

# Paul and his logic on the WRATH of God

Bertie Brits

July 14, 2019

Today we are going to be talking about the wrath of God that is mentioned in Romans 1. We are now walking through Romans verse by verse. Today we are getting to

**Romans 1:18:**

***For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.***

I was thinking of this verse and it is really a complicated verse to explain. There is a lot to understand in Romans that

you have to have as a foundation because if you don't have that you will not understand that passage. Now, this passage flows into what basically sounds as very condemning verses like,

***:19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them.***

***:20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.***

***:21 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.***

***:22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools,***

***:23 and exchanged the glory (that resembles eternal life) of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.***

If you read on it goes on to say that God gave them over to a reprobate mind so they can dishonor their bodies amongst one another and it goes on like that even unto the last verses.

***Verse 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.***

Then it talks about things like fornication, adultery and all those kinds of things. So, these are difficult passages to explain and I've prayed a lot about this and I read through Romans, studied it out and the Lord has, over time, revealed things to me about Romans and the context wherein it is.

I was hesitant to preach about this but since I said that I'm going to preach through Romans verse by verse and I got to this Sunday and this is the time to preach about this. So, I am going to give it my best shot in explaining what I see there and maybe we will get across a little bit today and then next Sunday we will continue with that.

What we are going to look at today, and I want to start with this, I mentioned a little bit about this last week but then we lost sound so I am going to just backtrack a bit and talk about this. We need to understand the early church setting where people lived, the whole culture, and just have a little bit more of an idea on how things worked back then. Back then everyone in the church did not have a Bible, even the Old Testament, that they could read. Private people didn't possess those writings. They were in the synagogues and then you could go there once a week and maybe sometimes others were talking about it and you could hear someone read the text to you.

Private reading was simply not there. People couldn't go and say, "Well, tonight I am going to read through Isaiah at home." That didn't exist. The people who really knew Isaiah were people and the young Hebrew boys that learned it by heart and then could recite it. It is like a lot of us that come from the Reformed churches, some of the Catholics, would have the Apostles Creed and we would say the Creed and memorize those things. As we memorized that, we could say it again whenever we want to. As we would say that we get a bit of the gospel story there. In the very same way, these folks memorized the scriptures and it wasn't like, "Wow, look how intelligent they are!" That was what they were taught from childhood. They would recite it all together. They would recite large passages of Scripture all together and they would know it.

When we look at the writing of the New Testament or the letters in the time of Paul, papyrus was not as affordable as what paper is today. You couldn't just go down to our shops like CAN or PNA where they sell papers and books and those kinds of things, and just buy yourself a hundred sheets of paper and write a letter to someone and send it. It wasn't done that way. Differing from the area, they say that between five and twenty percent of the people were literate. They could read and not even all of them that could read could write. Not all of them were scribes. They could not write. So some of them could read. Imagine that just five or ten, or twenty percent of the people in a town could read. Today, just about everybody can read. You will go to a place and say the people are illiterate but in westernized countries, I mean most countries in the world, most of the people can read.

Back then, in Rome and in the times of Paul, not many could read. What they would do is, as Paul would write in Greek or whatever language he wrote, he wrote in what is called continuous scripture. That means that there were no spaces, basically no punctuation and no paragraphs. It was just one long word, no paragraphs, no separation at all but just one long word that is five or ten pages long. That is how they wrote. Then that letter was given to somebody who understood, exactly, the whole message. He then would go and read the letter to the people. Then they would hear where the punctuation is, what is exactly said, what is meant.

I'm sure, and this is what I think would be practical, if people had questions, they could ask this person that knows exactly what the writer tried to communicate and he would explain it to them. Sometimes I wish it was in those times that we can just really see what was meant.

So, we find that these writings, these letters, like Romans would be one of them, it was basically written in just one long word. (Bertie showed a slide of a picture of some old Greek texts. One is P46 ... 2Corinthians 11 verses 33 to 12 verse 9. It was dated about 123 to 225 just after Christ. It showed that everything looks like capital letters and it is all one word.)

Bertie shared a slide which basically showed what it would look like in English:

**JESUSISNOWHERE.**

You can read for yourself what is written there. I'll give you a moment just to see what is written there.

Some would say, "**JESUS IS NOWHERE.**"

Some would say, "**JESUS IS NOW HERE.**"

Depending on from where in the United States you are, you might say, "**Yes US is nowhere**", depending on how you read that.

When we look at that way of writing, it is really difficult. I mean, if I wanted to say, "Yes, us is nowhere" and I wanted to explain when our car broke down in the desert, it would have a completely different meaning than saying, "Jesus is nowhere." It would, again, have a completely different meaning in saying, "Jesus is now here." I think, in the Greek, they could make up more or less what was written but I wanted to see how important understanding was in that time and how it was communicated. It was communicated orally. There was an oral communication and that is important to see.

