seen alive by Peter, then to the Twelve apostles, then to over five hundred Christians at one time, then to James, then to all the apostles, and then to Paul.
- iv. The resurrection is a profound truth with many implications. As I mentioned in a previous sermon, if Christ rose from the grave, then...
 1. He is God.
 2. There is a God.
 3. There is life after death.
 4. All of His words are trustworthy.
 5. We can look to Jesus for the truth about God, morality, money, heaven, hell, the devil, etc.
 - a. **Andy Stanley** “My high school science teacher once told me that much of Genesis is false. But since my high school teacher did not prove he was God by rising from the dead, I’m going to believe Jesus instead.”
- v. So, did Jesus really rise from the grave? Historians use two criteria to systematically investigate the past, to determine if an alleged incident actually occurred. This is called the historical method (Qureshi, *Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus*, p. 159).
 1. **Criterion of Multiple Attestation:** A principle of the historical method that posits that a recorded event is more likely to be historically accurate if it is recorded in multiple independent sources. The resurrection of Jesus was recorded by four independent sources; we call them the Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
 2. **Criterion of early testimony:** A principle of the historical method that posits that early accounts of an event are more likely to be accurate than later accounts, all else being equal. The written accounts of Christ’s resurrection – the gospels – were written only a few decades

after the resurrection, by eye-witnesses, and when other eye-witnesses were still alive and able to make refutations.

- vi. **Billy Graham** “There is more historical evidence that Jesus rose from the dead than there is that Julius Caesar ever existed or that Alexander the Great died at age 33, two “historical facts” that are taught boldly and without dispute in schools all across the world. After Jesus’ resurrection he was seen more than twelve times by over 500 eye-witnesses.”

5. His name is Jesus.

- i. **1 Thessalonians 1:10** “and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.”
- ii. Jesus was given his name before His birth. An angel appeared to both Joseph and Mary before He was born, instructing them to name Him Jesus (Mt 1:21; Lk 1:31).
- iii. Jesus is called many things in the gospels, but “Jesus” is by far his most common name, being used more than six hundred times in the gospels.
- iv. “Jesus” was a very common Jewish name. It is the Greek form of the name Joshua. Joshua was the successor to Moses. There were at least five High Priests named Jesus. In the works of the Jewish historian Josephus there are about twenty different people named Jesus, ten of whom lived during the time of our Lord. One of the books of the Apocrypha, Ecclesiasticus, is the work of Jesus son of Sirach. There are even certain manuscripts that say that Barabbas was called Jesus Barabbas, which might have meant Jesus son of rabbi.
- v. But the name “Jesus” has a very important meaning. It means “Yahweh saves,” or “The Lord saves.” This is why He was given this name.
- vi. **Matthew 1:21** “She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”
- vii. In other words, Jesus was given that name because it describes His purpose and mission for coming to earth – to save his people from their sins.

6. He rescues us from the coming wrath.

- i. **1 Thessalonians 1:10** “and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.”
- ii. The last statement in this verse tells us two important things. First, there is a coming wrath, and second, Jesus rescues us from it.
- iii. Let’s begin with the coming wrath. This refers to God’s punishment against sinners. Because of our sin, we deserve God’s punishment. The punishment for sin is hell – the place of eternal torment. That is what we deserve. And hell is coming for each person. The moment you die, you wake up in eternity.
- iv. And worst of all, there’s nothing you can do to save yourself. What if a murderer told the judge, “I’ll never commit murder for the rest of my life; and I promise to devote myself to a life of good works and charity from this day forward,” would the judge let him go free? Of course not, because he

is still a murderer. No matter how many good deeds you do from this day forward, you're still a sinner, and the punishment for sin is hell.

- v. But Jesus rescues us from the coming wrath. How so? By His death on the cross, He paid for our sins. He was punished for our sins so that we could escape punishment. Because Jesus took God's wrath upon Himself, we can be forgiven, and be reconciled to God, and have eternal life.
- vi. **Isaiah 53:6** "We all went astray like sheep; we all have turned to our own way; and the Lord has punished him for the iniquity of us all."
- vii. The way we receive this gift of forgiveness is by faith in Jesus. We must...
 - 1. Admit that we are sinners, deserving hell.
 - 2. Understand that we cannot ourselves through good works.
 - 3. Believe that Christ's death can atone for our sins.
- viii. **Acts 16:31** "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved."

IV. SEVEN WAYS TO RESPOND TO JESUS

- i. If all of this is true about Jesus, then how should we respond?
 - 1. Believe in Him. Believe that He is real. Believe that He is God. He did die and rise again. He is in heaven. He is coming back.
 - 2. Trust in Him. Rather than in good deeds.
 - 3. Love Him. Have the deepest admiration and affection for Him for what He's done.
 - 4. Worship Him. Because He is God. We should praise and thank Him.
 - 5. Talk to Him. He lives in you through the Holy Spirit. He wants a relationship with you. Talk to Him often and always.
 - 6. Obey Him. He is God. He deserves our obedience. He knows what is best for us. And He loves us and wants what is best for us. When He tells you to do something, obey Him.
 - 7. Serve Him. Without Christ, people will go to hell. Christ is on a mission to save as many people as He can. Will you serve Him? Will you dedicate your life to bringing others to Jesus?

V. CONCLUSION

- 1. People often say they see the face of Jesus. One person claimed to see it in a cinnamon bun; another saw the face of Jesus in a pizza. Still another claimed to see the face of Jesus in a Walmart receipt. It's true. After unpacking their groceries, they saw a grey mark on the receipt in the shape of a face resembling Jesus. The man said, "We just feel [as if] it's a blessing that God showed it to us and opened our eyes. We just feel that we should share the blessing God gave to us to everybody else."
- 2. God wants us to know Him better, so that we can love Him better. But you're not going to get to know Jesus better by looking for his face in your spaghetti, or your cereal. You're going to get to know Him better by studying what the Bible says about Him, and then believing in Him, and then following Him.