

The Wrath of God

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Greetings! It is so good to bring the Gospel of God's grace to you. We are going to talk about the power of eternal life and the influence that God has on humans through what He has accomplished in Jesus Christ. Before we get into this, let me just open this in prayer:

Father, I want to thank You so much that I can stand here today and that I can know Your Gospel, that I can know Your Good News, that I can also know that I speak from the power of what You have accomplished in Jesus.

Father, thank You that You empower me in such a way that many people can be blessed by this message, that many people can be encouraged in what You have done for us and that I can communicate that accurately. Amen

I want to tell you that this message will only be about the goodness of God, the power of God and the love that He has for all of us. It's not going to have its focus on what you need to do to get God to do something for you or it's not going to have the focus on any self-help program when you try to help yourself in trying to follow some form of principles. It is all about the power of God and the influence of the only eternal Being, God, on us, giving us His life.

Before we get into the message, I would like to testify a little about my trip to Uganda. Like many of you know, I've been visiting Uganda and just came back this week. We've had an awesome time! I preached there and it was so good to see hundreds and hundreds of people being impacted by the message of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Grace of God when people are set free from the Law System. The message of the Resurrection is a powerful truth that greatly impacts lives.

I preached at a graduation as well as on a radio station and we have been on the National 8 O'Clock News where we just declaring the Good News of Jesus Christ. Pastor Gerald is the pastor that I worked with and he is such a delight to have as a friend where we can just share the same thoughts. We are the same person, just in different skin. It is wonderful to see how God has brought us together and how we can minister the Gospel of Grace, the very same message together! It is awesome! While I am preaching here it is the same message going out as well as he is preaching in Uganda. We're going to be together again in January where it looks as if we are going to be traveling to India and we will be ministering the Gospel there, together. And, obviously I will invite him to come down to South Africa and Zambia and I think there's a lot of work that we will do together. It is a wonderful friendship that we have and this message of Grace is impacting the world. Amen!

So, if you are in the Uganda area, just check our website and you will know when we come up to that area again. It will be wonderful to see you at one of our meetings and just to minister the Gospel of Grace to you.

We are going to get into the message for today. I'm going to continue to speak on Romans. Last week we tried to do a live stream from Uganda but the internet there is not up to standard so I broadcasted a message that I preached in 2014 on the wrath of God. Many times, when you look at some of your old messages, you realize you can change a little bit here or change a little bit there. But I would say that most of that message, maybe a little tweak here or there, was just absolutely outstanding and it blessed me. Just before I was doing this message, I just watched that old message again and it is so good to know that the wrath of God is not about God being angry and that He wants to kill anybody. That message was about the wrath of God and I think it locks in well with what we are going to talk about today as we go in through Romans.

Romans 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

We are now going to take the message of the wrath of God and link it in to what Paul is trying to communicate here in the first chapter of Romans because Paul is laying down the wrath of God and what the wrath of God is to make a point. He's not trying to teach on the wrath of God. He is not trying to give a good explanation of what the wrath of God is. He is, basically, talking from the perspective where he knows that everybody understands wrath and what wrath actually is and what the wrath of God is. He also explains how the wrath of God is revealed to make a certain point.

The point that Paul is trying to make is that salvation is only by faith and it is for all people who believe in God. That is the point that he is trying to make and that is what we have seen all the way through in Romans, chapter 1.

Let us read from verse 16 and just pick it up from there. Then we are going to go and lay a foundation again of what he tried to say when he said, "The just shall live by faith." And then verse 18 where the big word there is the first word, "For", which basically further explains the passage in Romans 1:17 which says that the just shall live by faith.

Before we get into that, let us first read these two passages:

Romans 1:

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

17 For therein* (which is in the Gospel of Jesus being the Christ) *is the righteousness of God* (the goodness or the fact that God is not a liar) *revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Now, there are some things here that is very important to understand. The first thing we need to understand is that the whole Gospel is about eternal life and God giving eternal life, as a gift, to all of us. That is what the Gospel is about.

The Good News to Adam was, "Adam, through Me, you can have eternal life!"

The Good News to Noah was, "Through Me, you can have eternal life!"

