

THE WRATH OF GOD ... AGAINST.. ALL UNGODLINESS AND UNRIGHTEOUSNESS OF MEN

ROMANS 1:18

This is a message of warning. Jude teaches we should use both the love of God and the fear of God in our efforts to reach souls. *“And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.”* (Ju 1:22-23)

It doesn't matter what you have done,
good or bad.
God loves everybody the same.

(Seen on a church sign)

It is true that God loves all people that He has created. He loves them with a Father's love. He is not partial. *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.* 2 Pet 3:9

But is it true that God feels the same toward everyone? We will try to answer this question in this message. The text verse we choose for this message reveals a different side of God's attributes. *“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness...”* Rom 1:18 We will take our title from this verse.

Being created in the image of God we understand in part His emotions because He made us in His likeness.

It is true that our emotions are affected by our fallen nature and God's nature is unaffected by sin. In spite of this the Bible repeatedly describes God's love, and His jealousy - terms we all understand. God is described as a Personality who experiences joy, and even sings, (Zeph 3:17). He also has anger so strong it smokes. (Deut 29:20). He promises special love for those who choose to follow Jesus' commandments. *“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.”... “Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”* John 14:21,23

One example of God's anger recorded in the Bible “for our sakes” is His response to Moses' disobedience. God and Moses talked face to face as friends (Ex 33:11). Moses was the meekest man who ever lived (Nu 12:3) And yet, when Moses struck the rock he was directed to speak to (Nu 20:8-13), God became angry with him, and determined a punishment for him. Moses repeated this event and the consequences again and again. (Deut 1:37, 3:22-27; 4:21). Finally in Deut 34:1-4 when Moses is on Mt Nebo God tells him one last time *“I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither.”*

This teaches us God can love a person deeply and yet be hurt and angered by the choices he makes. We connect with these emotions and understand God. He made us like Himself. (However, in marked contrast from God, we are not called to bring judgment

against someone who consistently disobeys us.)

The Bible gives us at least three situations where God has wrath and anger toward men. You and I need to know about and ponder these. This study will highlight these situations.

1. The Wrath of God hangs over all who choose not to believe in Jesus Christ.

Mike is a seeker from Protestant background who is in an Anabaptist instruction class. In studying a lesson on the importance of believing, the teacher decided each of the brethren present would read a statement and say whether or not he believed in what was being said.

The first statement was read, “Do I believe God created out of nothing all that we can see?” When he was finished, the reader said, “I believe God created the earth and the entire universe out of nothing.”

It was Mike’s turn to read next. His statement to read was, “Do I believe that only those who believe in Jesus and repent of their sins can be saved.” After Mike read this statement he looked up and said, “I cannot say that I believe that. I have been taught all my life that God loves saints and sinners alike – that’s what helped pull me out of my addiction.”

The moderator then asked Mike to read John 3:16 and state his beliefs on this verse. When Mike read the verse, he said, “Yes, I believe that verse. God loves the entire world.”

The teacher then highlighted verses 18-21 which explain how believing in Jesus meant a person needed to bring all his deeds to the light. The verses explain why many people in that day (including many of the religious Pharisees) did not come to Jesus. It would have required them to confess, become transparent with, and forsake their sins.

Then the teacher asked Mike to read John 3:36. “*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*” When Mike looked up from reading the verse, he had a very sober look on his face and said simply, “Now I believe.”

There are at least two reasons why unbelievers deserve the wrath of God. The first is because of the sins they have committed against God. The second is because God has provided a remedy for sin through the death of His Son Jesus, and when that offer is rejected it is a double offense to God. We may conclude that while God loves the disobedient sinner, He also is angry with them and is preparing to bring judgment upon their heads.

2. The wrath of God will come on children of disobedience who have committed sins unto death and have not had them dealt with by the church.

*“For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, **hath any inheritance** in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things **cometh the wrath of God** upon the children of disobedience.”* Eph 5:5-6 *“Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things’ sake **the wrath of God cometh** on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.”* Col 3:5-7 *And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.* 1Pet 4:8

One of the prevailing teachings of our day is that “all sins are the same size” and should be related to equally. These verses plainly show this is not the case. Some sins prohibit one from inheriting eternal life. Lets take a brief look at the history of the doctrine of sin.

The Roman Catholic teaching has been that there are mortal sins (sins unto death) and venial sins (sins not unto death). Martin Luther legitimately protested against how the Catholic church dealt with sin, but he erroneously taught that all sins are the same before God. His solution for every and all sin was that there were only two things to do to be forgiven. 1. Tell God of your sorrow for your sin, 2. Believe God has forgiven that sin. If a person could not believe he was forgiven, then the sin was still held to his account. Sadly

this doctrine has greatly affected the view of sin for Modern Christianity. Lets clarify terms.

The following are all negative terms. They are arranged in order of seriousness and what it takes for forgiveness before God.

