

# Is There Wrath in God?

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 27 January 2008

Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0:00] Romans 1, beginning in verse 18. The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men! who suppress the truth by their wickedness.

! Since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities, His eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified Him as God nor gave thanks to Him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their heart to sexual impurity, for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator who is forever praised.

Amen. Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way, the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another.

[1:23] Men committed indecent acts with other men and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion. Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, He gave them over to a depraved mind to do what ought not to be done.

They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed, and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant, and boastful.

They invent ways of doing evil. They disobey their parents. They are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things, but also approve of those who practice them.

Surveys show that nine out of ten Americans believe and agree that there is a God. There is a God. On this we're agreed. But then ask them, What is that God like?

And all the agreement is shattered. Why is that? Why is it when there is one book written by God in which He tells us what He is like, why is there not unanimity on man's part as to what that God is like?

[2:49] Well, it's because men do not answer the question, what is God like, by the scriptures, but rather by their own imaginations.

Well, I like to think of God like this. Ever heard people describe God that way? And what follows is what they would like God to be.

Well, I have a simple question for all of you who believe in God. Is there wrath in God? And it's not an academic question just for a few theologues or seminarians that have interest in these things. We're talking now about the God in whose hand you and I are, the God who will one day judge us. It behooves us to know what kind of God He is, and namely, is there wrath in God?

And in answering that question, I'm not all that interested in surveys of men. And I trust you're not all that interested in what I think, but that we are all interested in what God's Word says.

[3:57] And what He says about Himself. So to the Bible we will go, and as we do, we find a resounding, yes, there is wrath in God.

Notice, first of all, the descriptions of His wrath. Here we must be so selective because of the sheer number of verses. We could fill up the hour just reading texts of Scripture on God's wrath.

Indeed, A.W. Pink points out that there are more verses in the Bible about the anger and fury and wrath of God than there are about His love and tenderness. I did a word search on anger, angry,

and wrath, and had 600 verses to look up.

Not all of them, of course, had to do with God's anger and wrath. Some had to do with man's, but a good number of them, I didn't count, had to do with God's wrath.

So just listen to a sampling, that's all we have time for, of ways that God describes His own wrath and anger in the Scriptures. He speaks in Revelation 16, 19 of the fury of His wrath.

[5:09] In Jeremiah 21, 5, He speaks of His great wrath. I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and a mighty arm in anger and fury and great wrath.

I don't even have time to give you the references, but listen how God describes this. He speaks of His fiery wrath, His fierce anger, His furious anger, His great anger, His jealous anger, His raging anger, His hot anger, His burning anger.

Exodus 15, 7, You unleashed your burning anger. It consumed them like stubble, as if it were a horse being held back, and then He just let go of the reins and unleashed it, and the result was they were consumed.

Well, again, dozens and dozens and dozens of texts. What should we learn from that? What conclusions should we draw?

Well, surely this much, that God's wrath is real and He wants us to be aware of it. It fills the Bible.

And if men will doubt God's wrath, it's not because of a lack of biblical evidence.

[6:30] If men will deny His wrath, it will be in the face of God's own statements to the contrary. So those are just a few of the descriptions of His wrath that we meet up with in Scripture.

Secondly, the expressions of His wrath. Turn to Psalm 7. Psalm 7.

Because God has not only told us about His wrath, but He has also expressed it. He has shown it. He has exercised it. Psalm 7.

And verse 11. A very short statement, and yet one that we need to hear. God is a righteous judge. A God who expresses His wrath every day. That means God is angry today. That means He's expressing His wrath today.

[7:36] We're not talking about a God of the Old Testament. We're talking about current affairs. What is true of God right now? Well, He is a God who expresses His wrath every day.

Every day. Now, He's holding much back. The Bible does teach us that. He's holding back much of His wrath. But He still is daily exhibiting His wrath on the earth.

Indeed, all of human history since the fall is a record. It's a testament to the wrath of God. From the beginning, when He chased Adam and Eve out of the garden and brought death to all men, God has been expressing His wrath.

Now, there are some people you don't want to get angry with. Because they have power to hurt you. There are other people that you really don't care if they do get angry at you.

Because they cannot hurt you. The three-year-old neighbor boy can be having a temper tantrum in your yard. And you just put your hand on His head and all of His kicks come short of you and all of His punches never reach you.