The Good News to Abraham was, "Through Me, you can have eternal life!" And He said it this way: "In you will all the nations be blessed." Then Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

What was the message to the Jews? "If you believe Me, you will have a promised land." In other words, "Through trusting Me, you can live forever. I am the eternal God. Trust Me and you will live forever."

The message that we had from the beginning, to Adam, was that God gives eternal life as a free gift. But we also see that there is some negative part to it. The negative part is that if you try to live by your own power what we would call today, Law Righteousness or unbelief in God or standing in the solitude of yourself or trying to mix your own power with a little bit of God's power trying to mix these things in, you will surely die.

God said, "Through Me you can have eternal life. But, if you don't believe in Me, if you don't trust Me, and you want to stand in the solitude of yourself only t rusting on your own ability, then you are not going to make it!" That's what God said. That is the simplicity of this. We then know that the devil came and he told Adam and Eve that God is a liar, that God does not tell the truth. The devil came and he was actually a liar and lied to Adam and Eve. Then Adam and Eve did not believe God but they believed the devil. That means that they made God out to be a liar. They said, "God lied. He is not the only source of eternal life. I can have life by the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. I will not surely die. I am an eternal being in my own power and I can stand by my own power." They made God out to be a liar.

They knew the truth which was that God is the only source of life but then they kept that truth in unrighteousness. That means they didn't believe God and they said, "Well, God is a liar. We know what God said. We know the truth that He spoke but we choose not to believe Him. We are going to believe something else." They basically put God in the category of liar and themselves and the devil in the power of truth. Then we found that God was not a liar and that He always spoke the truth and we found the truth of God and the truth that God spoke, manifesting in man in that man was then starting to die. So, God was never a liar. He always spoke the truth. What He said from the beginning, is even truth today. The truth is, "By my own power, I cannot do it!" You can try and try and try until you die, but by your trying, you are not going to make it. It is only by the Grace of God. That is the only way we can make it.

What he is saying in Romans 1:16 is: ***For I am not ashamed of*** (Jesus being the One that conquers death and gives us life. That is what we call ***the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes*** (When we look at salvation, salvation needs to be defined. What is salvation? Salvation is defined in ***Romans 1:17 For therein is the righteousness of God*** (or the truth that God is the one that saves from death and gives life; ***the*** goodness or the fact that God is not a liar) ***is revealed*** (by people believing in God) ***from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.***

It says that everyone that believes shall be saved. So, if belief brings salvation, and in the context of verse 16, it says that belief brings life, it means that salvation is the redemption from death. That is what it is. It is not complicated. It is not difficult. It is very simple. God told Adam in the beginning, "Adam, if you want to live forever, trust Me. I am the only source of eternal life." Adam did not believe God. He believed the devil and he thought that he was also a source of eternal life in himself and by his own doing and his own hard work and laboring and toiling, that he can also be a god in himself. He soon found out that God was speaking the truth and death settled in. This death that started to settle in was then a big problem because it brought forth what we would call the fruit of the flesh or sins, in the lives of people, as a proof of what we could call, God not being present in their lives, although God was there. God was always around man. The power of God that brings forth life was not seen inside man.

Let's just wrap this whole thing up.

:16 Paul said, For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it (the Gospel) is the power of God unto salvation (which is to give people life) ...

:17 ... as it is written, The just (those people who are right) ***shall live*** (have life) ***by faith*** (by believing in God). That means that the justice, or justification or righteousness, is defined in believing in God and not in your own hard works neither in ethnicity or anything like that.

Now it goes on. We need to see the context here:

:17 The just (righteous) ***shall live by faith.***

:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

I want to read one of the meanings of the word, wrath. It simply means to have God not present... to be given over to something, which God warns you against. The word, wrath, talks about a reaching or a desire or a total giving over; it is also seen as vengeance or anger; it simply means to give someone over. That is one of the meanings: to give someone over. That's where it comes from.

So, when we say that life comes by belief in God for the wrath of God, or the proof that God is not present, is seen in people that held the truth, which is that you can only live by the power of God in unrighteousness, saying, "I'm not going to believe God!" What he is basically saying is that the just will have life by believing in Jesus.

