



World Christian Fellowship

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Romans 25 Wrath of God

Romans 1:18, *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,*

The gospel message begins with a statement about the wrath of God.

This is diametrically opposed to most of our evangelistic technique. Most of our contemporary evangelism purposely avoids that theme.

We talk about

- love,
- happiness,
- abundant life,
- forgiveness,
- joy, and
- peace.

We offer people all those things and ask them if they would not like to have all those things. But we very rarely talk about judgment.

When you have presented the gospel to somebody how many times did you introduce it by saying, did you know that the wrath of God is revealed against your ungodliness?

We are in such a hurry to win friends and influence people that sometimes we bypass the starting point.

From Paul's perspective, fear becomes the first pressure applied to evil men.

Let them know about the wrath of God.

The wrath of God is a hard subject.

It is the beginning of the gospel and the proper preparation for the announcement of grace.

How can people understand anything about love if they do not understand God's hate?

How can they understand anything about His grace if they do not know about His law?

How can they understand forgiveness if they do not understand the penalty of sin?

Men cannot understand.

They cannot seek grace and salvation unless they are affected with the dread of the wrath of God that is upon them.

Unless men sense they are in grave danger, there is no pressure applied to them to change.

When you talk about God being a God of wrath, certain people get disturbed.

They do not understand how God can be a God of anger.

- God can be a God of wrath,
- God can be a God of terror.

That is because they do not understand God.

God's attributes are balanced in His divine perfection.

They are perfectly balanced.

If God did not have wrath, and God did not have anger, then He would not be God. God is perfect in love, on the one hand, and He is equally perfect in hate, on the other hand.

Just as totally as He loves, so totally does He hate. As His love is unmixed, so is His hate unmixed.

Hebrews 1:9, *"You have loved righteousness, and hated iniquity."*

Perfect balance in the nature of God.

When is the last time you heard a new song on the wrath of God?

People do not extol the wrath of God.

God does not love, but it is to say that you will never understand how great His love is unless you know how great His hate is.

If you understand that God hates sin so profoundly, then you will find it more amazing that He can love sinners.

So that without an understanding of His hate, His love is crippled, too, in our thinking. "Love" and "grace," our favourite terms, are void of meaning if God does not hate.

God as a God of hate and a God of wrath, the Scriptures clearly emphasize this.

Psalm 2:1-3, *Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? ²The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, ³"Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us."*

Let us do away with God, do away with His rule. He intimidates us. Let us eliminate Him.

Psalm 2:4-5, *He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision. ⁵ Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure:*

Psalm 2:12, *Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish in the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.*

In other words when God just gets a little angry people perish.

Reflecting on the judgment of God upon the Egyptian army.

Psalm 76:6-9, *At Your rebuke, O God of Jacob, Both the chariot and horse were cast into a dead sleep. ⁷ You, Yourself, are to be feared; And who may stand in Your presence When once You are angry? ⁸ You caused judgment to be heard from heaven; The earth feared and was still, ⁹ When God arose to judgment, To deliver all the oppressed of the earth.*

Psalm 78:49-51, *He cast on them the fierceness of His anger, Wrath, indignation, and trouble, By sending angels of destruction among them. ⁵⁰ He made a path for His anger; He did not spare their soul from death, But gave their life over to the plague, ⁵¹ And destroyed all the firstborn in Egypt, The first of their strength in the tents of Ham.*

God was angry. God was fierce. God had wrath. God had indignation. God brought trouble, very severe.

Psalm 90:7, *For we have been consumed by Your anger, And by Your wrath we are terrified.*

Psalm 90:11, *Who knows the power of Your anger? For as the fear of You, so is Your wrath.*

This is the hymn book of Israel. They had hymns about God's wrath. It was equally a part of God's nature.

The prophets spoke often of the wrath of God, the judgment of God.