I just want to make another point here. St. Augustine was very impressed with St. Andrews because he could read without moving his lips. That means silent reading like what we are doing today. So, we find in the early Middle Ages, we find people reading quietly. There's no oral tradition anymore. It is starting to fade away. But, in the old times, it was people reading aloud. As they read aloud, the people that heard it would also say it aloud and memorize it so they had a certain message.

Now, what is very important, when I bring across is, this way wherein they communicated was done with some miracle that has just taken place and that was that there was a man, Jesus Christ, that did the impossible.

He was physically raised from the dead after mighty Rome killed Him and in His Resurrection He was basically declaring, "I'm bigger than Rome! I'm bigger than any authority in this world. I make a public spectacle of them in them nailing me to the cross. And then I get raised from the dead, laughing at their power that they thought they had over Me. I am Lord!" That is the backdrop where everything is read. Everything in the New Testament must be read and understood in the light of this amazing truth which is the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

So, with all that said, this is the point that I want to make: Understanding something was of vital importance before you could communicate it. And the way that we read today is we read silently. We take the Bible and we look at the words there and we read it. We don't do it in the presence of somebody or we haven't memorized it in a way where we are saying, "Somebody who has understanding is explaining these words to us." I think a vital part of communicating the Gospel got lost in just silent reading. I don't say that we should just do it orally and all of that. I just think that we need to communicate this powerful understanding of the death and the resurrection and have that as a bedrock from where we continue our Gospel.

As a summary, before we get into those difficult passages, I want to bring to your attention the following: If you want to understand the scripture, if you truly want to understand the Gospel, this is very important: You need to know that man, when he was made was mortal and that there was an immortal God that was promising eternal life to people. It was like God gave being to man and then He wanted to give eternal being to man as man would trust in Him and believe upon Him. This promise was from the beginning. God, from the beginning, from before He made any human, His plan was that He, as an eternal, ever living being, will bring forth a being that's got a free will and a mind. And through a free will and a mind and trust and reliance upon Him, a being that is functioning like Him will have access to the eternal existence that God has. That is the boundaries wherein we define the whole Gospel. We need to understand that. I almost want to say that if we cannot believe that, it would be very, very difficult to understand the Gospel.

I did not believe that when I got into the Grace message. I believed that I was just an eternal spirit. And even after I was in the Grace message and preaching a penalty substitutionary atonement gospel, I was saying that I am, and all of us, are going to live forever anyway. It just depends where we are going to live. You are either going to live in heaven or you are going to live in hell. But, thank God for Jesus Christ that He fulfilled the law and made the way to heaven very easy. And that made me happy inside the paradigm where I defined myself as an eternal being actually making God a liar... but it wasn't knowingly. I didn't know! And so many of us don't know that. We don't understand that.

But, if we want to understand the Gospel the way that Paul understood the Gospel we have to change the foundation from where we interpret everything. We need to see that there was an eternal God and He wanted people to be eternal. He wanted eternal beings and then He made beings from the dust of the earth

(And there's a lot to say about that which I cannot get into now and I'm not ready to even preach on that although I do believe it with all my heart. There are certain things about Genesis and all of that which is very mind-blowing, that we need to get, but before we get that it is more important is this simple truth because some might say, "These things are so complicated!")

I wrote an article and I started the article by saying when fear speaks to me and basically says, "Bertie, why do you want to bring something that further confuses the Church? They are already very confused. Just leave them the way it is and just tell them all the time that God loves them and that's all! But, that is not what I believe is a good foundation to have understanding of what God came to do. When we look at the foundation of the Gospel, this is it: You need to know that there was an immortal, eternal, being that wanted to give people eternal existence as physical human beings. That was what His dream was from the beginning. Then He created a man from the dust of the earth which is all language talking about the mortality of this being. Then He took this mortal being and He promised eternal life to him. This being did not believe it, walked in his mortality, didn't want to honor God for who He was and didn't want this eternal life by God and God gave him over to live that way.

From there we find all the pain and destruction and turmoil and hurt a sickness and disease and whatever you want to call it and we find that flow from there. That's what went wrong. And then, with that in mind, an eternal God went to a mortal man and promised him eternal life. He wanted to give him eternal life and this person wasn't grateful. He knew everything he could know about God but didn't want to accept it. As he didn't want to accept it God gave him over to live by the power of his own mortality and that brought him to death. Now that is a very sad thing.

