**The Wrath of God**

S.R. 1 John 4:7 - 11 6 – 29 – 2014

Intro.

1. The love of God is a primary theme in the Scriptures and a wonderful topic for us to consider.
2. Each first day of the week, we are reminded of the tremendous love of God and Christ as we share in the supper of our Lord. (**1 John 4: 7 - 10**). “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the **propitiation for our sins**.”
3. The love of God is intended to be a powerful motivation and example for us
4. **1 Jn. 4:11** “Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”
5. **John 3:16 “For God so loved, that He gave**
6. Yet God’s wrath is also an important facet of God’s nature **(John 3:36).**
7. "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who **does not obey** the Son will not see life, **but the wrath of God abides on him**."
8. God’s just and righteous character require the punishment of sin.
9. A just God must demonstrate wrath against sin.
10. Sin destroys what was created in God’s image.
11. In the last few years there has been a shift toward emphasizing the love of God to the neglect of His divine wrath.

1. Last year (2013) a mainline Protestant denomination decided to remove the song, “In Christ Alone” from their hymnal.

 a. Why? Keith Getty and Stuart Townsend, refused to omit a reference to Jesus “satisfying the wrath of God.”

 b. Lyrics: In Christ alone! –

 In Christ alone who took on flesh, Fullness of God in helpless babe.

 This gift of love and righteousness, Scorned by the ones He came to save:

 Till on that cross as Jesus died, The wrath of God was satisfied -

 For every sin on Him was laid; Here in the death of Christ I live.

 b. Their explanation: “**If we want Christianity to stay relevant with young people we’ve got to rewrite the way we do church, including our songs.”**

 **c. “**Theology is supposed to be **true**, not palatable.” John Stonestreet

2. Richard Niebuhr back in the 1930s, described this kind of revisionist Protestantism as a religion in which, “A God without wrath brought men without sin into a kingdom without judgment through the ministrations of a Christ without a cross.”

3. Is Christ Alone the only way to escape the wrath of God or is there even such a thing as God’s wrath?

1. Purpose:
2. Emphasize balance and make vivid God’s wrath..
3. Encourage each of us to live so as to avoid the wrath of God in judgment.
4. **The Nature of God’s Wrath**
5. God’s wrath is based upon His justice, righteousness and law not emotion.
6. The gods of ancient idolaters, Romans, Greeks and Mesopotamians were capricious. Their wrath against men was selfish and emotionally irrational.
7. God’s wrath is provoked by rebellion against His holiness by unrighteousness.
8. **(Romans 1:18 – 19)** “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.”
9. **(Romans 1:32)** “and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.”
10. **(Romans 2:2,5)** “And we know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things….But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are **storing up wrath** for yourself in the **day of wrath** and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,”
11. The promise of God’s wrath is the result of sinful rebellion against Him.
12. **(Ephesians 2:3)** “Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, i**ndulging the desires** of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature **children of wrath**, even as the rest.”
13. **(Ephesians 5:5-6)** “For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.”
14. **(Colossians 3:5 - 6)** “Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. 6 For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience,”
15. **Demonstrations of God’s Wrath**
16. The great loss of life in the flood during Noah’s day **(Genesis 7:21-23).**
17. Our shock at the death of a large group of people: slaughter among warring tribes; ethnic cleansing in Europe. Imagine if the entire population of the earth, with the exception of eight people died.
18. The reason for the destruction in Noah’s time: man’s extreme wickedness

a. **(Gen. 6:5, 11-12)** “Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the **thoughts of his heart** was only evil continually. .. 11 Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; **for all flesh had corrupted their way** upon the earth.”

1. God’s past Judgments as recorded by Jesus (Flood and Destruction of Sodom)

1. **Noah (Luke 17:26 – 27)** “26 "And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: 27 "They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.

2. **Sodom and Gomorrah** (Luke 17:28 – 29) “28 "Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; 29 "but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.”

3. (2 Peter 2:6) “if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and **made them an example** of what is going to happen to the ungodly;”

1. The curses of the old covenant: **(Deuteronomy 28: 15, 20 - 32, 45, 49 - 61).**
2. These are the things which happened to God’s people at the hands of the Assyrians and Babylonians **(2 Chronicles 36:17).**
3. Note the description of the Valley of the Son of Hinnom [valley of slaughter];

 (**Jer. 19:6, 11).**

D. The destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans is another illustration of God’s punitive wrath. **(Mt. 24; cf. 23:37, 38). “37** "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! 38 "See! Your house is left to you desolate;”

1. Josephus provides excruciating detail of the suffering brought on Jerusalem by God via the hands of the Romans. (The Wars of the Jews, Books V and VI)
2. This destruction was the coming of the Lord in judgment against a rebellious nation **(Mt. 24:30; cf. 34).**
3. **Our Response to the Divine Wrath**
4. The fear of God’s wrath should cause us to avoid sin when we are tempted and cause us to repent when committed.
5. There are some who argue that fear of God’s wrath is somehow a lower motivation or perhaps not even a legitimate motivation for obedience.
6. Why do the Scriptures use this motivation!?

a. (**Hebrews 10:31) “31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”**

**b. (Romans 2:5-6**) “5 But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 6 who WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS:”

1. Fear of God’s wrath will cause us to give up sin even when others know nothing of our disobedience.
2. There is no escaping the wrath of God if we choose to become and remain the enemies of God (**Deuteronomy 29:18 - 20; 32:36 - 39**).
3. **Hebrews 4:12 – 13**  “For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.”
4. Knowing the coming wrath of God, we should be concerned about the souls of others

**(2 Cor. 5:10 - 11)**  “10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. 11 Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men,”

**Conclusion:**

1. The love of God needs to be preached. We must also make people aware of the wrath of God.
2. In the day of final judgment, there will be those who will face the wrath of God (**Romans 2:5 - 9).**
3. The examples we have noted illustrate the firmness of God’s determination to punish unrighteousness.
4. Consider the restraint necessary for God not to punish sin immediately. God is longsuffering also **(2 Peter 3:9 - 10).** Don’t mistake his patience for forgetful unconcern.
5. God calls us for salvation, to escape the wrath of God upon the disobedient

1. (**1 Thess.5:9- 10) “For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him.**

2. (1 Thess. 1:10) “and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.”

3. In Christ alone we can escape the wrath of God that we deserve.

 a. **Isaiah 53:4-5, 10 – 11** Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted.

 5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed…. **10** But the LORD was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, And the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand. 11 As a result of the anguish of His soul, **He will see it and be satisfied**; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities.”

 b. (1 Peter 2:24) “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.”

 c.. (1 John 2:1 – 2) “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; 2 and He Himself is the **propitiation** for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.”

 d. If we reject the gift of God’s merciful sacrifice and the blood of propitiation to atone for our sins, nothing remains but certain fearful expectation of judgment. (Heb. 10:26 – 31)

4. (John 3:16; 8:24; Mark 16:16; Eph. 1:3) “Every spiritual blessing…is in Christ.”