[8:42] He's very angry, but it's no sweat. He cannot hurt you. God is not like that. You don't want God angry with you. Because He is the Almighty.

And the Bible speaks of the wrath of the Almighty. In other words, omnipotence stands behind the purposes of His wrath and carries them out.

Is God angry? He has all power to punish. And He's the one who expresses His wrath every day. Look at verses 12 and 13 of Psalm 7.

If He does not relent, He will sharpen His sword. He will bend and string His bow. He has prepared His deadly weapons. He makes ready His flaming arrows.

Now here's a man getting ready for battle. And what's he doing? He's got a stone and he's sharpening his sword. Why? Because he wants it to be more effective in killing the enemy.

[9:47] And now he's stringing his bow. He's left it unstrung so that he would not take any of the power out of his bow. And so he lets it relax. But now it's time for battle.

And he strings his bow. And he puts the tension on it as he tightens the string. And now he prepares his arrows. And he's got fire ready to dip them in oil and to send them on their way. Indeed, one passage of Scripture says that God has His arrows pointed. And all He must do is let it go. This is the picture that we have of God in the Scriptures.

One of the pictures that He has prepared His deadly weapons. A whole arsenal full of them. Jeremiah 50 and verse 25.

Think of some of the weapons of God's wrath that are in His arsenal.

[10 : 49] What all has He brought out? We think of the United States in our arsenal of weaponry. There's nothing compared to God's arsenal and His weapons of wrath. All creation is at His beck and call to use as a weapon of wrath.

Think of water. We need it for life. But He destroyed all the life on the face of the earth but for eight people. When He turned it into a weapon of wrath in the global flood.

Fire. We like it for warmth. Makes our cars go down the road. But fire fell from heaven and consumed the cities of the plain. Because of His wrath against their inhabitants.

We read of the earth. We're so thankful for earth. We like to feel it under our feet. But He made the earth open its mouth and swallow up rebels in Israel. Because of His wrath against them.

Earthquakes. Whirlwinds. Tornadoes. Hurricanes. In my wrath I will unleash a violent wind. And in my anger hailstones and torrents of rain will fall with destructive fury.

[11 : 59] Ezekiel 13. 13. There were once two bears that mauled 42 irreverent young people. There were once lions.

That devoured Daniel's enemies. There was once an arrow just shot in the air toward the enemy that found the very chink in Ahab's armor.

He who thought payday would never come for his sin against Naboth. God used that arrow as a weapon of wrath and led it directly to the chink in the armor of Ahab.

God has used a stone to find the forehead of a Goliath who defied him. He's used hailstones to kill the enemy more than the very swords of Israel.

He's used bolts of lightning. He's used famine. Yes, God has starved men in his wrath against them. He's used the plagues.

[12 : 57] Ten of them on Egypt. Decimating the land. Killing all the firstborn. He's used diseases. We think of Eleazar struck with blindness and Achan. Think of King Herod eaten by worms.

Yes, those little critters. They're made by God and they answer God's call. And when he opens his arsenal and brings out his weapons of wrath, worms respond.

Angels he calls my warriors to carry out my wrath. Isaiah 13.3 Government officials who bear the sword do not bear it in vain.

But they're called the agents of God's wrath. Romans 13.4 God has used wicked men and nations as instruments of his wrath.

Isaiah 10.5 Assyria is the rod of my anger in whose hand is the club of my wrath. That great nation Assyria who's just sweeping over the land and destroying peoples and nations.

[13 : 56] What are they? They are the rod of my anger. They are the club of my wrath. He raised up the Babylonians to give full vent to his wrath.

To pour out his fierce anger on Judah. Lamentation 4. And then he stirred up the Medes as his weapon of wrath to destroy Babylon. The other weapon of his wrath. Isaiah 13.

The Lord Almighty is mustering an army for war. They come from faraway lands, from the ends of the earth. The Lord and the weapons of his wrath to destroy the whole country.

See the day of the Lord is coming. A cruel day with wrath and fierce anger. To make the land desolate and to destroy sinners within it. I will make the heavens tremble and the earth will shake from its place.

At the wrath of the Lord Almighty. In the day of his burning anger. God has used nations as instruments of wrath. And we would be wrong to assume that he's not doing so today.

[14 : 57] That there are wars going on today. In which God is exercising and expressing his wrath through nations. Punishing sinners. There are no ends then to the weapons of his wrath.