Isaiah 9:19, *Through the wrath of the Lord of hosts The land is burned up, And the people shall be as fuel for the fire; No man shall spare his brother.*

Jeremiah 7:20, *Therefore thus says the Lord God: "Behold, My anger and My fury will be poured out on this place—on man and on beast, on the trees of the field and on the fruit of the ground. And it will burn and not be quenched."*

Ezekiel 7:19, *'They will throw their silver into the streets, And their gold will be like refuse; Their silver and their gold will not be able to deliver them In the day of the wrath of the Lord; They*

will not satisfy their souls, Nor fill their stomachs, Because it became their stumbling block of iniquity.

The Bible is filled with statements about the wrath of God.

We can see His wrath exemplified in the Old Testament.

- Against the old world when He brought the flood.
- Against the people at the tower of Babel.
- Against the Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities of the plain.
- Against the Egyptians.
- Against many occasions the Israelites.
- Against the enemies of Israel.
- Against Nadab and others.
- Against the spies,
- Against Aaron and Miriam,
- Against Abimelech,
- Against the family of Saul,
- Against Sennacherib,

List goes on and on.

Some might say that is in the Old Testament.

But God does not change.

The same thing is true in the New Testament, as well.

John chapter 3, John, that wonderful gospel written by a man of love, that gospel that presents the Lord Jesus Christ in all His

wonder and majesty and beauty, is yet a gospel that speaks of God's wrath.

John 3:36, *He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."*

It is not well with people who do not know Christ. It is not well with them. The wrath of God abides on them.

Romans 9:22, *What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction,*

Ephesians 5:6, *Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.*

Colossians 3:6, *Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience,*

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, *and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, ⁸ in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ These shall be punished with everlasting*

destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

God is a God of wrath!

He is a God of anger.

Now does that sound like a poor choice of starting points for the gospel.

The bad news must come before the good news!

It is kind of like going to the doctor and having the doctor say to you, "I have bad news. You have a fatal illness that has killed many people. But I have good news. A cure has been found, and I have it right here."

The good news means nothing without the bad news.

You must diagnose the disease before the cure means anything.

- ✓ The bad news is God hates.
- ✓ The good news is God loves.

But you must start with His hate.

First the diagnosis, then the cure.

V 18, For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

Why is that “for” there?

This connects us to the previous passage.

The previous passage says justification is by faith alone.

All men hold the truth unrighteous and are under the wrath of God. Therefore, they have no capacity to justify themselves.

So, justification must be by faith, because all men, left to their own efforts, are under the wrath. Justification is by faith and it cannot be by works because by works all men are under wrath.

Romans 3:23, *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

Ephesians 2:1-3, *And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,² in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,³ among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.*

- Everybody born into this world is a child of wrath.
- Everybody born into this world is a victim of lust and desire toward evil things.
- Everyone is born spiritually dead.

The whole human race is damned to hell. We are all children of wrath under the judgment of God. Man is born condemned.

The passage on the condemnation of the human race starts in 1:18 and goes all the way to 3:20.

1. The quality of wrath.

What kind of wrath is it?

It is divine wrath.

It is not like anything else that we know in this world.

Like every other attribute of God, it is as perfect as His holy person. His wrath is righteous wrath. It is the right kind of wrath. It is holy wrath.

The passion that we call “anger” in this world, the thing that we call “wrath” in this human world is always reflective of the evil heart of man. But we must not impose that on God.

God could not be God and be holy and be wholly good if He did not react to evil.

He cannot be God. You cannot be holy and tolerate unholiness. It cannot be done.

That is why Habakkuk the prophet said, *“You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness.”*

God cannot tolerate it.

The more Godlike you become, the angrier you will get at certain things.

For God is infinitely beyond that, because even when we get mad about the right things it is usually polluted by our sinfulness.

Illustration:

Jesus in **John 2 cleansing the temple.**

Made a whip and started whipping people all out of the temple.

That was His first public act in Jerusalem.