So how will we define good news? Good news would be that if God can come and bring forth a man that is in this condition of death and that this man, as the first man that disobeyed, if he can come and now conquer death and then appoint him, as what the first Adam was appointed, to have rulership, that he appoints him to now rule with the eternal life from where it takes everything that went wrong, talking about all the sins that are manifesting in the world, and all the bad and all the hatred and child trafficking and drug dealing... he looks at all of those things in the world and from all those transgressions He brings people, again, to a place, by His power, where everyone who believes in Him, doesn't matter what they are busy with. It doesn't matter if they are sex offenders, if they are thieves, if they are liars, if they are addicts.

I saw where this one billionaire American, a pastor, was, caught with child trafficking and all those kinds of things. It doesn't matter what they are busy with! As they believe upon the Lord, the rulership of life is greater than the power of their death. That person's life gets changed by the rulership of Jesus and so God brings the world into the power of His Son, Jesus. And even if they die, He is busy working in the world and in the last day He will even raise them again, bodily, and grant them a birth from physical death creating, giving birth to a man, that is then eternal, immortal, wherein dwells the fulness of God.

That, my friend, that I am sharing with you right now, is the Gospel! Now, Paul knew that and we need to know that before we can understand Romans.

So, it's like somebody needs to understand it and from the understanding tell you, "Listen, as we read Romans, we can know where to put the punctuation. We can explain to you what Paul understood and all those things which sadly, has fallen away in the Church. It, basically, has been suppressed with a gospel that was either completely dead works orientated or a gospel which was completely the health and wealth prosperity kind of a gospel on the other side where we tried to now rule as people in the kingdom of God or into a gospel which was like a penalty substitutionary atonement gospel where if God is just smiling and happy and loving you, which is already much closer to truth. But as we can have understanding and from the understanding can read the Scripture, we will find that the scripture really opens up.

When we look at Romans, it has a very interesting thing about it. The foundation of Romans, and I've mentioned it now many times in my messages, is Paul correcting the people, the Church, in Rome. He is correcting them from the belief that they believe that God has rejected the Jews and now take the Gentiles and they are now God's new favorite people because the Jews didn't obey God. They crucified the Son of God with some of the officials in Rome and now the Holy Spirit was also poured out on the Gentiles and the Church was exploding among Gentiles. Now these Gentiles are saying, "Do you see God is doing mighty miracles among us? He's touching us and blessing us and these people are cut out and we are now God's people." Then they started to boast, not in the fact that they are saved by grace but they started to believe that they, as Gentiles, in their flesh, God sees them as a special people and that is why they now receive Jesus as their Messiah.

These Gentile people were falling into the very same thing as what the Jews were in at that moment as well. So, we just found that Paul wanted to correct that. The way that he was correcting that is an absolute masterpiece! I've heard people say this before that Romans is one of the best pieces of literature ever written. If you read Romans and you see and start to understand what Paul was doing here, it is just mind-blowing! It is an inspired of the Spirit of God book. It's almost as if a man, in his own mind, I don't know how he can write that way and how he can bring things in harmony like that. It's like an orchestra with the violins and the cello and the piano and the brass and the flutes and everything... coming in together all the time saying the very same thing bringing a beautiful music of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That's how Paul wrote.

So Paul came and he saw that there was a problem in Rome. The problem in Rome was that the people were in the flesh. In the flesh was saying, "Well, I am now in grace. I am saved by Jesus but it's because I am a Gentile!" He was actually now correcting that! With that in mind, I want us to quickly go to Romans 1:16. Now listen to this. When Paul writes Romans 1 and when it gets to verse 18, it's actually rhetoric. That's what he is busy with.

He is telling a story in a way wherein he explains the whole fall of Adam and Eve and then he basically says that is the fall of all of humanity. Man fell in Adam if you want to call it that way. He doesn't use the word, fall. It just basically says that through the disobedience of one sin entered and death through sin and so forth. He explains that in chapter 1 and then in chapter 2 he quickly hits the Jew there where he says, "Well, you as Jews think that because you have a law that says that you shouldn't do these things that came through Adam and Eve and their disobedience, that you now have a free pass. But, you are also sinning, as the whole world is sinning, even if you have the law. So, I want to just say that you are as dead as all."

And he starts with this concept of all. All in Romans doesn't speak of every individual. It talks about all nations from where we can say, "All people." And that needs to be understood before we can continue.

### **Romans 1:**

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

***17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just 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;***

Can you see how the parameters that I set in the beginning on wherein the Gospel is defined. The Gospel is just defined in, "There's an immortal God!" That's it and that He wanted to give what He has, bodily, to people. He wanted a being called a human and that being would have the fulness of the Godhead bodily. It would not be a servant! He would be a co-sharer in God serving him with His life!

