

The Disliked Jesus

Jon Benzinger

John 1:9-10

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Hey, so I want to ask you, is there anything that you just can't stand? Just can't stand it. Maybe you're like, yeah, being here right now. Oh, sorry about that. But what is it you just can't stand it? For me it's ranch dressing. Can't stand it. Sour cream, cottage cheese. We put rotten milk on top of fruit and call it healthy. I'm never going to understand that. So, for me it's almost all white condiments I just cannot stand, mayonnaise, all that stuff. Gross. Disgusting.

What about you? What can you just not stand? Just can't stand it. See, it's interesting. Thank you for that. It's interesting that when we read the account of Jesus life, that the thing that most people couldn't stand was him. You recognize that? And John, the book of John, we're going to have four chapters of no conflict, but as soon as we get to chapter five, there is a dark cloud that forms over his life until his he's betrayed, tried, convicted, and crucified. In the book of Mark, it's only one chapter. The first chapter, no conflict, he's amazing. As soon as you enter chapter two, the conflict begins. By the beginning of chapter three, there's already a plot to have him killed. So, in the book of Mark, over 80% of that book has a negative reaction to Jesus in that book. I mean, what did he do that was so awful and objectionable? What do you need to do that people just couldn't stand? Oh yeah. He forgave sins and healed sick people and preached against hypocrisy. What an awful guy. He didn't follow the manmade rules. He made distinctions between those who believed in him and those that didn't.

It got so bad that in Mark chapter six, it says many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. There were thousands of people following him at one point. And those thousands of people get down to 12. By chapter seven, the religious officials have sent officers to have him arrested. By the end of chapter 11 the plot to have him killed is moving forward with rapid speed. So, at this happy hippie, throwing up the peace sign everywhere, singing all you need is love all the time, Jesus, that guy doesn't get rejection, arrest warrants, and death threats. So, as we ask the question, who is Jesus, really, as we seek to answer it from the opening verses of the book of John, we're brought face to face with the truth that he is the disliked Jesus. The real Jesus is a disliked Jesus.

See, we see him now with over a billion people that call him his followers. And he's one of the most loved people in history. But at the very end of his life, there were less than half a dozen people who were even willing to be seen with him. The truth that Jesus was disliked and then detested and discarded is at the heart of what we need to know about the real Jesus. You cannot know the real Jesus unless you know why it is so many people eventually disliked him. And actually, he is the disliked Jesus because of what John says in verse nine. The true light, which is Jesus, who gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. The reason Jesus was disliked has to do with this word light in verse nine. Ultimately the light is Jesus. The word light is connected to the words he and him in verse 10, where it says he, the light was in the world and the world was made through him. So, this is Jesus. Jesus, verse nine is the true light. The idea there is that he reveals the truth about God. He reveals the one, true God. He speaks the truth. His light shines. The truth comes out of him, and it exposes the darkness. It exposes the errors and the lies that we believe. As the true light, there's nothing artificial about Jesus. He's the real thing. He's

the genuine, true revealer of God. What he says is true, regardless of what he's speaking on. He's the ultimate expression of who God is.

So, here's Jesus, just like we did child dedications just now, when Jesus was eight days old, his parents brought him to the temple. And there was a man there named Simeon. And when he held Jesus, he had this moment where he proclaims in a prayer, "My eyes have seen your salvation." So, he's talking to God. He says, "My eyes have seen salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation." There it is the idea that he reveals truth. He reveals God. A light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel. All Simeon is doing is simply quoting text prophecies about Jesus in the Old Testament, like Isaiah 9:2, which says the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness, on them light has shown. Isaiah 42:6 predicts Jesus, saying that God would make him a light to the nations, not just the Jewish people, but all people everywhere. He would be a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. And Isaiah 49:6 says about Jesus that God "will make him a light for the nations." Why? He continues, that my salvation might reach to the end of the earth. Or like verse nine says, every single person, everyone, salvation would reach to the end of the earth. So, I think all of this is in John's mind when he writes versus 9 to 13. That others may claim to reveal God to us, and some may get nothing right, and others may get a whole lot right. But Jesus is the light. He is the accurate, complete, ultimate divulging of who God is and what God is like, what God wants. See God has given us things that reveal who he is. He's given us creation that reveals who he is. He's given us history and he's given us our consciences that reveal who he is. The Old Testament reveals who he is. And all of these are true, but all of them are incomplete. They're provisional. They anticipate the ultimate revealer, the ultimate divulger of who God is, which is Jesus the light.

