

Sermon Series: Romans

Sermon Text: Romans 1:18a The Apocalypse of God's Wrath

In the gospel God shows you the true nature of His wrath against sin, so that your faith, hope and love are strengthened in Christ.

1) God's wrath is righteous.

- a) Connection with v. 17 "the righteousness of God is revealed"
- b) "against all ungodliness"—irreverence toward God; sin against God's majesty (commandments 1-3)
- c) "and unrighteousness"—sin against God's good order, both religious and social (commandments 4-10)
 - i) Sin proceeds from rebellion against God to injustice toward humanity.
 - ii) Righteous wrath likewise proceeds from sins against God to sins against humanity/creation.
- d) "day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed" (2:5)
- e) God's wrath is not capricious or arbitrary.
- f) God's wrath is the expression of His holy-love against all that disregards His goodness and destroys His good creation.
- g) If God were indifferent toward evil, then He would not be righteous.
- h) **Application:**
 - i) Strengthening Faith: Don't misplace your faith in your self-righteousness (2:1, 12-13; 3:19-20).
 - ii) Strengthening Love: You can love your enemies because God will avenge every wrong (12:14, 18-21).

2) God's wrath is partial at present and full in the future.

- a) "the wrath of God is revealed"—present continuous tense
- b) Structure of 19-32 and Present Wrath/Judgment:
 - i) 19-24—"they exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images . . . Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity . . ."
 - ii) 25-26a—"they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the creator . . . For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions . . ."
 - iii) 26b-32—"their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise . . . God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done."
 - iv) Judicial Hardening
- c) Present Wrath through Human Government: 13:4 "For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer."
- d) Psalm 7:11 "God is a righteous judge, and a God who feels indignation every day."
- e) "That Day" of Future Wrath:
 - i) 2:5 "But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed."

ii) 2:16 “on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.”

f) **Application:**

i) Strengthening Faith: Note the kindness and severity of God to encourage and sober you to persevere in faith (11:20-22).

ii) Strengthening Love: Don’t be arrogant toward unbelievers (11:20).

3) God’s wrath is executed through the risen Christ.

a) Connection with v. 17 “In it [the gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed . . . For the wrath of God . . .”

b) 2:16 “according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus”

c) Acts 17:30-31 “The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now He commands all people everywhere to repent, because He has fixed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom He has appointed; and of this He has given assurance to all by raising Him from the dead.”

d) Rev. 6:16 “the wrath of the Lamb”

e) Rev. 14:10 “If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he also will drink the wine of God’s wrath, poured full strength into the cup of His anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.”

f) **Application:**

i) Strengthening Faith: “Not Tame, but Good”—Don’t domesticate Jesus in your mind.

ii) Strengthening Love: Present the whole Christ: Prophet, Priest, and King (see Isaiah 33:22 “For the LORD is our judge; the LORD is our lawgiver; the LORD is our king; He will save us.”)

4) God’s wrath is pacified in the crucified Christ.

a) 3:24-25 “Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by His blood”

b) 5:9 “Since, therefore, we have now been justified by His blood, much more shall we be saved by Him from the wrath of God.”

c) **Application:**

i) Strengthening Faith: In Christ, even your afflictions serve your salvation (5:1-11).

ii) Strengthening Hope: Your Judge died and rose for your salvation (8:34).

iii) Strengthening Love: The reality of God’s wrath stirs our compassion for the lost (9:1-3; 10:1; 11:13-14)

As the gospel shows the true nature of God’s wrath against sin, let us . . . : “Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, **let us** draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. **Let us** hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And **let us** consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a **fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.** Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. **How much**

worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by **the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace?** For we know him who said, ‘Vengeance is mine; I will repay.’ And again, ‘The Lord will judge his people.’ **It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”** (Heb. 10:19-31)

Doxology: Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of His glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. (Jude 24-25)