Then, **The just shall live** (have this promise) **by faith** (by trusting in this God). That is all! That's what God preached to Adam and Eve and that's what God preached to them. That's what God preached to Abraham. That's what God preached to Noah. That's what God preached to all of these folks, And then He brought the One that you could trust. He preached it even to Jesus although it was the Word incarnated. He preached it to Jesus. Jesus believed the Father and as He believed the Father, the Father made true what He promised the man Jesus so that we all, through the simple one message which is "Believe God and you will live!", we can have what He promised from the beginning. Hallelujah!

See what he says here: ***16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*** He is already saying to these Greeks and the people living in Rome and the different Gentiles that this Gospel is for all people. He is already coming with a correction there.

**17 For therein** (In this Gospel) **is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith** (In other words, from the belief of what God has promised, which is that Jesus is raised from the dead unto the faith that we shall also be raised from the dead. Another way that I need to go and study out there can also believe from the faith that the Jews had unto the faith that the Gentiles also believed which I think we can just go and study it out. But I believe it is more about from the faith that Jesus was raised from the dead unto the faith that we shall have the same resurrection. And this is true for Jew and Gentile. That is what he starts here.

Now, listen why he concludes it is true for Jew and Gentile. **18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;**

How does Paul make the conclusion that since the wrath of God is revealed against all unrighteousness of men therefore I conclude that the Gospel is for all people. How does he say, "Since the wrath of God is against all unrighteousness and of all men that the Gospel would be for all." He simply says this: Anybody who, since God said, "I don't care who you are. If you don't believe in Me you will not be able to live forever. You will have existence now, or you will have being and if you don't believe in Me you will not have well-being. You will start to struggle with things you don't want to struggle with... things that are very destructive. Like I look at some people here. The other day a guy took a knife and put it to a child's throat and robbed her of her cell phone and money and whatever. She was at the school here who was waiting outside of the school for a mom to pick him up. They caught the guy but, you know, if you don't believe in the resurrection power of Jesus and you don't trust Him for life, you will try to have your own life and you will have to take life to have your own life. That's why you want to take the life of someone else. You'll find all these very bad things happen to you. You will be given over, you will be walking in your reprobate mind, your wrong belief, which is, "I must live by my own works."

So, this is Paul's conclusion: "I don't care who it is. I find that the Gentiles are dying and I find that the Jews are dying and the wrath of God is, basically, God saying that should you not make use of My life, since you have existence, don't think that your existence is an eternal existence. For if you think that, I want to tell you that you will surely die! Can you see how the whole parameter is that an immortal God wants to give eternal life to mortal people. What was His warning to Adam? "You will die!"

Then Paul takes what happened in Adam and says, "These people are without excuse! They knew everything they could know about God but then they didn't want to obey Him or thank Him. But, they, Adam and Eve, became wise in their own eyes, and in their own eyes they exchanged the glory of the immortal God for the glory of the mortal. They said, "We don't want to be an image of immortality." That means that immortality indwells us so that we can have the glory of God but we would rather have the image or bear the image of mortality standing in the power of ourselves." That is what is going on here and Paul, with that in mind, is now writing Romans 1. And he says, "I see that all people are dying." Then he knows that Jesus died and that He was raised and from there he has the conclusion that this Jesus is the Christ of everybody! Hallelujah! That is what is happening here. Go and read all of Romans 1 verses 18 up to the end. That is basically what this is all about. All that it does is it just goes into great detail of how all of this works.



As we look at these things, we cannot but, come to the conclusion, that the Gospel is not a very big thing. It is very small, narrow. "Narrow is the road... just the one Man, Jesus... and trusting. That is what it's all about and as we read through this, we cannot but conclude that Romans 1 is actually a story of Adam and Eve and the fall of man. When you look at Romans 5, it says there and I want to read from verse 12 and bring it into Romans 1 and see how these things line up.

#### **Romans 5:**

**12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:**

**14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression** (I believe that there he is referring to and just helping the Jews again because Adam did not believe God and he brought death and then it says that death reigned from Adam to Moses even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression. Who were these people? Who didn't sin after the similitude of Adam's transgression? It was Abraham and Abraham believed God. It was counted unto him for righteousness but I think Paul, cleverly, this is why I say that it is a masterpiece, he cleverly addresses what would be in his opponent which would be the Jewish people's minds because they would quickly say, "Ahhh, listen, You see that your argument is that death reigned or that through the disobedience of Adam, this came. But, our Father, Abraham, was obedient and he is our father." They were excusing themselves from this condemnation of death.

