

Jesus Christ the most hated and loved man who ever lived. Was there a time when you hated Jesus? What were your earliest thoughts of Jesus? How has your perception of Jesus changed as you have gotten older?

The more familiar you are with Jesus, the easier it is to lose the wonder of who he is and what he has done. Do you find your familiarity with Jesus has diminished your wonder when you think about his incarnation, substitution, resurrection, and ascension?

**The Doctrine of Christ** – Only the person and work of Jesus mediates the hostility between God and man.

**1. Think about the work of his incarnation. He is my missionary. (John 1:1, 14, 18; John 17:18)**

The belief that Jesus is God is what distinguishes Christianity from other faith systems.

Read John 17:18. Jesus didn't just come to earth. He was sent in to the world. So are we. Do you live with a sense of urgency that you are "sent" into your world to rescue sinners with the message of the gospel? How does thinking about the incarnation of Jesus fuel your obedience to the great commission?

How are you following Jesus' example as a missionary sent to those who need salvation?

What are practical ways you can be "incarnational" (i.e. overcome cultural barriers) to communicate the gospel?

Read Hebrews 4:15. How does thinking about the pain and suffering that Jesus endured as a human, comfort you when you are experiencing painful and difficulty?

**2. Think about the work of his substitution. He is my replacement. (Romans 5:6-8,19)**

The hostility that exists between God and man is the result of a noun, not a verb. "Sin" not "sinning" is the problem. We sin because we are sinners. What parallels between sin and ebola? Which is more deadly?

Our tendency is to try to stop "sinning" without dealing with "sin." What effects do you see in your life of this pattern?

Replacing your sin for Jesus' righteousness is a transaction of confessional faith. This happens at a point when you are saved. But, it also happens continually as you see more of your sin as a believer. Describe how you personally and continually take your sin to Jesus for replacement righteousness.

**3. Think about the work of his resurrection. He is my life. (1Peter 1:3; Romans 9:9-10)**

The world was not turned upside down because of the teaching of Jesus. It was the thought of his resurrection that empowered his disciples to take his teaching to the world. Do you doubt the resurrection of Jesus?

It is impossible to be saved without believing whole-heartedly in his resurrection from the dead. Those who don't love Jesus have a hard time with the moral boundaries in the Bible. If Jesus is alive there is not a claim that he makes that can be ignored. How does thinking about the resurrection of Jesus motivate your obedience, give you hope, and crush fear?

**4. Think about the work of his ascension. He is my Lord. (Romans 8:34, Hebrews 7:25)**

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Jesus has not physically walked the earth for 2000 years. Is this a good or a bad thing?

The bible says Jesus' "body" is actually still on earth. Read 1 Corinthians 12:27-28. What is that body? What role does this body have today? Are you a member of this body? How are you representing the presence of Jesus today in the world?

Read Hebrews 4:14-16. Today, Jesus is at the right hand of God the Father where he is praying for you and listening to your prayers. Do you feel like God hears your prayers? What are you praying for? What prevents you from prioritizing prayer?

After Jesus ascended, he sent the Holy Spirit to empower the church. What advantage does the ministry of the Holy Spirit have? Do you see his power at work in and through you?

### **Additional Scripture**

- Philippians 2:9-11
- Deuteronomy 6:4-5
- Matthew 3:16-17
- Hebrews 1:1-8
- Colossians 1:15-23
- Matthew 26:63-65
- John 10:33-35
- Matthew 1:23
- John 20:28
- John 5:20
- 2Peter 3:18
- 2Corinthians 5:21
- 1Corinthians 15:17-22
- Hebrews 9:24
- John 16:7
- John 14:2
- Hebrews 12:2