

“The Wrath of God Revealed”
Romans 1:18
(Preached at Trinity, March 18, 2007)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. In **Verses 16-17** Paul sets forth a clear theology of how a man might be made right before God. He describes clearly the doctrine of Justification by faith alone.
2. Beginning with **Verse 18** Paul begins a lengthy discourse running over several chapters affirming the universal condemnation of God. A person will never see his need for Christ unless he understands his condemnation under the wrath of God.
3. In **Verse 18** we find the ultimate problem of sin.
 - A. Sin is not just an ethical problem. It is an offense against God. Every human being has treasonously rebelled against the sovereign dominion of God. They have defiled themselves with great wickedness.
 - B. God’s anger is not just kindled against sin. His fiery anger is kindled against sinners, against every human being.
 - C. This is why only the just shall live. Because God’s wrath is kindled against all sinners.
4. Last week we began to look at the doctrine of the wrath of God.
 - We saw the Wrath of God Defined - The wrath of God is one of God’s attributes. It is God’s holy hatred and indignation toward sinners.
 - We saw the Wrath of God as a Doctrine Denied – Our generation doesn’t believe in the wrath of God. They cannot imagine God being angry at them. They cannot imagine themselves cursed of God.
 - We saw the Wrath of God as a Doctrine Deserved – All have sinned. All have rebelled against God. God’s anger is kindled upon every sinner.
 - We saw the Wrath of God as a Doctrine Demonstrated – We’ve seen the wrath of God demonstrated in the Fall of Adam, the flood, Sodom and Gomorrah and many other examples of God’s holy hatred of sin bringing swift and terrible punishment. It continues to be demonstrated today as we live in this fallen world.
 - We also saw the Wrath of God as a Doctrine Delayed – although we see much suffering today, we are actually living under God’s mercy. There is coming a time, the great day of judgment when God’s fury will be poured out upon all who would not bow before Him in life.
5. This morning I want to look at one more aspect of the wrath of God. I want us to see the wrath of God as a Doctrine Declared.
Romans 1:18 – “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;”
6. Paul says that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness. In other words God has clearly given all men knowledge of His divine judgment. The Greek word for "revealed" is in the present tense (durative) a constant warning, something going on all the time.

How is it that God's wrath has been revealed?

- I. The wrath of God is clearly revealed in Scripture
 - A. God has been pleased to give us a revelation of Himself
 1. He has revealed His holiness
 2. He has revealed His demand for all men to submit to Him
 3. He has revealed the terrible consequence of failing to obey
Romans 1:18 – “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;”
 4. Over and over in the Word of God we are told of God's wrath
Ephesians 5:6 – “Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.”
 - a. J.I. Packer – “One of the most striking things about the Bible is the vigor with which both Testaments emphasize the reality and terror of God's wrath.”
 - b. The word wrath appears over 200 times in Scripture not counting the numerous times we read of God's anger, His fury – all warnings of His divine judgment.
 - B. The Bible also reveals the wrath of God in the numerous references to hell
 1. Jesus spoke much more about hell than He did about heaven
 2. Hell speaks of the ultimate expression of God's divine wrath
 - a. It is everlasting – an infinite punishment
 - b. It is a place of darkness – void of all light which is the reflection of God's glory. The spent a lifetime running from the light, they will spend eternity where there is no light.
John 3:19-20 – “And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.”
 - c. It is a place described as a lake of fire that burns with fire and brimstone.
 - d. It is a place of torment, a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth.
Matthew 13:49-50 – “So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, ⁵⁰ And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”
 - C. This revelation of God's wrath so plainly given is a wonderful gift from God
 1. It is only because of the hardness of men's hearts that they don't flee from God's wrath.
 2. John the Baptist preached to the Pharisees:
Matthew 3:7 – “. . .O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?”
 3. God has warned every human being, “Flee from the wrath to come.”
 - D. One of the ways this revelation is delivered unto men is through preaching
 1. This is why preaching must not be void of sin and judgment – of pleadings and warnings.