But, he said that this death even reigned over those who did not sin in the similitude of Adam and he is, in that way of writings, quickly telling the Jews, "Don't exclude yourselves from this death. You, as Jews, need the Messiah to save you from death as much as what the Gentiles do. We all are in the very same boat.).

**who is the figure of him that was to come** (Talking about Adam being a figure of the one that was to come saying that the effect that Adam had was on all people including Abraham and his descendants and Jesus is now also in the same power that His power, is now for all people... Jew and Gentile. Can you see how he's addressing this thing of the Jews thinking they are special? We'll get into that when we get to the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter of Roman's.

**Romans 5:18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment (wrath of God) came upon all men to condemnation (which was death); even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.**

Condemnation here means death! So it says that Adam disobeyed and it brought death to all people. But, Jesus, through His obedience and His gift of righteousness came unto all men and to the justification of the resurrection giving all people life

**Roman 1:**

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

**17 For therein** (in the Gospel... you know the Gospel is the Resurrection of Christ) **is the righteousness** (the good act) **of God** (the good act of God... what He has promised from the beginning. The fact that He is right (we will get into that when we get to chapter 3) **is revealed from faith** (the faith that He was raised) **to faith** (the faith that we shall also be raised): **as it is written, The just** (the believer) **shall live** (and not die) **by faith** (that they can say, "I believe God and that His life can be mine.")

**18 For the wrath of God** (Now this is his conclusion... because this is true because the wrath of God) **is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who** (by their unrighteousness) **hold** (suppress) **the truth in unrighteousness;**

**19 Because that which may** (can) **be known of God is manifest** (plain) **in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.**

**20 For the invisible things** (attributes mainly His eternal power and divine nature) **of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen** (perceived), **being understood by the things that are made** (perceived even since the creation of the world. I believe he is talking about, in the back of his mind, I get the feeling like the guy who would read this to the people in Rome, I believe his understanding would have been in his writing to Paul, "Paul, what are you thinking here?" Although it's not written directly, I think that in the back of Paul's mind is Adam and Eve....") **For the invisible attributes namely his eternal power and divine nature** (Can you see that he is talking about the nature of God which is an immortal nature? **And His eternal power** Can you see that he focuses on eternal life?) and **His eternal power and divine nature** (have been clearly perceived ever since **the creation of the world by the things that are made...** So they are without excuse. He says that God created everything. He showed His power and showed that He's a life Giver. He's a creator and He says, "Trust Me. I can give you eternal life. Adam and Eve did not believe that.

**21 Because that, when they knew God** (Who knew God? Who walked with God in the cool of the day? Adam and Eve). Even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God), **they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful** (The did not give thanks to Him ; **but became vain** (futile) **in their imaginations** (in their thinking), **and their foolish heart was darkened.**

**22 Professing themselves to be wise** (the tree of the knowledge of good and evil by the Jews was also called the tree of wisdom.) **Claiming to be wise , they became fools,**

**23 And changed** (exchanged) **the glory** (that which resembles eternal life) **of the uncorruptible** (immortal) **God** (Can you see how the context is immortality, the immortal God and He wanted to give that to them) **Changed the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.**

**24 Wherefore God** (because... and this is the whole story of the Garden of Eden, when they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, God said, "Let Me put them out of the Garden lest they eat of the Tree of Life and live forever." What was that? That is another way of saying He gave them over to their own belief to live in that belief to bear the fruit of their own doing.) **also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts** (to impurity), **to dishonor their own bodies between** (amongst) **themselves:**

**25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie** (When Paul talks about the lie, I believe in the back of his mind he is referring to Genesis when the father of all lies came and lied.) **and worshipped and served the creature more than** (rather than) **the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.**

**32 Who knowing the judgment of God** (which was, "Listen guys, if you eat of this, you are going to die). And then they didn't obey. Then we find, through all of humanity, things started to happen that's worthy of death.), **that they which commit such things are worthy of death** (Can you see again, life and death. Now the death and the resurrection start to make sense. Glory to God!)

I want to thank you that I could have ministered this. I feel much better now after preaching this message. It really is something that will bless you greatly. Take the time to listen to this three, four, five times if you have the time to do that. Please, my friends. Listen to this and let it wash your heart. The moment you start to make a shift in belief systems, it is a bit difficult but as you continue, it will change your life. Like one person said to me, "Bertie, I started to support you but what I did was I listened, a few times, to 900 messages on your website." And his life was changed. Almost every time I speak to them, they say to me, "It changed our lives! Thank you so much!"

And I want to say to you, "Thank you that you allow me to serve you and I trust that this message greatly blesses you and gets you to think deeper about these things .

God loves you and He will always love you.