His arsenal is full. As in so many ways God is expressing his wrath every day. Now the New Testament passage that says much the same was the passage read for us in Romans chapter 1.

If you'd look there in verse 18. It says the wrath of God is being revealed. There it is again. It is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men.

Who suppress the truth by their wickedness. This is an ongoing reality in this fallen world. God's wrath is being revealed constantly. It's the present continuous tense.

It's happening all the time. God's revelation of his wrath. Just as God's goodness is always being revealed. So God's wrath is always being revealed.

[15 : 59] But here in Romans 1. God's wrath is revealed in a very strange way. It's just revealed in just giving people what they want.

And we wouldn't immediately label that as the wrath of God. When we see a bolt of lightning come out and kill someone who's just cursed God. We say ah the wrath of God. But when we see people just going on in their sinful desires.

And God giving them over to do what they want. Whatever their sinful hearts suggest. We don't often think that's the wrath of God upon them. But if we read Romans 1.

18 and following correctly. That's how we're supposed to think. Because here God's wrath is revealed from heaven. In just giving people what they want. Notice verse 24.

Giving men over to their own sinful desires. Their own desires for sexual immorality. And he gives them over to it. Have at it men. Verses 26 and 27.

[17:00] Giving them over to their shameful lusts. And to their perversions. And then letting them suffer the consequences for having done so. Verse 28. Since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God.

He gave them over to a depraved mind. To do what ought not to be done. And then you read the list that follows. Of what ought not to be done. And why is that sounding so much like current events in the United States of America?

You want to see the wrath of God? Read the newspaper. You want to see the wrath of God? Go into our schools. Go into our workplaces. Go into our marketplaces. See what people are doing. See them being given over to whatever they want to do.

See the restraints being pulled off of them. Men do not want to retain the knowledge of God. And so we take it out of our schools. And we take it off of our courthouses. We can't have God's law posted.

And to be a voice to our conscience. We don't want the knowledge of God. We don't want it taught that He's the creator of heaven and earth. And so we take it out. And what has God done?

[18:06] He's just, okay. You want a mind without God? Then have it. And He takes off His restraints. And our country is becoming more and more a country without God in our thoughts.

And what is the result? What are the results? God is not seen to be the creator. And man is not seen to be the special creature made in the image of God.

His life is expendable. And we see it in abortion and murder. And we see it in school shootings. And all sorts of things. Just the fruit of God having given us over to what we want.

Life without God. A mind with God not in the picture. Three times God says He gave men over to what they wanted. And that is the wrath of God being revealed.

So in all your considering of the wrath of God, don't forget this most fearsome expression of God's wrath. It may not seem like wrath to you.

[19:08] You get to do what you want if you're one of these. And nobody's stopping. Father and mother have been pulled away. And now you're on your own and you can do whatever you want. And you think of it as freedom.

And God calls it His wrath. Giving you over to your own decisions. Far more horrendous, fearful than a bolt of lightning.

Because what it allows you to do is to store up wrath. For the day of wrath. And that's what he goes on to say in chapter 2. There's yet a future expression to God's wrath.

It's called the day of wrath. His final judgment upon all who are outside of Christ. When they are cast into hell. And punished according to what they've done.

Chapter 2 of Romans verses 5 and following. But because of your stubbornness. And your unrepentant heart. You are storing up wrath against yourself.

[20:07] For the day of God's wrath. When His righteous judgment will be revealed. And God will give to each person according to what He's done. And so on it goes.

There will be wrath and anger. For those who are self-seeking. And who reject the truth. There will be trouble and distress. Strange statement this.

Storing up wrath. Against themselves. For the day of wrath. Kids what do you usually store up?

What do you usually save up for yourself? For the future? You save something that you like.

Something valuable. Something that's for you. You save for instance money. Money. And so every week perhaps. As you get some money. You store up some of it.

You put it in a savings bank. You go and make a deposit. Because you're storing it up for the future. That you might have that money. Someday. To marry a wife.

[21:04] And to provide for her. You're not thinking of that yet. But you're storing up something good. Here's a strange thing. And people are storing up wrath. Against themselves. For the day of wrath.

Well they don't think. That they're storing up wrath. They're just doing whatever they want. God has given them up. To their own choices. And so they're just doing. Whatever they want. And every moment.

That they remain unrepentant. Of their sin. They're making another deposit. In the bank of God's wrath. For the day of wrath. When his righteous judgment. Will be revealed. And he will give to all men.

