

The Wrath of God – Romans 1:18-23

Last week we asked the question, 'are you ready to face God'; how we answer this question will go some way to establishing whether or not you have understood the grace of God. As you answer this question, grace directs your gaze away from 'self' and onto Christ, and enables us to respond as emphatically to this question as we would to these:

- Did Christ conquer sin and death on the cross?
- Did He rise again 3 days later?
- Do I believe in Him and love Him?
- Am I ready to face God?

If you can answer 'yes' to the first 3 questions then you can the last, this is grace! It's all about Jesus, not you, not me!

Q. Do you believe that having faith in Jesus alone is enough to have peace with God?

The wrath of God is as terrifying as the mercy of God is compelling; it is as fierce as the love of God is tender; as just as the grace of God is generous. In fact, I could not know God's mercy toward me without knowing how it removes God's wrath from me!

Q. How do we know when we have received mercy?

Q. When you think of God, does His wrath feature in your consideration of His character?

Q. What would be the implications for the holiness of God if sin did not incite Him to anger?

Paul says that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven. Paul doesn't say that the wrath of God will be revealed, he isn't describing in this instance a future event, but a present reality. Clearly then, Paul isn't dealing with something that is 'in your face', we are not encountering thunderous shouts from heaven each time we sin, therefore we have to conclude the manifestation of this 'wrath' is far more subtle. John Ziesler in his commentary on the passage describes this revelation of the wrath of God,

"[wrath of God is revealed] ...not by God's intervention but precisely by his not intervening, by letting men and women go their own way. God abandons stubborn sinners to their willful self-centeredness, and the resulting process of moral and spiritual degeneration is to be understood as a judicial act of God"

Q. Why would God's lack of intervention when men sin be a judicial act? (In answering this be mindful of what sin is... the rejection of God)

Read verses 19-20.

Q. What does it mean for us to be 'without excuse'?

Q. In what ways might we suppress the truth of God as revealed through creation?

Would you not be offended if a piece of work you had poured your life into, that you loved and delighted was rubbish, mocked and spoilt? Would you not be angry?

Q. What things in life make you angry?

Q. Do you have a perfect sense of justice? Does God? Could you worship a God who doesn't feel anger towards suffering and evil?

Q. How can the Christian be confident that God's wrath is no longer upon him?