2. This is God's revelation of the judgment to come. The Gospel must not be void of the wrath of God.

II. Second, the wrath of God is revealed through God's testimony in history

- A. God has revealed foreshadows of His wrath over and over
 1. The Garden clearly reveals the wrath of God as Adam was thrust from paradise and the flaming sword stood as a testimony of God's righteous judgment.
 2. The flood clearly reveals the wrath of God as every man, woman, and child were destroyed under the wrath of God, save nine souls
 3. Sodom and Gomorrah reveals the wrath of God as God destroyed every man woman and child in these cities save three souls.
- B. The wrath of God is clearly revealed in the death and suffering that continues upon the earth.
 1. Even those who deny the wrath of God cannot hide the sorrow as death takes those they love one-by-one.
 2. Even those who deny the wrath of God cannot hide from their own mortality.
 3. The fear that grips their hearts is testimony that all is not well on this earth
- C. Tear after tear we are reminded that God's judgment is upon this earth
 1. We cannot deny that there are consequences for sin
 2. AIDS drains the life from millions as their own immune system becomes their enemy.
 3. People gasp for air as their lungs no longer function after years of smoking or cancer takes away their lips or tongue or their cardio-vascular system is destroyed.
 4. We cannot deny that there are consequences for sin – The wrath of God is being revealed

III. The wrath of God is revealed through the internal and external testimony of the Law

- A. The Law declares us guilty
 1. Internally our consciences testify to our guilt
 2. We have broken the law and are condemned by it.
 3. God's wrath is imprinted upon every man's conscience - all know it
- B. Societies have long had systems of judicial punishment
 1. We know by nature that bad behavior must be punished
 - a. We know by nature that stealing is wrong
 - b. We know by nature that murder is wrong
 - c. Most cultures instinctively know that incest is wrong and must be prohibited.
 2. We naturally enjoy condemning bad behavior in others
 - a. It is a way of excusing ourselves
 - b. Paul warns that our natural accusatory tone only testifies to our own condemnation.

Romans 2:1-3 – “Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. ² But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. ³ And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?”

- C. The institution of sacrifice and the Mosaic system was designed to point us to our guilt and the consequence for sin – It testified to the wrath of God
1. The animals slain and their blood shed testified to the need for propitiation
 2. Propitiation is the satisfaction of God’s wrath – it is only possible through the shedding of blood.
Hebrews 9:22 – “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.”
 3. All of this testified to the wrath of God.

IV. The wrath of God was revealed at the cross

- A. Jesus came down from heaven as the perfect God-man
1. Jesus was the perfect revelation of God’s divine excellence
John 1:14 – “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”
Colossians 2:9 – “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.”
 2. He lived a perfect life fulfilling the demands of the Law
 3. He was absolutely sinless and was always in perfect fellowship with the Father. God’s testimony:
Matthew 3:17 – “And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”
- B. The perfect Christ who knew no sin became sin for us
1. Jesus offered up Himself as a sacrifice
 2. At Gethsemane Jesus prayed,
Matthew 26:39 – “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me”
The cup was the full measure of the wrath of God. It was God’s punishment of sin.
 3. The Father consumed Him in His wrath
Isaiah 53:10 – “Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.”
 - a. The word for “bruise” (כָּרַס) literally means “to crush”
 - b. Jesus was crushed under the full wrath of God
 - c. It pleased the Father to do this that His wrath might be satisfied in Christ. Jesus took our place.

- C. The scene of the Crucifixion testified to God's wrath
 - 1. Jesus cried out as God turned His face from His Son – testimony to God's holy hatred of Sin – Jesus was forsaken
Matthew 27:46 – “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”
 - 2. The sun refused to shine, the earth trembled

- V. The tragedy is that all of God's revelations are rejected by the lost man
 - A. He denies God's revelation in Scripture
 - 1. The Word of God is rejected
 - 2. Peter spoke of such:
2 Peter 3:16 – “. . . they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.”
 - B. He denies the testimony of history
 - 1. He doesn't believe that suffering is the result of sin
 - 2. He doesn't believe in consequences
 - C. He denies the proddings of his conscience
 - 1. He finds it easy to silence his conscience and justify his actions
 - 2. He convinces himself that he isn't bad enough to deserve God's terrible wrath.
 - D. Because of his denial of God's revealed wrath, he sees no need for Christ
1 Corinthians 1:18 – “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”

Conclusion:

- 1. How have you received the revelation of God's wrath?
The Christian has received it as his own. I am guilty of the wrath of God. I am guilty of His righteous judgment. I justly deserve to go to hell, but I'm trusting in the sacrifice of Christ to satisfy God's wrath. I'm trusting in the righteousness of Christ. His righteousness is my righteousness.
Romans 1:17 – “For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”
- 2. If you have not trusted Christ, are you denying His wrath? Do you not believe that God is angry with you? Do you think that you can avoid His wrath? You desperately need Jesus.