We find that Jesus trusted the Father and He had life. He was raised from the dead by having faith in the Father. And we who believe in Jesus shall also have life by simply trusting in the Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ and believing in Jesus who is ruling over our sin and death. But, those in the Old Testament, (basically referring to Adam and Eve) who took the truth and kept it in unrighteousness.

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men (Or another word of 'against' here is in, or on, or even the word, through, or over, or by, or before, or into. So, what it is saying here is that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven in all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. So he is saying that those who don't trust God for life and they only believe in their own works, (now he is referring to Adam and Eve and to people in the Old Testament that did not believe in God), he says that the wrath of God or the absence of God's life is seen in their actions. That is basically what he is seeing. So, the wrath of God is not God coming to kill you! The wrath of God is, basically, God not being present in providing life for you. It's like when God said to Adam and Eve, "If you eat of this tree, you will truly die!" Then man was put out of the Garden where he was now standing in the solitude of himself and God said, "We will not give eternal life to man in this condition." We talk about the, I don't know if it is the right word, an involvement, God not being involved as the source of life in those who decided to stand in the solitude of himself. That is what it is all about. The wrath of God is basically God not being involved as the source of your life but where you are using your own power as the source of your life. That is what the wrath of God is... **For the wrath of God** (the uninvolved of God in being the source of life **is revealed from heaven** (It is clearly made visible in seeing the **ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness** (who don't believe the truth.);

So God said to Adam and Eve, "If you don't have your life only as a free gift from Me but you trust in your own ability, you are going to die!" When they did that, we could see death settling into their lives as the very truth that God was speaking. God told them that it was going to happen. We need to understand that it is not God killing people!

Now, back to the Apostle Paul... What is Paul trying to say here? He is trying to make a case and build a case from chapter 1 and this specific verse up to the end of chapter 8 where he is trying to tell people, "Listen. Salvation is not by your works. It's not by ethnicity. It's not by you being God's blue-eyed boy, a Jew, or someone like that. The salvation is found in God giving life to those who believe Him. And those who don't believe in Him and don't trust Him, it's the evidence that the absence of God's life-giving power is inside them and we can see it through their unrighteousness--- basically through the lack of life in them where they fall into... and then he goes on and he was talking about how these people who knew the truth of God and didn't believe God, how they thought themselves to be wise and God not to be wise... looking at verse 21 and how they **became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. their foolish hearts were darkened.**

22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible (the immortal) God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

Now I will explain verse 23 in depth. What he is basically saying is that man was the image of God. In other words, man was a being that didn't have eternal life in himself but is alive on account of God. But then man did not follow the wisdom of God and then became an image of what is temporal and corruptible. In other words, they became a presence of death in the world and the truth about God was then revealed from heaven, even inside these actions of death that started to manifest in man after the fall of Adam. Things like absolute unrighteousness, sexual immorality and all those kinds of things. Those things, the sexual immorality and all those kinds of things, were called the wrath of God. So the wrath of God is not God coming to kill anybody. The wrath of God is a noninvolvement of God in being the source of your life through man's rejection of God as the source of his life. It is not God killing anybody! It is man, standing in the solitude of himself and now the wrath of God or what we can say, God not being involved on account of man walking away from God, is now seeing the person through things like hatred, bitterness, backbiting, haters of fathers and mothers, sexual immorality of all sorts where people are even given over to the power of themselves that men commit things with men that is undesirable and that is against nature... and women with women, etc.

So what is happening here is that Paul is building a case where he is saying, "God says that the only life that you can have is by Me!" But when Adam and Eve did not believe, we can see the truth that God was saying from the beginning that if you stand absent from the life of God that you will not be able to live. And we can immediately see decay and this whole thing of going backwards, manifesting in people.