Now verse nine, Jesus is the light quote notice, "which gives light to everyone." So, Jesus is the true light and he's also the exposing light. Now what does that mean? Notice that it says there, what does it mean that he gives light to everyone? What does this mean? He gives light to all people. Well, some take that is saying that everyone's going to be saved. That light is salvation. He gives light to everyone. Every single person will be saved. Others say it refers to prevenient grace, which is the idea that grace goes out to all people everywhere and gives them the ability to overcome their sins and choose to follow Jesus on their own and be saved. Others still will say that this light that he gives refers to reason or the ability to understand right and wrong.

I don't think it means any of that though. As you follow light in the book of John, what you find is that like physical light, the light that John is talking about here exposes. It exposes the truth about God. And with this phrase in the middle of verse nine, he's saying that Jesus exposes the truth about people in relationship to God. Since Jesus came in the world, he as light has shined on the human race. His shining on a person reveals the truth about that person's heart towards God, that exposes where a person truly is in their relationship with the one true God. So, he shines on every person, and how each person responds to him will either be positive or negative, either they will come to the light, or they will flee and remain in darkness. So, if Jesus is the true light, then it would be good for all of us to point #1) ***Admit Jesus exposes the truth about us and God. Admit Jesus exposes the truth about us and God.***

In other words, who Jesus is and what he says about us is what you and I really are. All of us too, notice verse nine, everyone. When the light that is Jesus shines on people, especially through what he says, he always divides, he always forces a distinction, he always forces us to choose.

This understanding of verse nine is supported in John 3:19, where Jesus is speaking. He says this is the judgment, which means this is God's assessment of humanity. This is what God thinks about human beings. The light has come into the world. That's Jesus, but people loved the darkness rather than the light, because their works are evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. There's what the light does. It exposes us. It shows us who we really are. Whoever does what is true comes to the light so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God. So, Jesus simply shines, the light simply shines. But when it does, it divides people into those who love the darkness and hate the light and those who flee from the darkness and come to the light because where they are with God is exposed. You see an example of this in John chapter eight. Jesus proclaims to many people, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." So, he proclaims light. He proclaims the truth, and the religious leaders respond immediately with, "You are bearing false witness about yourself. Your testimony is not true." Why did they respond that way? Because the light shined right onto their hearts, see shined right into their lives. And they were exposed where they're really at with God in that moment.

In verse 18, Jesus replies to them and says, "I am the one who bears witness about myself. And the Father who sent me bears witness about me." Why? Because what I say directly connects to the Father, my words expose your true relationship with God. He continues. You know neither me nor my Father. If you knew me, you would know my Father also. In other words, Jesus exposes where you and I, each of us, are truly at with God. How we respond to Jesus is automatically how we respond to God. There's none of that, well, God's great, but I'm not a fan of Jesus. No, there's no interaction, no connection to God without Jesus. So, when our sin is exposed, how do we respond? When the light of God's word shines into our lives like it's doing right now, how do we respond? In the words of John three, do we love the darkness, flee from the light? I don't want that. I don't like being exposed. Do we run as fast as we can from the light and from the people that expose us to the light. Do you get prideful and justify it? Do we ignore the guilt? Do we try to push the conviction away? How do you respond to the light? See for some of us, we need to grow in how we respond when those who know us best and love us most shine the light of Jesus into our lives. We need to remember that the fact that we have any light in our lives at all, the fact that we even know the name of Jesus is an expression of God's love for us and that he only ever wants what's best for us. For others. It's time to stop running from him. For others, it's time to come to him. No matter what you've done, no matter what's been done to you, no matter how many times you've run from the light, no matter how many times you've pushed it away, no matter how many times you've even expressed hatred for the light, he remains a Savior. He will forgive you. He will save you.