That is not the way you start a crusade.

You do not go into the religious places, take a whip, and start flagellating everybody, overturning tables, and crying about their sin.

You will never get a crowd that way.

Jesus was furious because God was being dishonored.

Psalms 58:10, *The righteous shall rejoice when he sees the vengeance; He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked,*

The righteous are so excited about God's judgment that they want to wash their feet in the blood of the wicked!

Psalms 58:11, *So that men will say, "Surely there is a reward for the righteous; Surely He is God who judges in the earth."*

When God judges it is so right, it is so perfect, it is so holy that God's people are seen as if they were washing their feet in the blood of the unrighteous.

Incredible concept.

Lamentations 1:18, *"The Lord is righteous, For I rebelled against His commandment. Hear now, all peoples, And behold my sorrow; My virgins and my young men Have gone into captivity."*

God is judging, I deserve it and He is righteous.

Remember what happened to Achan?

God said to them when you go in to take Jericho, do not steal anything. Achan just stole everything in sight, just disobeyed. He came back and buried it all in the ground in the middle of his tent.

Joshua 7:19, *Now Joshua said to Achan, "My son, I beg you, give glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession to Him, and tell me now what you have done; do not hide it from me."*

Achan died and all his family with him. Then they must have been implicated in the whole operation.

Before you get your due judgment from God, you confess your sin.

Do not you ever impure God as if He did something impure. Even when God is angry it is the right expression of His utter holiness.

We see that in Romans. We see it right where we are. The wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness.

We are going to see it repeatedly in **chapter 2, and 3**, that God's righteousness or God's judgment is a righteous judgment.

"Is God so infinitely holy? Then see how unlike to God sin is. Sin is an unclean thing. It is called an 'abomination.' God has no mixture of evil in Him. Sin has no mixture of good. It is the spirit in quintessence of evil. It turns good into evil. It has deflowered the virgin soul, made it red with guilt and black with filth. It is

called 'the accursed thing.' No wonder therefore that God hates sin." **Thomas Watson**

The quality of wrath is that it is a wrath of God, and that is different than any other kind.

2. Time of wrath.

V 18, *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.*

What does he mean "is revealed"?

When is the time of God's wrath?

It is constantly being revealed.

God's wrath is constantly being manifest.

God's wrath is always being made known. It is visible to all human history.

When Adam and Eve sinned and immediately the sentence of death was passed, the earth was cursed, and they were thrown out of paradise. The world had a great beginning lesson on the fact that God hates sin.

- It was revealed in the flood when God drowned the whole human race except for eight faithful souls.
- It was revealed in the drowning of Pharaoh's army.
- It was revealed in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire from heaven.
- It was revealed in the curse of the law on every transgressor.
- It was revealed in the institution of the sacrificial system, and all the services of the Mosaic Law.

In fact, the whole creation groans, and travails in pain under the judgment of God waiting for redemption.

For all laws are based upon the mind of God. No one can plead ignorance because the wrath of God has been revealed throughout human history.

The greatest demonstration of the wrath of God ever given was given on Calvary's cross. God hates so deeply sin that He allowed His own Son to be put to death, the greatest manifestation of the wrath of God. He poured out His fury on His own beloved Son. He would not hold it back even from His own Son. That is how He hated sin.

What is the time of the wrath of God?

It is constantly being revealed all the time. Every time you turn around, you see it. People live and die. Nations rise and fall. God judges sin.

How can they live and get away with it?

Why does God let them live such wretched, dissolute, vile, and sinful lives?

Psalm 9:16, *The Lord is known by the judgment He executes; The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Meditation.*

- If God lets men prosper for a while in their sin, His bowl of wrath is just all the while filling up.
- If He lets them sin for a while it is just that He is sharpening the sword.
- The longer God pulls back the bow, the deeper the arrow plunges when He releases it. Judgment will come.

“The wrath of God is revealed from heaven.”