According to what they have done. And in that day. Amazing things will happen. Isaiah says. That men will flee to the caves. And the rocks. And the holes in the ground. From dread of the Lord. And the splendor of his majesty. When he rises to shake the earth. Men don't like to live in holes in the ground.

[21:59] Men like to live in nice houses. And when you see men. Who like to live in nice houses. With carpet. And with drapes. And with warm blankets. And when you see them.

Crawling into holes of the earth. You must know something. Strange is happening. The day of wrath has come. And in that day. Men will throw away.

To the rodents. And bats. Their idols of gold. Their idols of silver. Which they have made to worship. The very things. That they've sold their souls for. Their idols.

That which they put. In the place of God. And live for. Silver and gold. Wealth. And they're throwing it. To the bats. And the rodents. They're throwing it. And leaving it.

As a worthless thing. That it is. You see. The day of wrath. Reveals the value. Of all things. And in that day. The great day. Of God's wrath. People will realize.

[22:55] These things are worthless. They cannot save me. And they'll throw money away. Be strange sight. Wouldn't it? To be walking down. Bremen today. And see a man. Taking his life savings.

Out of the bank. And just throwing it. Into the gutter. You'll see that. In the day of God's wrath. People will be abandoning. All that they had treasured. And valued. For they will see.

As Proverbs says. That wealth is worthless. In the day of wrath. But righteousness. Delivers. From death. Oh righteousness. It's so devalued. But in that day.

It will be valued. In the great day. Of God's wrath. John describes it. In vision. Doesn't he? In revelation. He's given. To see.

In vision form. This day. That Jesus warned against. That the prophets warned against. And John sees it. That's the way God revealed it to him. He was able.

[23:49] In his own mind's eye. To see this day of wrath. And you know what he saw? He saw great men. Presidents. And kings.

People that usually live in palaces. And in white houses. Presidential palaces. And generals. These are the bravest. Of a nation. And rich. And poor. And slave. And free. The ordinary man. The rich. The famous. All of them alike.

And they're all doing the same thing. They're running. They're running. And hiding in caves. And hiding in the rocks of the mountains. And they're calling to the mountains and the rocks. Fall on us. Fall on us. Kids. Have you ever heard someone. Asking a mountain to collapse on them.

[24:47] We hear of miners that are trapped in caves in the ground. And the mountain falls on them. It's a terrible tragedy. Here are men. Educated men.

Rich men. Powerful men. Calling for that to happen to them. Fall on us. Why? What in the world is happening in this day? Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne.

And from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of their wrath has come. And who can stand? Men that didn't give two cents to the reality of God.

Didn't give a thought to the fact of the day of wrath. Here it is. It's arrived. Front and center. And they're asking the mountains to fall on them. Somehow obliterate them.

So that they don't have to face the one on the throne. And the wrath of the Lamb. That would be Jesus. That would be Jesus. And John sees Jesus. And his wrath.

[25:45] That terrifies all men. God is expressing his wrath every day. But he's holding much of it back. For the day of wrath.

It is a day of grace today. But one day. He will unleash his wrath in full unmixed fury. It is something to avoid at all costs.

Let that be the lesson of the expressions of God's wrath. This is something to avoid at all costs.

Then thirdly. The provocations of God's wrath. If God's wrath is real.

If it is so terrible. That no one can stand before it. Then we ought to want to know. What things provoke God's wrath. What provokes God's wrath.

What stirs up. And arouses his wrath. And there are dozens of verses. That just use that very language. And tell us. What provokes. His wrath.

[26 : 44] And you'll be glad to know this morning. That there's really only one thing. That provokes his wrath. Just one thing. Children. That provokes the wrath of God. And it's sin.

It's sin. Colossians 3 and verse 6. Is just named. Several sins. And then. Paul says. Because of these. The wrath of God is coming.

It's because of sin. That the wrath of God. Is coming. It's because of sin. That he's angry with sinners. John Murray.

Defines the wrath of God this way. The wrath of God. Is the inevitable reaction. Of the divine holiness. Against sin. The inevitable.

The only. Reaction. Of the holiness of God. To sin. It's the only way holiness. Knows how to behave. In the presence of sin.

[27 : 42] He goes on to say. Sin is the contradiction. Of his being. And he cannot. But recoil against. That which is the contradiction. Of himself. This holy revulsion.