There are many things there. We don't have to hammer on homosexuality or any of those kinds of things. There are many things that are mentioned up to the end of Romans chapter 1... Things like just anger and drunkenness and all those kinds of things. Those are signs of man standing in the power of himself especially in this case, man, as in Adam. Sometimes we can look at this just individually. For instance, they say, "I have a weakness for alcohol in my life. That means that the wrath of God is upon me." That is not the true context that Romans is written in here. The true context is basically Adam and Eve. He is talking about Adam and Eve that had all the truths before them and how they rejected that truth and how the man, Adam, could not, by his own power, bring forth salvation to humanity. Then he, basically, wants to say that as we were all in this Adam unto death, Christ has now risen as the Messiah of all people. And since God's principle of faith has been like that from the beginning, all these people, that are now in the death that Adam brought, can now believe in Jesus, be they Jew or Gentile, and they can have life by Jesus Christ as a free gift not standing in the power of themselves.

You need to understand that the Law was also given as that which, basically, emphasizes that man by his own power cannot have life. We see that in Romans chapter 3 and we will get into that.

Let us just go quickly and just explain what took place in Adam and Eve here. I mentioned the Law thing here quickly because when I talk about the Law there, I want every person to know how this is relevant to everyday life. You might say, "But this is not relevant to everyday life!" I think it is **most** relevant to everyday life! This truth helps me every day of my life! There is not a day, there is not anything, any case, anything in my life that I take on outside of this understanding. The understanding here is that I don't have to try and preserve my own life! I know I cannot preserve my own life. The only way that my life can ever be preserved is by reliance upon Jesus that rose from the dead and me saying, "I'm under Your rule. You bring life forth in me." Then, as I believe upon that and trust that what God was saying from the beginning is the truth, I find the presence of God and not the presence of self-will power, but the presence of God, and it does bring forth life in me. It brings forth peace. It brings forth wisdom in how to handle things. It brings forth wisdom in how to deal with my children, with family, with the ministry, with everything! It brings wisdom forth effortlessly as God's life is the root of it all. Amen! That's why I think it is very, very important. I've walked in this message for some years now and I want to tell you that it is powerful and does bear great fruit.

Romans 1:20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

I believe what he is talking about here is basically referring to Adam and Eve and that they were without excuse. They knew everything that had to be known about God that His eternal power and Godhead brought everything forth. They understood in their seen world which I believe was an archetypal temple as well and that Adam also represented a high priest and a temple and the whole system there. Everything was placed before Adam and he understood that God was saying that all the visible things, even His eternal power and the fact that He is God and the Godhead, the unity in Elohim, was laid before him and then he didn't believe it. He just said, "I am not going to believe that!" And he believed the lie.

"... they are without excuse They knew exactly what was going on.

:21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God (When they knew that God was the only eternal, they did not glorify Him as the only eternal. They came and said, "We don't need that eternal life to live forever. We shall surely not die! We are also eternal beings in ourselves!" And that is even what the church does today. We say that we are eternal spirits anyway. We are either going to live in heaven or hell and that's it!" But, that is not what God says! God says that man can utterly die! But, it also says that we can be saved, to the uttermost meaning, that we can have eternal life as portrayed in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ, as a free gift, seeing no need to try and preserve our lives by ourselves),

...neither were thankful (They didn't say, "God, You are the only eternal. You are the only immortal and we know that and from You we have our source of power." They said, "No! We can also surely not die!" Then they were not even thankful in the fact that God gives them eternal life as a free gift. I find that today as well. Many times in church, when we say everything is a free gift, it's not a case of thankfulness. It's a case of, "No way! So you want to tell me that I must do nothing? Do you want to say there is no eternal life in my works in what I also need to do?" Then I say, "Yes! There is no eternal life in your contribution to God's work in your life! There is no eternal life in anything you do! He is the only eternal. He is the only immortal. He is the only life Giver and you can only trust Him and as you trust Him, good works will come forth in your life as a result of life being present with you... not as a source from where you get life... and that is very important!)

The Bible says,

:21...their foolish heart was darkened

:22 Professing themselves to be wise (Why? Because they ate of the tree of wisdom. They said, "We are wise in our own power and then} **they became fools,**

:23 And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image (What he was basically saying is that the glory of the incorruptible God they've changed into the image **made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.** (He says, "Man said that he is just like God and God is just like him and that he doesn't need a God. He can walk in the solitude of himself!)