He exposes us. His words expose us. So how will you respond? To switch the metaphors, he is a fork in the road for every single person. One path leads to light. The other path remains in darkness. You decide. To switch the metaphor again, he is the son to the world of human beings. He's the source of light. He's the source of truth. He's the source of reality. He exposes the truth about us in God. And like the sun, he shines on everyone. And like the sun, he is free to everyone. Like the sun, no one can escape his exposure. And when we're exposed, there is no one so dirty or so dark that he cannot set you free and bring you to God. Turn from the darkness and turn to the light. Jesus will show you mercy. But Jon, you don't know who I am. You don't know what I've done. And you're right, for most people here, I don't know that. But I know who Jesus is. Where your sin increases, what does the Bible say? His mercy increases all the more.

His forgiveness increases all the more. He will never push away a single person who comes to him for mercy. See the darkness for what it is. It is a lie that wants your destruction. See Jesus for who he really is, God's light, God's truth that only wants your good. Now not only does Jesus expose the truth about us and God but doing that was no small thing for him. Look at verse nine again. The true light which gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in world and the world was made through him. Jesus is called the one in verse nine, who was coming into the world, making Jesus the incarnate light. Incarnate light, the incarnate. Does that sound familiar? You ever had chili con carne? What does that mean? Chili with flesh, with meat, flesh sounds weird, right? Chili with meat.

Well, look at verse 14. Jesus is the word who became flesh. He's incarnated. He put on skin. He came into the world, into humanity because he's not from humanity. Verses one and two, he's from all eternity. Jesus is deity, verses one to three, who came to humanity when he was born to Mary and Joseph. He's not a deity that dwells on some mountain, ignoring us most of the time. But every once in a while, looks down, goes, "I don't like that. There's a lightning bolt." That's not Jesus. That's not Jesus. Notice verse 14, he became flesh and dwelt among us. He lived among us. He died among us to bring us to God.

I watched a YouTube video this week about the 10 states with the most people that live in it who were not born and raised in that state. Arizona was on that list. Are you surprised? I'm not surprised about that. Arizona was actually third in 2021. We're just full of people who aren't from around here, myself included. Jesus certainly wasn't from around here. He was not of this world. He came to the world, verse nine, meaning he was born. The first phrase at verse 10, he was in the world. The idea that he was surrounded by humanity, the idea is that he didn't dip his toe into humanity and go, oh, that's gross, I don't like that and peace out. No, he was here for about 30 years. And this is incredible because he's also the creating light. Look at the second phrase in verse 10, The world was made through him. Not only is Jesus the creator of all things, verse three, but verse 10, he's the creator of every human being that has ever lived. He's the creator who entered humanity when he was born. That's the end of verse nine. He lived among humanity for a while, 30 plus years. That's the first phrase of verse 10. And he is our creator. That's the second phrase of verse 10.

Now the word world in John, which we saw at the end of verse 9 and throughout verse 10, that word world and the way that John uses it, it's like the word trunk in English. So, what does the word trunk mean? Well, if you're at the zoo, it's the nose of an elephant. But if you're in the forest, it's the base of a tree. If you're near the pool, it's what men wear to go swimming. If you're looking for gold, it's what you put your treasure in. If you're behind your car, it's what you put your luggage in. So, what does the word trunk mean? That's one word with many meanings based on context. And that's the same thing with the word world in the book of John, many meanings, one word. And most of the 60 times that John uses the word world in this book, it is with a negative sense. So, when John uses the word world, it typically doesn't mean the universe or the planet. Typically, doesn't mean just human beings in general or all people without exception. Search world in the book of John later and you will see most uses are negative. So, I'll give you a summary of what John says about the world. The world is said to have no relationship with God or Jesus. Look at verse 10, says at the very end the world what? Did not know him, did not have a relationship with him. In fact, the world hates Jesus, and his followers. And that's because Satan is the ruler of this world, chapter 12, verse 31. The world's sin needs to be taken away. The world needs a Savior because it needs saving. Those who believe in Jesus not only are