Is his wrath. God is repulsed. By sin. I don't know what repulses you. Think of the most revolting. Thing that you can think of. And you say. I'm not forcing myself. To get upset about that. Everything in my being. Is repulsed by that. That's God's.

Response to sin. Everything about his. Holy being. Is revolted. And recoils. Against. Sin. In other words. God's wrath.

Is not a bad mood. He gets into. Once in a while. But it's due to his very nature. Who he is. Sin is. Is obnoxious. To his very being. Always.

[28 : 39] And he naturally. Detests. All that is not pure. And right. And just. And in this. We see. One of the ways. That God's anger. Is not like man's anger. You may know an angry man.

And you're never quite sure. What's going to set him off. Will it be something I say. Something I do. Some little thing. And. You feel like you're living. At the foot of Mount Vesuvius. And you never know.

When it's going to blow. God isn't like that. You know precisely. What sets his. His anger off. You know exactly. What provokes him. It's sin. Always sin.

Ever. Sin. Only. Sin. He's perfectly. Consistent. So his wrath. Is not a fit of rage. That he flies into. Once in a while. He's always angry. At sin. He's never. Not angry. With sin. Right now. He's slow to anger. We read.

[29 : 33] In scripture. Thank God. He's slow. To punish. He holds. Back his wrath. Isaiah 48. He bears. With great. Patience. The objects.

Of his wrath. He's never. Out of control. He's never. Just. In a rage. Where he does things. That he later. Regrets.

Always. And only. Controlled. Righteous. Anger. Only. Giving. Exactly. What the sinner. Deserves. God. But his wrath. For sin. Is as steady.

As his love. For righteousness. Many reject. The wrath. Of God. These. These. Nine out of ten.

That believe. In God. Is there wrath. In God. They would say. No. No. No. That's.

That's the God. Of the Old Testament. Or. Of course not. God is a God. Of love. How can a God. Of love. Feel hatred. And wrath. And I say.

[30 : 26] How can he not. How can he not. He who loves. Righteousness. Cannot. But help. Hating. Wickedness.

It's said of our Savior. You have loved. Righteousness. And hated. Wickedness. It's just. Two sides. Of the same coin. It's his holiness.

And his holiness. Loves righteousness. With a passion. And his holiness. Hates wickedness. With a passion. It has to be so. Any supposed.

Love for righteousness. That does not include. Hatred for wickedness. It is phony. It's words only. If you love darkness. You'll hate the light. If you love the light.

You'll hate darkness. So it's sin. Then. That provokes. God's wrath. So. Just one thing. Children. That makes God angry.

[31 : 21] If you have no sin. You're safe. From his wrath. Forever. Nothing. To harm you. But if you sin. You have a great problem.

You've provoked the wrath. Of a holy God. You who are in the adult Sunday school class. You heard. Octave Bourgeois. Explain.

Something of the way. God saved him. Last. Week. In the Sunday school hour. He was driving down the road. Viewing something of. God's creation. And felt his own smallness.

And then. He realized. That that God. Was angry with him. And he says. He realized. That he not only was. Against. What he had done.

But against. Who he was. You see. He's a sinner. And that's why he sins. And God is against.

[32 : 16] Sin. And he's against. Sinners. His wrath. Stands. Against. Sinners. It's provoked. Not only by what I do. But what I am.

That sin. Within me. It's a systemic problem. It runs right through. My whole nature. It's enmity. Against God. It's anti-God principle. In my heart. By nature.

My mind. And will. And desires. Are self-centered. Not God-centered. And God hates that. He hates it. With a passion. And so. Ephesians 2. And verse 3.

Says. We were by nature. Objects of wrath. People who are now. Under the favor of God. Paul himself included. The apostle Paul. Said. We were once. By nature.

By what we were. By virtue of our. Our humanity. Fallen in Adam. What we were. As we came into this world. By nature. We were objects of wrath. That is. To say. That by nature.

[33 : 10] The way our mind. And our. And our affections. And our wills. Operated. It was all obnoxious. To God's wrath. Our very.

Nature. Was opposite. Of God's nature. And so you see. There's quite a problem here. Isn't there? That. That my nature. Is opposite. Of God's nature.

And he's not going to change. He'll never come to love. My sinful nature. And I can never change myself. To give my own self.

A new nature. I need help. I need help. Outside of myself. But I also. I not only need a new heart. I also need a way of escape.