Now it explains the wrath of God: Because they said, "We will stand in the power of ourselves,

24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of (that was in) **their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves:** This means that as long as you believe in God, God will be the one that keeps you from uncleanness and evil lusts and dishonoring of your own body and all those kinds of things. He was the keeper of it. How? By belief and trust upon Him. But, when you trust in your own power and not in God, Romans 7 says, "When the Law came sin revived and I died." He expresses this, clearly, as the wrath of God. It says,

25 Who changed the truth of God (The truth of God was, "If you eat of this tree, you will surely die. Then they said, "That truth of God is not true. It is a lie.") **into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator** (They said, "We believe in ourselves. We can stand in doing the right thing living by our own power." Then they didn't believe in God anymore but they believed in themselves and they made themselves a god and changed the image of God into the image of a man saying, "Well, we are gods in ourselves. We are eternal beings in ourselves and we are just going to have this eternal life and live it without God."

Therefore God, basically, was not involved anymore in their lives on account of the evil belief in their own heart. It is not God withdrawing from man. It is man having another belief not making use of the life of God and that's why it is seen as a giving over or a non-involvement of God... and that is the wrath of God.

So what Paul is doing and what he is building on here is he says that this unbelief came and was manifested as ***all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,***

30 Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

31 Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

What he is saying is, "Listen people! The truth is revealed." Paul said, "I'm not ashamed of the Good News that salvation comes only by belief in God. For the Scripture says that we can only live by belief in God for it is clearly seen that God didn't lie in the beginning and that where He is not involved that decay comes which is worthy of death which means it leads to death. That is all that he is saying in the first chapter of Romans.

I'm ending with this and this is the point I want to make today: The only point that Paul wants to make in **Romans 1:18 "For the wrath of God is revealed..."** is simple this: Life is by trusting in God. The wrath of God or God not being present in our lives, leading to death is revealed in Adam and Eve that did not believe the truth. And we found that this unbelief in the truth brought a decay over all of humanity. That is all that he is trying to say. Paul is simply trying to say, "I'm not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus for the just shall have eternal life by faith for it is quite evident that people, without God, do not have eternal life and they are dying. Then it just used Adam and Eve as an explanation of how this takes place.

So, Paul is building a beautiful case here setting the whole thing up into chapter 2 where he is now going to address the Jews, who were also under death, basically saying to them. "Listen. You think that now because you've got the Law you're not under a death sentence and that you can now stand proud in your own flesh? No! You are still under a death sentence." Jew and Gentile, all people, can only be saved by one thing and that is belief in Jesus Christ and nothing else! That is the case that Paul is building.

Then in chapter 3 we are going to see how he is talking about all people, now united in Christ, have life by reliance upon Him in how He now resists the evil... how He now brings forth a holy life where a holy life is not a prerequisite but where it is a fruit on account of only believing Jesus! That's all... only belief! So that you can say what is the only thing that we must do, if you want to do anything, is allow Jesus to serve you with the fact that He says, "You can only have life through Me. Just believe Me! I was raised from the dead. I am Lord and I rule with My life over you. Believe it!" Just believe that and trust, Iambano (accept), grab a hold of, with a purpose to make use of that, say, "Father, I am available for the life that is in Jesus. It is true that He was raised and You rule in me!" And that shall manifest in your life. Amen and amen

Let me summarize everything: Today, we come to the end of Romans chapter 1. Paul simply comes and says, "I am an apostle of Jesus Christ who was raised from the dead and I have the Good News. This Good News is, that through belief in Jesus and in God and what is promised from the beginning, those who believe on Him will have eternal life. That is true for we have clearly seen the wrath of God, or what we would call the non-involvement of eternal life in those who say, "I separate myself from God and I live by my own power." We all know that nobody can live by his own power! We can only live by the power of Jesus Christ!

God, basically, was not involved anymore in their lives on account of the evil belief in their own heart. It is not God withdrawing from man. It is man having another belief not making use of the life of God and that's why it is seen as a giving over or a non-involvement of God... and that is the wrath of God. I trust this has helped you to understand Romans chapter 1. We went through many messages to get to this point but I trust that his will bless you and set you up for having a great platform for understanding the rest of Romans. Glory to God! I will continue in Romans chapter 2 next week. God bless...