- **Accident** – an event that is not planned or intended: an event that occurs by chance.
- **Mistake** – to make a wrong judgment about something. In this case the person sincerely believes he is right, or simply makes a decision without proper forethought.
- **Sin not unto death** – an offense against the law of God that when observed by someone else is something we pray for 1 John 5:16-17 or exercise Christian charity for 1 Pet 4:8.
- **Sin unto death** – an offense against the law of God that requires action by the church, often a public rebuke 1 Tim 5:20 or excommunication 1 Cor 5:11-13.
- **Brother sins that lead to death and being unforgiven.** Both of these scenarios lems are addressed by our Lord (Matt 18:17; and Matt 6:15)

The Bible also teaches the church has responsibility and power to forgive sins. Obviously, this is not the kind of faults that charity covers. *And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.* John 20:22-23 The man guilty of incest in 1 Cor 5 was confronted, disciplined, punished and then forgiven of his sin. This is a pattern for the church to follow. If you or I have “sins unto death” hidden in our lives, we need to bring them to the light and not provoke God.

3. Lastly, we understand mankind is fast approaching a “Day of the Lord” era when the wrath of God will be poured out on those who have rejected Him.

Recently, in studying in 1&2 Thessalonians I became aware the passage makes it clear there are two main events prophesied that lie before us. Let us evaluate these two events.

The Coming of our Lord	The Day of the Lord
1:4:13 Paul wanted to make sure that they wouldn't be ignorant of this day	1:5:1-2 Paul was confident they knew about this (from OT prophets).
1:4:18 An event of comfort for the saints	A time of distress for the world
1:4:17 We...we 5:4,5 Ye...ye 5:9 us...	1:5:3 They...them...they
1:4:16 The dead in Christ will rise first	2:2:2 They feared they had already entered
At any moment, dead in Christ first, then alive in Christ next.	2:2:3 Not until falling away & Antichrist is revealed, He who withhold taken away
1:4:17 Caught up to be with the Lord, (in heave) ever with Him	2:2:3-12 Time under the oppression of the Antichrist, then destruction.

Peter also tells us to keep the Old Testament prophecies in mind (2 Pet 3:2). Then he goes on to warn us about the Day of the Lord. The Old Testament prophets consistently warned of a dreadful day when terrible calamities would come on the earth because of God's wrath on disobedient mankind. This is referred to as the “Day of the Lord” or “that day”. It is only in Mal 3 & 4, that the prophet hints at the gospel era. He tells us that “Elijah” (John the Baptist) would come and “the Lord... the messenger of the covenant” (Jesus the Messiah) would come first to turn the heart of the fathers to the children and children to the fathers before the Day of the Lord comes.

And so the day of grace came. When Jesus came, He instructed us to show kindness and

mercy to all mankind whether they bless or curse us. He explained to His disciples that our Father in heaven would be relating to unbelievers in this manner and we are called to reflect God's heart. (Matthew 5:43-48) This is why we love our enemies, look for ways to bless them and practice nonresistance toward evildoers even when we are mistreated.

But that did not mean God has changed His plan. We may know that every one of the 26 prophecies referencing the "day of the Lord's" wrath or anger will come to pass. (By the way, the word "day" does not mean a period of 24 hours. The very first part seems to be at least a 7 year period of time with the last 3½ years as being especially intense.)

The majority of the Book of Revelation is spent describing a time which shall be "hereafter" (Revelation 1:19 and 4:1). In that time, while the Lamb is opening the sealed scroll, waves of terror and destruction are described as coming. This is the time of the reign of the Antichrist. *"For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"* Rev 6:17 It will be time so terrible that men will wish with all their heart that they could die rather than continue to live to witness such terrible events. As with other Jewish days, this day will begin with the night of the terrible reign of the Antichrist and end in the glorious day of the reign of our Lord Jesus and His Saints. You do not want to be here for that time.

Where are we now?

Our society and the entire world is fast rejecting God and His Truth. In 1999 I was assigned a message entitled, *"The Millennium in Retrospect"* It was to show people how fast society's norms were changing. I prepared a chart to show drastic changes that were taking place in society in my short 40 years that I could document. Now 20 years later, there has been even more drastic deterioration. As change comes we gradually adjust and often do not stop to think about what is happening. Abortion, homosexuality, transgender changes, animal rights are now a normal part of our "Christian" nation.

Things will not always stay this way! Many of the changes taking place in our world today provoke the wrath of God. He continues to witness men turning His grace into lasciviousness (license to sin) Jude 1:4. And while men spurn His righteousness, preachers assure them that God loves everyone the same, even while in their sin! Oh what deception!

As Christians we are called to not only be prepared for Christ to come, but we are also called to warn unbelievers of what will be their fate. We should tell the world that God loves them, He loves everybody the same. But we must also warn them of the wrath of God coming upon all who reject His Salvation, or live in sin. This is a solemn trust. May God help us to rise to the challenge.

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2Pe 3:10-13)

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." Luke 21:36

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