From the wrath of God. For my sins. Because if I got a new heart today. And never sinned again. I still have got sins. That God hates. On my record. Where am I going to find escape. From all my sin.

[34 : 04] We need a way of escape. From God's wrath. Because who can stand before you. When you are angry. Who can withstand his indignation. Who can endure. His fierce anger. No one.

No one. Well we come to the last point. Then the escape. The great escape. From his wrath. Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones. Was a minister in London.

Greatly used of God. He died 27 years ago. And in an interview. With Christianity Today. Just before his death. He was asked. What are your parting words. To this generation.

And he said. Flee. The coming wrath. Short. And sweet. Let my parting words. To this generation. Be these.

And he took the words. From John the Baptist's mouth. Flee. The coming wrath. Now the wrath of God. Is not a popular message. But hear me. It's never been.

[35 : 01] Men. Men have never been. Glad to hear. That God's angry with them. But the church of our age. Has caved into the world's preference. To ignore God's wrath.

And in so doing. Has reduced. And redefined the gospel. In terms of men's felt needs. So men are invited. To come to Christ. For all sorts of reasons.

Come to Christ. For fulfillment in life. Come to Christ. If you want to be happy. Come to Christ. If you want to be successful. In your business. In your relationships.

In your marriage. And with your children. Things go better with Christ. As the bumper sticker says. But absent.

From all of this. Gospel. Is man's greatest need of all. That our greatest problem. Is not passing through. Our 80 years of existence here.

[35 : 58] Unfulfilled. At a job that I don't really like. With a wife or husband. That really doesn't. Do much for me. That is not our greatest problem. Our greatest problem.

Is that without Christ. We are exposed. To the eternal wrath. Of God. That's what hell is. The undiluted. Unmixed. Unending.

Wrath of God. Is a place where he gives full vent. To his wrath. All restraints. Are lifted. That's. Our great problem. And Martin Lloyd-Jones.

Saw that God's wrath. Was the missing note. Of the church. The world is marching. To hell in mass. And fewer. Raising their voices. To warn them. To flee. The coming wrath.

Your felt need. Is not to escape. From God's wrath. You may not even. Concern yourself. With God's wrath. You may not even feel. That you're under God's wrath.

[36 : 55] But it is your greatest need. You see. If your gospel. Is reduced. To come to Jesus. For love. Joy. Peace. Fulfillment. Then your gospel.

Will soon be irrelevant. To your world. Because there are some people. Who find their fulfillment. In Buddhism. And in the Beatles.

And in sports. And in sex. And in money. And so the gospel. Of fulfillment in Christ.

Is dismissed. And Christ remains irrelevant. To them. Well I'm glad Jesus works for you. Drugs works quite well for me. I'm finding fulfillment. I'm finding peace. But what makes our gospel. Relevant to every man. And woman. Boy. And girl. Is the wrath of God. The truth is. That we're all sinners. And that God is angry.

[37 : 53] With us all. Because of our sins. Against him. And his wrath. And anger. Will be poured out on us. In hell forever. Unless. Unless. We take refuge. In his son. The Lord Jesus Christ.

The Bible tells us. Jesus. It's Jesus. Who rescues us. From the coming wrath. 1 Thessalonians 1. 10. It is Jesus. Who rescues us. From the coming wrath.

We are saved from wrath. Through him. Romans 5. And verse 9. You see. Your drugs. And your sex. And your football. And your eastern mysticism. May give you some happiness. And thrills. It may give you. A sense of fulfillment. In life. It may even give you. Some peace. But they will not rescue you. From the wrath of God. Only Jesus.

Rescues us. From the coming wrath. You see how the gospel. Is relevant. To everyone. But it loses. Its relevance. When we redefine it. In terms of men's felt needs.

[38 : 52] That's where the world is. Come on. Tell me. Tell me how I can be fulfilled. Tell me how I can be happy. Tell me how I can be successful. Nobody is asking.

Tell me how God is angry with me. And what the only answer is. No. There's only one way of escape.

And that's to get into the place. Where God's wrath has already fallen. It's illustrated in the early history of our country. The American Indians escaped the prairie fires.

With methods that are still used to fight forest fires today. If they saw smoke arising in the horizon. Coming their way. What would they do? They would start a fire.

But it was a controlled fire. They wouldn't let it get out of control. And they'd just let it burn. And they'd stand there with their instruments. To beat it out if it got too strong. And they would just keep the fire burning.

