

God Reveals His Wrath (Romans 1:16-32)

NOTE: The first three chapters of Romans are very hard to digest. They are filled with bad news and hard truths. Romans is a presentation of the gospel, but the gospel must always start with the reality of our horrible situation. God is at war with sin and He is angry with sinners. Unless something is done to remove that sin, there is no hope of pleasing Him.

I. Boldness in the Gospel (Rom. 1:16-17)

[gospel = man is sinful, bound for hell – Jesus pays the price]

A. The Gospel is the Power of God for Salvation

1. God gives His own righteousness through the gospel
2. We don't have to worry about "convincing" others – the gospel does the work.
3. The righteousness of the gospel is revealed from faith to faith
 - a. At the point of faith (salvation) – God's righteousness is given to the believer (from faith) – this salvation leads to a life of growing faith and trust in God (into faith).
 - b. The righteousness of God not only saves, but transforms man's walk to live by the faith they hold.

Why is Paul so Urgently Bold with the Gospel? – Because God's wrath is real!!!!

II. God's wrath is being poured out right now (Rom. 1:18-28)

A. Sinful man is under God's wrath

1. God's wrath is revealed (present tense = "being revealed") against all ungodliness and unrighteousness (1:18)

B. Sinful man is without Excuse (Rom. 1:19-20)

i. God is Known

1. God has revealed Himself "in/to them." (v. 19)
2. God has revealed Himself through creation. (v. 20)

ii. Man has no excuse before God (v. 20)

1. God is just in punishing man.

Notice that God does not believe in Atheists. There are no Atheists. Instead, Paul says that man is suppressing the truth about God in unrighteousness (18c). He knows God (v. 21), he just refuses to acknowledge Him.

III. God's wrath Turns men over to their Sin (Rom. 1:21-24)

a. God gives men what they want

i. They exchanged God and became corrupted (21-23)

2. Men reject God (21a)
3. Their hearts and minds become corrupted (21b)
4. They pridefully trade God for idols (22-23)

ii. Therefore God gave them up (v. 24)

5. God turned them over to their desires (24a)

6. Their desires dishonored their bodies (24b)

You must notice the pattern that Paul gives us. Three times in Romans chapter 1, we are shown that

1. *Man exchanges God for something else – (v. 21, 23, and 25)*
2. *God gives man up – (v. 24, 26, and 28)*
3. *Resulting in man acting out in sin (v. 24, 26, 29)*

b. Man's behavior is a direct result of God's wrath (25-28)

- i. They exchanged God for idols (v. 25)
 1. They exchanged the truth for a lie (v. 25)
 2. They worshiped creature instead of creator
- ii. God gave them to their dishonorable passions (v. 26)
 1. Homosexuality became the result

Notice: The depravity into which man sinks further and further is a direct result of God removing His hand from them. Today, the world would be far worse than it is if God removes His protection. Therefore, descending into sin (especially sexual sin) is both the sin and the judgment. Man desires sin more than God, God demonstrates wrath by turning man over to that which he desires.....and the cycle continues!

IV. The Character of those under wrath (Romans 1:29-32)

a. The sins of the reprobate

It would be easy for us to look at the degeneracy of homosexuality and shake our heads in disgust, however, Paul gives yet another list of sinful behaviors which are indicative of the "reprobate mind." (v. 28)

- i. Unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil, envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice, gossip (whisperers in KJV), slanderers (backbiters), haters of God, prideful, boastful, inventors of evil, and disobedient to parents.
- ii. Does anything on that list describe you?

As I read that list, I find myself with pride, boasting, etc. This is not to say that the Christian will never sin in this way. However, the believer (because of God's grace) understands and accepts his sin as against God. He is repentant and seeks to flee to the cross for forgiveness. It is common for those in the homosexual lifestyle to say that "God made me this way," or "I am a homosexual Christian." This is the difference. While the believer may fall into envy, he does not accept envy as a valid lifestyle before God. He does not say, "God made me an envious person, therefore I am an 'envious Christian.'" If this were so, we would have "idolater Christians, adulterer Christians, and covetous Christians."

The difference between stumbling into a sin and being turned over to a depraved mind is simple.

“although knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure (approval) in them that do them. Romans 1:32