Heaven is the source.

The wrath of God comes from heaven. Earth is dominated by heaven. Wrath is dynamically effectively operative in the world of men. It comes from the throne of God.

Now there are basically two ways that heaven reveals the wrath of God.

Moral and Personal.

The wrath is revealed from heaven in the moral order. You do things that are immoral, and you pay a price. Because the world is made on moral law. You live a dissolute life, degenerate, evil life, and there will be consequences. It is from heaven because heaven made the rules.

The wrath of God is also personal activity on God's part. God is not just a cosmic force who made a law and just let it run its course. God gets involved. It is not just automatic judgment by an anonymous cosmic computer. God is involved, and the Bible shows a very intense personal reaction to sin within the heart of the divine being.

Illustration:

Psalm 7:11, *God is a just judge, And God is angry with the wicked every day.*

God is angry. The Bible does say that God is angry.

There is not just a moral order, God is angry.

God is angry with the wicked every day.

There is moral law, moral order, but there's also personal act, as God expresses the wrath of a holy nature.

What is the nature of wrath?

V 18, *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.*

God is not like a criminal who takes his vengeance out on the nearest person. It is discriminated. It is carefully pointed at the unrighteousness and ungodliness of men.

“ungodliness.” Focuses on the relationship to God. God is angry because men are not rightly related to Him. They are ungodly.

Jude 1:15, *to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”*

It refers to impiety toward God. It refers to a lack of reverence, a lack of devotion, a lack of worship.
Sin as a failure to reverence God.

“unrighteousness,” When you are not rightly related to God and do not reverence God properly, then your transactions with everyone else around you are not right, either.

So, ungodliness leads to unrighteousness.

All sin attacks God's majesty, and then His law. The reason men treat men the way they do is because they treat God the way they do. Ungodliness leads to unrighteousness.

All the murders, and all the crimes, and all the horrible things that are going on.

Why is so man so inhumane to man?

It is because he is so unrelated to God. All human relationships and all human transactions are corrupted.

3. The extent of wrath.

Against All men?

All.

Romans 3:23, *"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."*

People are different. Some appear better than others.

Nobody escapes, no one.

Zedekiah, who made a covenant with God and then decided to break it and reached out to Egypt to help him when all he really needed was God.

Ezekiel 17:15-16, *But he rebelled against him by sending his ambassadors to Egypt, that they might give him horses and*

many people. Will he prosper? Will he who does such things escape? Can he break a covenant and still be delivered? ¹⁶ 'As I live,' says the Lord God, 'surely in the place where the king dwells who made him king, whose oath he despised and whose covenant he broke—with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die.

He will not escape.

Shall he escape?

The answer is no.

I do not care who you are. The faintest trace of ungodliness and unrighteousness brings you under the wrath of God.

Inescapability.

4. The cause of wrath.

V 18, *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.*

The real problem and the cause of wrath is that “men hold the truth in unrighteousness.”

Sin just is in the heart of man so strongly that it assaults the truth.

Sin always assaults the truth. The fundamental truth of God and His Word is assaulted. There is always an attempt to suppress it, to bury it, to obliterate it. It is the essence of sin, however, that the attempt is always futile.

The knowledge of God is all over. Men love darkness rather than light. Because their deeds are evil.

Psalm 14:1, *The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, They have done abominable works, There is none who does good.*

The fool is always saying, "There is no God."

Why does he say that?

Because he does not want there to be a God because if there is a God, he is in trouble.

How are the heathen to know?

God has revealed Himself to every individual, and if individuals, wherever they are, no matter how remote they are, do not suppress that truth by the love of sin, that truth will protect them from the excesses of sin, and eventually lead them to the truth of God by His gracious providence.

They avoid the truth of God.

If you are not a Christian the wrath of God waits for you.

There is good news, and the good news is Christ has taken the full fury of God's wrath if you will accept His gracious substitution for you.