[39 : 48] Until it burned off this area. Charred. Scorched earth. Right in the middle of this dry and dusty prairie.

And then they would put themselves right into the center. Of that burnt out area. And they would gather their family. Everything valuable to them.

And stand in that burnt off part of ground. And they would watch the flames of fire coming toward them. And they would come right up to the edge of that circle. And the flames of fire would go right around them.

Why? Because everything combustible, you see, had already been burnt. There was nothing left to burn. Fire had fallen there already.

And my friend, that's the only. That's a picture of the only safe place to be. From the coming wrath of God. It is to get into Jesus Christ.

[40 : 49] Where the fire of God's wrath has already fallen. You see, apart from the wrath of God, you can't understand what happened on the cross. Jesus goes to the cross as our substitute.

He dies in the place of his people. And what does he take? He takes our sins. Remember the one thing that provokes God's wrath. He takes our sins.

He bore our sins in his body to the tree. That's why God poured out his unmixed wrath upon his son at Calvary.

That's why he cried, why have you forsaken me? God's wrath for sin was falling on our substitute. The cup of God's wrath was put into his hand.

And he drank it to the bottom. So there's no more wrath to bear. He was cursed under the wrath of his father. And so there's no more wrath. No more curse for us.

[41 : 50] Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. As it is written, curse it is everyone who is hanged on a tree. Now that's what the Bible calls propitiation.

The Bible calls propitiation. 1 John 2.2 He, Christ, is the propitiation for our sins. He is the one who turns away the wrath of God from us by absorbing it himself.

He steps in and takes the full blow so that we have no wrath of our own to bear. He lets it consume him instead of us.

So there's therefore now no condemnation for those who are in the burnt out area in Christ Jesus, where God's wrath and fire has already fallen.

So you must get into Christ. All your sins must be laid on him outside of Christ. Doesn't matter what you're doing outside of Christ. That's where the wrath of God is.

[42 : 53] Outside of Christ, your sins are still obnoxious to God's wrath. Outside of Christ, his wrath will find you out in hell. It's only inside of Christ that there's safety.

It's one safe place in all the world where God's wrath is turned away from us. It'll never touch us here. How do I get into Christ? I get into Christ by faith.

You come to Jesus and you confess your sins to him. And you ask him to have mercy on you. And you believe his promise. That's faith.

You take him at his word that he said that whoever believes on him, whoever trusts in him will not perish, but have everlasting life. That's how you get into Jesus.

Trust in him. Whoever believes in the son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the son will not see life. For God's wrath remains on him.

[43 : 50] You see, everywhere else, God's wrath remains on you. It's only in Christ that God's wrath is gone.

You say, oh, I'm very religious. I go to church every Sunday. Outside of Christ, the wrath of God remains on you. You say, I try to be good to my neighbor.

Are you in Christ? No, then you are ripe for the judgment of God. I try to keep the Ten Commandments. I read my Bible. Are you in Christ?

Have you come to Christ? Have you received him by faith? Outside of Christ, the wrath of God remains on you.

John 3, 36. How will you escape if you neglect so great a salvation, so great a Savior? Here is this burnt off area. I am certain that if we were out in a prairie and fires were coming and there was one huge acre that was burned off, we'd all be running to it.

[44 : 56] I'm certain there's not a child here that wouldn't make his way to that burnt off area. But something worse than a prairie fire is coming. It's the thing that causes men to call on the rocks and mountains to fall on them.

It's the wrath of the Lamb. And nobody's running. Nobody's fleeing. Nobody sees any urgency about it. It's almost as if it's not coming.

Where is this coming that he promised? Oh, I urge you to get into Christ. To flee the coming wrath and to run with urgency into Christ this morning.

How does this apply to believers? Well, seeing how much God has to say about his wrath in the one book that he's given us about himself. A.W. Pink says we need to think often about the wrath of God.

Well, if you're reading your Bible, you're doing that, you see. Because it's often here. We're told to consider both the kindness and the severity of God in Romans 11, 22.

[46 : 04] Consider both his kindness, his love, and his severity and his wrath. It's not one or the other. It's both. It's the balance that we need. Just as an imbalance in our diet will lead to great health problems.

So an imbalance of our thoughts will lead to an imbalance in our life. If you have a lack of vitamin C, you will come down with scurvy, perhaps, or other diseases.

