

SRMBC Family Bible Study

Romans: A New Lifestyle

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Lesson 2: The Wrath of God Romans 1:18 – 32

The continuing revelation of the wrath of God is an expression of His personal righteousness and its opposition to human sinfulness. Therefore, people need the continuing revelation of “a righteousness from God” (Rom 1:17) that He provides. God's wrath is directed against all the godlessness and wickedness of men, not against the men as such. God hates sin and judges it, but loves sinners and desires their salvation.

Group Discussion: What have you heard or read in the news lately that indicates our world is not whole and healthy? How do you think God responds when he sees the evil we've brought into his world?

Wow! What a loaded question, the **#MeToo** movement, we have heard so much about Sexual harassment, Assault, Rape, etc. Along with the emphasis on the s-hole comments – we are just not healthy in our relationships with each other particularly between men and women and one another.

God probably responds with disappointment but also anger – that is partly withheld by His love and mercy. He releases just enough of His anger by allowing circumstances/consequences in order to get us to repent and turn to Him/Jesus.

In this passage Paul tells us that something is dreadfully wrong with us, our friends and society.

Read Romans 1:18 – 32.

1. According to verses 18 – 32, what are some of the reasons God's wrath is being revealed?

Reasons for God's Wrath	Description
Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men	Our sinful condition – Not just what we do and say that runs against God's Word – but who we are inside.
Suppress the Truth In Unrighteousness	People inside know God exists and the right thing to do – push down the truth to do evil
Although They Knew God, They Did Not Glorify Him	Rather than acknowledge and give honor due the Lord – It all about them/us
Nor Were Thankful, But Became Futile in Their Thoughts, And Their Foolish Hearts Were Darkened.	God provides everything (Life, air, water, food, etc.) yet never Thank God and become foolish (Titanic...)
Changed the Glory of God into An Image	Creating a God of their own understanding. Worship of things instead of God.
Lusts of Their Hearts	Craving the lusts/evil of the flesh sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger... (Gal 5:19 -21)
Exchanged the Truth of God for The Lie	Re-interpreting the Word of God to fit our own agenda (ex. Marriage, Gender etc.)

Worshiped and Served the Creature Rather Than the Creator	We worship people, power, money, etc. rather than the One who created everything and is worthy of Worship.
They Did Not Like to Retain God in Their Knowledge	We are start out with fundamental knowledge of God – some even taught about God as children, but in pride reject that knowledge.
Knowing the Righteous Judgment of God, Not Only Do the Same and Also Approve.	Ignoring God and His standards along with the surety of His judgment at the end of life – continue in sinful practices and encourage others to do the same.

2. What questions or feelings do you have when you read about God's wrath in verse 18?

Questions

- What about babies and children – is God's wrath and judgment for them?
- Are the natural disasters, disease, wars accidents indicators of God's wrath?
- What about those who have never heard of Jesus? Does God's wrath still apply to them?

Feelings

- Awe, Reverence, High respect for His Power/Authority.
- Fear of His wrath – eternal punishment.
- Love, Thankfulness that Jesus took God's Wrath on the Cross for me.

3. What does everyone know about God, according to verses 19 – 20? How do they know these things?

19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,

Things People Know About God	Description
He Exists	God has shown Himself to us (Internally/Externally)
He is Creator	The wonder of nature (Even our own bodies)
His Love Mercy and Grace	His providential care for all living – even those who reject Him in unbelief
His Power	His ability to produce and maintain His Creation

4. How do people respond to the knowledge they possess about God (vv. 18, 21)?

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened

- People suppress or try to ignore what they know to be truth of their own sinfulness.
- Act as if they don't know who God is
- Although God does so much for them and has authority – they neither Glorify or thank Him
- They fill their minds with anything – that keeps them acknowledging God
- Without acknowledging God, their hearts become darkened, immoral, unloving

Paddy was driving down the street in a sweat because he had an important meeting and couldn't find a parking place. Looking up to heaven he said, "Lord take pity on me. If you find me a parking place I will go to Church every Sunday for the rest of my life and give up drinking."

Miraculously, a parking place appeared. Paddy looked up again and said, "Never mind, I found one."

5. Verses 21 – 32 describe the downward spiral of sin. How would you summarize each level of descent? What evidence do you see of this moral degeneration today?

21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

24 Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, 25 who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

26 For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 27 Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, 30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving unmerciful; 32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them

If you look closely, you will notice several levels:

- Idolatry (Vv. 21-23)
- Impurity (Vv. 24-25)
- Perversion (Vv. 26-27)
- Depravity (Vv. 28-31)
- A Flagrant Disregard Of God's Judgment (V. 32).

Paul is not claiming that every non-Christian exhibits all of these characteristics to the same degree. But they have characterized humanity ever since the fall of Adam and Eve.

6. It is common to think of God's wrath primarily in terms of future judgment. Yet verse 18 states that God's wrath is now being revealed. How is this evident from verses 24 – 32?

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Oftentimes we think of God's Judgement as Him taking action in direct opposition to our behavior. As such, some people think that if God is not stopping us, He must be pleased or okay with what we are doing.

The truth is that God's harshest judgment can be seen when He lets us have our own way and let our own evil heart and desires lead us in a downward spiral of sin (Cf. Psalm 106:15).

7. Do you think verses 18 – 32 refute the notion that people are basically good? Explain.

- I think so. Especially when you think about when we try to compare our goodness with the Holiness of God.
- It is our lack of goodness that demonstrate why we need to be saved and why we can't save ourselves.
- People who think themselves to be good apart from God, are themselves under the judgment of God.

8. People often raise the question of how God could condemn those who have never heard of him. How does this passage address that question?

In reality, it is not that some people **have not heard about God**. Rather, the problem is that **they have rejected what they have heard and what is readily seen in nature**. Deuteronomy 4:29 proclaims, "But if from there you seek the LORD your God, you will find him if you look for him with all your heart and with all your soul." This verse teaches an important principle—everyone who truly seeks after God will find Him. If a person truly desires to know God, God will make Himself known

Instead of debating the fate of those who have never heard, we, as Christians, should be doing our best to make sure they do hear. We are called to spread the gospel throughout the nations (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8).

We all know people who reject the knowledge of God revealed in nature, and that must motivate us to proclaim the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ. Only by accepting God's grace through the Lord Jesus Christ can people be saved from their sins and rescued from an eternity apart from God

Pray that God would be revealed powerfully to those who are rejecting him.

Keys for Living



Although the concept of God's wrath may make us uncomfortable, just like His Love, it is an unchangeable part of His Character.



People may try to deny the existence of God, but the Lord has provided so much irrefutable evidence in creation, everyone is without excuse.



The truth is, none of us can be good enough to make ourselves right with God. Jesus came to give His life to satisfy God's wrath against sin and express His great love toward us.