

## The Attributes of God

### The Wrath of God

#### Romans 1:18

Good morning church, we've come to the last attribute of God that we will study. Over this past summer, we have learned and reflected on God's attributes. We have seen that unlike us, God is self-sufficient, all-knowing, all powerful, immortal. Also, He is loving, gracious, kind, patient, holy and jealous. God is 100% of all of His attributes.

Our God is both loving and of just. Many people struggle with this. They believe that a loving God can't be a judging God.

The wrath of God is His intense hatred of sin and his just punishment of evil. In other words, the wrath of God is what happens when God's holiness, his moral perfection, his purity comes in contact with human sin.

The first is that His wrath abides, or stays and builds up on sinners. Paul tells us this in Romans 1:18: *"The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them."*

The second aspect of God's wrath is that it is catastrophic. This is God's wrath unleashed on the human race or upon a people group for their sin and wickedness. We see this in God's wrath unleashed in the days of Noah where God unleashed a flood that destroyed the entire world. Look at Gen. 6:5-7. This is one of the saddest verses in the Bible and it shows us that God's wrath is always a righteous, right response to mankind's sin. God's wrath is a **response** to sin, it is not arbitrary, it does not play favorites. The word "deeply troubled" in Hebrew is that same word used in Genesis 34:7 when the sons of Jacob discover that their sister Dinah had been raped and taken advantage of. The word speaks of being shocked and hurt. And God reveals to us in this verse, that when mankind sins, when you sin, when I sin, it brings hurt to Him. In the United States we are ripe for the judgment of God. The way we have as a nation glorified violence, sex, freedom of choice, convenience, greed. Is there any surprise that the once great American city, Portland, has been burning for 90 nights with no sign of unrest. Why is God allowing this? I don't pretend to know the answer, but when I look at the wrath of God in Scripture, it is always a right, righteous response to sin. God is not an "abuser" who looks around for the weak to prey on. God's wrath is **always** a response, stemming from His Holiness against sin.

The third aspect of wrath we see in the Bible is God's consequential wrath. This wrath stems from the principle of sowing and reaping. The Bible guarantees that what we sow, we will reap. And if we continue to sow in sin, we will reap destruction. Galatians 6:7 says: *"Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life."* Flagrant, consistent disobedience by a person or a culture has its consequence.

The fourth aspect of God's wrath: abandonment. That's when sinners repeatedly reject the knowledge of God, His kindness, His mercy, God finally, abandons and gives them over to their sin. Paul tells us this in Rom. 1:24,26 and 28: *"Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. Furthermore just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind. These are people who wilfully exchanged natural relations for unnatural, who degraded their bodies, who also did not think it was worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, then God finally gave them over."* Earlier, I said that God's wrath is always a response to sin. He never starts the fight, but He will always finish it.

The fifth aspect of God's wrath we see is His eternal wrath. Hell. This is a place that all those who are not in Christ will go. A place where their will be weeping and gnashing of teeth forever and ever. Revelation 20:13-15 speaks of the "lake of fire" people will

be in forever who reject Christ in this life. Can you imagine? A lake of fire where you will drown, yet not drown because it's eternal and a place where the wrath of God is poured out upon people forever.

So, as we have seen God's wrath - we see it is consistent, it is not arbitrary and it is always a response to sin. But God hates sin, HE has an intense hatred of sin because sin and sinners stand in opposition and do not recognize God nor do they love Him for who He is. And so we see that the wrath of God is varied. It is abiding on sinners, it is catastrophic, it is consequential, it is abandonment and also it is eternal. So, what about the saints of God. What is our response to God's wrath? Three things.

The first is that we are to praise God for His patience and justice. Wrath of God is actually an outpouring of His love. The opposite of love is indifference.

The second is that this should motivate your personal evangelism. 2 Peter 3:9 tells us that the very reason the Lord Himself has not poured out His wrath upon sinners is that HE wants them to be saved.

Thirdly, and most importantly, is that the wrath of God must cause you and cause me to praise and glorify Christ.Â

The sixth and final wrath of God is redemptive wrath. The Bible clearly says that everyone, saints and sinners alike, will be judged according to their works, according to the way they lived. The only difference is that for you, for Christians, on that judgment day when the great cup of His wrath is poured out upon sinners, our cup of wrath will be dry because the cup of God's wrath has already been taken in full by the savior Jesus Christ. He took the wrath that you and me stored up. HE took what He did not deserve, so that God could give us what we did not deserve. Look at this wonderful passage in Ephesians 2:1-5: *"As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions it is by grace you have been saved."* Saints, in that last day, we will not experience what we deserve - the great wrath of God - but instead, because of God's love, Christ Himself has taken God's wrath in our place.

So, as I close our discussion of the wrath of God, His intense hatred of sin, we need to respond by praising God that he punishes sin and deals with evil. We need to be motivated to press harder in our personal evangelism knowing that everyone who has not heard, nor accepts Christ will experience the full wrath of God forever and thirdly, praise and be thankful that wrath that Christ endures for us brought redemption and that we won't get what we deserve.