And all the vitamin D that you take will not make up for the lack of vitamin C. You need the balance in your diet. And so it is. We need to consider, meditate, and think on both the love of God and on the wrath of God.

It's not an exaggeration to say that our generation of Christians has left off thinking much about God's wrath. It's all about his love today. There's a deficiency of vitamin W, if you would. And all the vitamin L will not make up for it. And the results are observable in the church. Various diseases. Lack of spiritual vitality. So what will, considering the wrath of God, do for us?

[47:20] Number one, it will inflame our love and worship of Jesus Christ. As I think about God's wrath, I realize my sin deserved God's wrath.

If you were to come and see me 50 years from now, you would be visiting me in hell, where I would be in torments. And if you'd come back a million years later, you would find me in hell, suffering God's wrath.

But he, Jesus, rescued me from the coming wrath by taking it upon himself. And if I think long and hard enough about that under the blessing of the Spirit, I start to love my Savior more.

And I start to see that he's the only one worth living for, the only one worth serving. He took God's wrath that I might get God's favor.

It should inflame our love and worship of Jesus. Secondly, it should sober us to the seriousness of sin. Light views of sin abound in the church today. Sin is no big deal.

[48:27] Obedience to God's commandments is viewed as optional. A little bit of sin is okay for the Christian. And it's in part a result of a lack of vitamin W.

To meditate on God's burning indignation against sin would shatter our light views about it. Who can gaze into hell, the hell of God's wrath, and think that sin is a little thing?

Who can visit Calvary and come away with light views of sin? Our sin never looks so ugly as when we see it placed upon our substitute and all of God's wrath poured out upon it.

If we thought about the wrath of God, we would hate our sin more. As we see he hates it, we would come to hate it.

Thirdly, it should increase our fear of God. Psalm 90 and verse 11 makes the connection. Your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you.

[49:37] Fear is due to God. A right fear of God is what we owe him just because of who he is and especially because of his great wrath. Your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you.

And as our sense of his wrath grows, so will our proper fear of him grow. Not much fear of God today, is there? Because we're thinking only of his love, not of his great wrath.

It will instill fear into our worship. Hebrews 12, 28 and 29. Therefore, since we're receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.

That would be his wrath. He's a consuming fire. And God says that acceptable worship with reverence and awe is the result of remembering who he is.

He's a consuming fire. He's a God of wrath. So in whatever else you remember about God, don't forget that he's a consuming fire. A deficiency of that in our day.

[50:48] Where God's wrath is forgotten, reverence and worship will be replaced with flippancy and ease. And standing before him in awe will be replaced with an attitude that trivializes God and brings him down to our own level.

Your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you. And fourthly, it will make us more urgent in our efforts to see sinners saved.

Because knowing the terror of the Lord, we will persuade men, Paul says. And Jude says, we will snatch others from the fire and save them because we believe he is a consuming fire.

And John the Baptist says, flee from the coming wrath. We will warn men to flee the coming wrath. I sometimes wonder whether or not I believe in hell.

Do you ever ask yourself that, Christian? I'm sure that there's a lot of practical denial of hell in the hearts of people who say they believe in it.

[51:50] I've seen it in my own life. If I really believe in hell, I would be found pressing people to flee the coming wrath, to come to Jesus Christ.

And lastly, if we thought more upon the wrath of God, it would make the love and grace of God all the more amazing. Isn't it something that the very reason that men reject the wrath of God out of hand?

Because he's a God of love. Because he's gracious. I will contend that you cannot begin to understand the love and grace of God until you have understood his wrath.

And next time, Lord willing, we're going to move on to meditate on God's love and grace and mercy. And I trust we'll appreciate it all the more because we've seen something of what we deserve. What we deserve from him is wrath. So may our meditations on God's wrath make us healthy Christians who love Jesus more, who hate our sins more, who fear God, who rescue men, and who glory in Jesus Christ and in his love and grace.

[53:00] Let's pray. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for rescuing me from the coming wrath. Thank you for bearing all the punishment and wrath that my sins deserve.

We're here as your people to glory in you, our Lord Jesus, to put no confidence in the flesh. Nothing of our own merit could ever suppress your anger.

But, oh, there's such value in your Son, our Father, that punishing him upon the cross has fully met the claims of your wrath against us. So look on him and pardon us.

Look on him and treat us with favor. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.