not of this world, but chapter 17, verse 16 says they are rescued out of this world because this world is the object of God's judgment. The world does not have a single believer in it, in fact, in the book of John, because believers are saved out of the world. The world rejoiced when Jesus died. And even though he's the Savior of the world, even though God loves the world, even though he gives eternal life to the world, since he's the light, he's the source of truth for the world. So, the world in John is not all people. The world, verse 9, verse 10, is the collective expression of the darkness of the rebellion of the human race. The world is human beings at war with God.

So now let's read verse 9 again. The true light, which gives light to everyone was coming into the world at war with him. He was in the world at war with him and the world at war with him was made through him. These are his creation. So, when John is writing this verse versus 9 and 10, he is saying that Jesus is showing up into hostile territory. So that Jesus even came into the world in the first place, let alone lived here for 30 or so years, shows just how merciful and loving and compassionate he is. So, point #2) ***Recognize how far down Jesus came. How far down Jesus came to expose us.*** When he became one of us, he became one of those who hated him. By living with us for 30 plus years, he was surrounded by, he interacted constantly with those who hated him. That's a long-distance town from where he came. Throughout John, Jesus is described as one who was sent into the world, as coming into the world, as having come from God and returning to God. So just one verse, John 16:28, Jesus says, "I came from the Father. I came from heaven and I've come into the world of hostility and war. And now I'm leaving the world at war with me and going to the Father."

So, to expose us, to give us the truth, to show us our sin, to show us our need to be rescued, he leaves his eternal satisfying relationship of love with the Father and the Spirit. He leaves the perfect environment of heaven. No sin, no discomfort, not even anything slightly annoying in anything that he saw or heard or even smelled. He never heard an angel sing out of tune. He never saw someone trip or fall. He never saw a hair out of place. He never saw envy or conflict. He never experienced manipulation, only pure love and goodness for millennia. He left being worshiped by angels. He left being adored by all of heaven. Philippians 2:7, he left all the blessings and benefits of being God in heaven and came here to a world that lives like he doesn't exist, to a world that suppresses the truth, that knows about him because it loves its sin, to a world that finds him worthless, the most wonderful being in the universe. A world dominated by Satan and the rebellion he encourages. A world that uses him, ignores him, defies him, betrays him, rejects him, tortures him, mocks him, and ultimately executes him because it hates him and wants nothing to do with him at all. Just wants him gone. He goes from perfect love and admiration to utter hatred and rebellion, all because God so what? Loved the world. His life and death was a rescue mission into hostile territory among people that hate him. And he knew all of that and he came anyway.

How many people like going to places where they know just one person in that room is not going to like them? There might be 500 people in a room, but she's there. He's there. Last time we got... We don't like it when one person in a room doesn't like us. He came to the world to masses of people who ended up wanting him dead. And they wanted him dead because he exposed the truth about their relationship with God. And he still does it today. Not much has changed. The real Jesus isn't loved or admired. He's distorted. He's used to promote agendas. He's ignored. He's told many other things are more important than that Jesus guy. He's used to make people rich. He's lied about. He's caricatured as toys and cartoon characters. False ideas are propagated about

him as true. People even pretend to be him. I'm Jesus. So, the people will treat him as if he was Jesus, give him the allegiance that only the real Jesus deserves. And why does he allow all that to go on? Think about it. Would you let that go on about you? Surrounded constantly by people that... It is a miracle that Jesus in one moment just didn't look at everybody and go off with all your heads. He would have every reason to do that. He would be justified in doing that. So why does he let it happen? Why does he let people in this moment completely ignore him, look at their phones, like he's just not all that important. What would that preacher be saying? He's an idiot. Because he wants you to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Because just like when he was here, in spite of all the abuse he took, he does it because he knows he can bring people to God. This is one amazing Savior, is he not? We don't let anybody treat us poorly. Either we confront them in the moment or we just kill them in our minds constantly, right?. Jesus lets everybody treat him blasphemously so that some of those blasphemers will flee the world, come to him and be saved. Hallelujah, Praise the Lord, what a Savior. Right? What a Savior.

Now with all that in mind, verse 10 ends on a note of tragic irony. He was in the world and the world was made through him. Yet the world did not know him. There's an escalation with every phrase. In verse 10 that ends in the climax, the one who came to the world, who created the world, was scorned by that same world. This is the greatest honor the world has ever had, that the God of the universe would become one of us, live here, step foot on this planet. And he was completely missed. The true light, the exposing light, the incarnate light, the creating light we see is ultimately the rejected light. The world didn't know him, verse 10, which means they didn't acknowledge him. That's not an intellectual thing. That's a heart thing. They didn't respond to him. Dogs know their owners. The world didn't know their creator. They didn't recognize him. They didn't welcome him. They despised and rejected him.

Think about the life of Jesus. The wind and the waves, he speaks and what do they do? They immediately respond to their creator. Their body parts, limbs, bones, they hear the voice of their creator and instantly they react and obey. People, though, refuse. Now listen, it's one thing to reject me. I'm nobody. It's one thing to reject the truth about God in nature or in history or in your conscience. It's another thing to reject the Old Testament writers or even the New Testament writers, but to reject the true light, to reject the one who created you, to reject the one who became a human being, to reject the one who became a man to save human beings like you and me, that is the depth of rebellion and arrogance. To not acknowledge him, to not know Jesus is to not trust him. To not repent and to not believe is to say everything you say, Jesus, I can treat you as optional. And you know what? I got some better ideas than yours. No, you don't. No, you don't.

John 17:3, this is eternal life that they know you, the only true God in Jesus Christ whom you have sent. Knowing Jesus and believing in Jesus are the same thing, because again, it's not intellectual, it's relational. To know him is to trust him. To know him is to be connected to him, to know him is to be saved. To not know him is to not believe in him, to not be connected to him, to not be in a relationship with him. It's to be lost forever. These people that he's describing in verse 10 missed their opportunity when he was right in their midst, in their very lives. They refused, verse 12, to receive him, to embrace him, to believe in him and were lost forever. Could you imagine being one of the people who saw Jesus with your own physical eyes? Many of you're watching The Chosen, and you're like, this is amazing crying for the whole hour. This is so amazing. Jesus, not really Jesus, but...

But imagine 2,000 years ago, you're out doing your chores one day and you see all these people running and you see this thing and you're like, "Hey, what's going on?" "Oh, it's this Jesus guy." And you go see, and he's saying things that you've never heard before and it's blowing your mind and you actually see him heal somebody who's sick. And he maybe even hear about, he raised people from the dead. And this guy's blowing your mind and you follow for months or maybe even a couple years. You're there and you're watching and you're listening. And after all of that, you go, "Ah, whatever with him, I'm going back to my life." That would never happen. I would never do that. If I was there, empty tomb, I would believe.

Luke 16:31, Jesus says, "If you would not listen to the Bible, you won't believe even if someone should rise from the dead." And if Jesus is right about that and he is because he's right about everything he says, then point #3) ***Don't run from the truth about you and God. Don't run from the truth about you and God.*** If you are at the crossroads with Jesus right now, not sure if you're going to come to the light or you're going to flee back into the darkness, don't run from him, run to him. Don't let it be said of you, "Oh yeah. He knew the truth. He knows the truth. She heard it for most of her life and she was raised singing songs about Jesus. Oh, he's got dozens of verses memorized about Jesus from AWANA, and oh yeah, they know the events of Jesus' life. And he knows theology. He knows his stuff. He used to serve at a church, used to be on staff. She used to be the super Christian." Yeah, but she turned away from all that. She would never say she hates Jesus, but she just lives like he doesn't exist and really doesn't even care. Now, Luke 11:28 says, "Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it." And keep it and hold onto it. And don't deviate and are established and rooted and grounded and don't move. You're blessed if Jesus exposes the truth about you and you don't turn from it, but you turn to it. You respond, you repent, you give your life to Jesus.

Today if you hear his voice, if you know that he's after you, if it seems that at moments, you're like, is that preacher talking to me? How does he know that? I don't know it. I don't know anything about you, most of you. But God does. And what God does is in moments like this, he speaks right to you. So today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your heart in rebellion, soften your heart and respond. Run to Christ. If the wind and the waves knew him, if the rocks would cry out and worship to him, but you will not, that speaks to the deadness of your soul. Don't be like Jonah. We read that story to our kids all the time because there's that big fish. I read that to my kids all the time, and then I pray with them, "God, please don't let these kids be like Jonah, who run away from you. May they always stay committed to you because they trust that you always want what's best for them."

Jesus only ever wants and Jesus only ever does. What's best for you. Why? Because he's your creator. He knows you. So don't run from him. Run to him. He will forgive you. He will save you. He will bring you to God. Now if you're listening, you're like Pastor, you're pretty fired up about something that I just don't see. I just don't get it. Don't get what you're saying. Keep looking at my phone. Can't wait to get out of here. I just don't see it. Listen, if you don't see that the light is Jesus, it's because you are blind It's because you're blind. But a blind man or a blind woman would be foolish to deny the existence of the sun just because they don't see it. It just might be that you don't see Jesus because you don't want to see Jesus. Many don't want Jesus. They don't want to see Jesus just like criminals don't want to see policemen. Even though he loves rebels and he will give you eternal life.

The pastor tells a story about a man named Robert J. Thomas. In 1866 he left China to bring the good news of Jesus to the people of Korea. Filled with love for the Korean people and a desire

for Jesus to shine among them, he boards a ship in China, an American ship bound for the city of Pyongyang with a large supply of Bibles to give away. As the ship got closer to the city, however, a fight broke out between the American ship and the Korean Coast Guard. The ship eventually caught on fire and all the passengers were killed except for Mr. Thomas. As the ship was sinking, he was struggling to reach the shore. He staggers onto the beach, his arms filled with as many Bibles as he could carry without drowning. And as he got to the shore, there were Korean soldiers there to welcome him. And he thrust the Bibles into their hands. And they take the Bibles and put them down, take out their clubs and club him to death.

Now that's a tragic story, but it is incredibly similar to the experience Jesus had when he came to this rebellious world. Just as Mr. Thomas went to Korea out of love with a message of salvation only to be killed, so Jesus came into this world because of his great love for this world of rebellious human beings like you and me, a world that rejected him. He comes to that world and got rejection. And the question is, will you reject him too? The light Jesus has, yes, he has come into the world, but he has come into you right now. How will you respond? He has come to you, so come to him. Instead of disliking him, reject the darkness and run to him and be saved. Let's pray.

Jesus, the mercy that we saw in this text that you would come to a world hostile towards you in order to rescue people out of that world is something that I think we will spend to endless ages marveling at and never plum the depths of. Jesus, I pray for every heart here. I pray that today for some would be a day when they finally say I'm putting my hostility down, I surrender. No longer going to flee back into the darkness. I'm going to come to the light. I'm going to come to you for forgiveness and mercy and be saved. And for others here, who you have done that for already, may we never be arrogant about that. May we always remember the mercy and the grace that you've shown us as we try to help others, as we try to point those people to you so they can see the wonderful, gracious, amazing, beautiful Savior that you are. Do this, please, for every person here. Do this, please, for everybody watching. Do this, please, so people see just how incredible and great that you are. It's in your name I pray, Jesus. Amen.