

UNIT 1: The Attributes of God

Section 18: God's Wrath

Assigned Reading:
A. W. Pink – The Attributes of God
The Wrath of God

Introduction:

In understanding God's Goodness, we spoke last week of His Righteousness and Justice. If this element of God's nature is often neglected, avoided, or abhorred by many in our world, the subject of our attention this morning elicits an even more negative response... Understood rightly, though, once you submit to the Biblical testimony, this ought to be believed as readily as our belief that God is loving, kind, gracious, merciful, and compassionate. As a matter of fact, **Pink** explains, "A study of the concordance will show that there are more references in Scripture to the anger, fury, and wrath of God, than there are to His love and tenderness." If we wish to worship the One, True God, we must take Him at His Word. If the basis for understanding that God is loving comes from the Scriptures, then we must also submit to the authority of the Scriptures regarding God's righteous anger, seen in His Wrath.

Q1: *What do we mean by God's Wrath?*

Q2: *How does the understanding God's Wrath contribute to a right understanding of God's Goodness?*

Q3: *Should we focus upon this attribute?*

Outline:

I. Defining Terms...

A. Wrath

1. **Heb.** גְּבַרְהָ דְּרַקְזָחַע דְּרַפְטָמָה - *wrath, overflow, excess, outburst.*
2. **Gr.** θυμὸς ὀργῆς - *wrath, anger showing itself in punishment*
3. **Pink**, "God's wrath is His holiness stirred into activity against sin. God is angry against sin because it is rebelling against His authority, a wrong done to His inviolable sovereignty. Insurrection against God's government shall be made to know that God *is* the Lord. They shall be made to feel how great that Majesty is which they so little regarded."
4. **Grudem**, "If God loves all that is right and good, and all that conforms to His moral character, then it should not be surprising that He would hate everything that is opposed to His moral character... God's wrath means that He intensely hates all sin."
5. **Packer**, "deep intense anger and indignation: anger – stirring of resentful displeasure by a sense of injury/insult, indignation – righteousness anger aroused by injustice and baseness."

B. The Testimony of the Scriptures

1. **Exodus 32:9-10** The LORD said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and behold, they are an obstinate people. "Now then let Me alone, that My anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them; and I will make of you a great nation."
2. **Deuteronomy 32:39-43** "See now that I, I am He, And there is no god besides ME; It is I who put to death and give life. I have wounded and it is I who heal, And there is no one who can deliver from My hand. 'Indeed, I lift up My hand to heaven, And there is no one who can deliver from My hand. Indeed, I lift up My hand to heaven, And say, as I live forever, If I sharpen My flashing sword, And My hand takes hold on justice, I will render

- vengeance on My adversaries, And I will repay those who hate Me. ‘I will make My arrows drunk with blood, And my sword will devour flesh, With the blood of the slain and the captives, From the long-haired leaders of the enemy.’ “Rejoice, O nations, *with* His people; For He will avenge the blood of His servants, And will render vengeance on His adversaries, And will atone for His land *and* His people.”
3. **Psalm 7:11** “God is a righteous judge, And a God who has indignation every day.
 4. **John 3:36** “He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”
 5. **Colossians 3:6** For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience
 6. **Revelations 6:16** and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb;
 7. **Romans 1:18ff** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness...

II. Discussing Wrath...

A. *Should we talk about this attribute?*

1. **Pink**, “It is sad indeed to find so many professing Christians who appear to regard the wrath of God as something for which they need to make an apology, or who at least wish there were no such thing.”
2. **Packer**, “To an age which has unashamedly sold itself to the gods of greed, pride, sex, and self-will, the church mumbles on about God’s kindness but says virtually nothing about his judgments.”
3. Far from being a “blemish” on the character of God, God’s wrath is a demonstration of His perfection! God in His Excellency cannot look upon unrighteousness as He does righteousness. God is only angry toward that which is worthy of anger!
4. We must beware of worshipping an idol... devising our own image of God...
5. **Psalm 50:21** “These things you have done and I kept silence; You thought that I was just like you; I will reprove you and state *the case* in order before your eyes.

B. *What are the implications of God’s Wrath?*

1. It is a virtue to hate evil and sin... Because God is Holy, He hates all sin. Therefore, his anger burns against the sinner.
2. **Zechariah 8:17** ‘Also let none of you devise evil in your heart against another, and do not love perjury; for all these are what I hate,’ declares the LORD.”
3. Sin cannot be dealt with in an impersonal manner... God punishes the sinner for his sin!
4. Remember, God did not put “sin” upon the cross impersonally, but punished Jesus, His only begotten Son in the stead of the elect.
5. **Robert Haldane**, “But above all, the wrath of God was revealed from heaven when the Son of God came down to manifest the Divine character, and when that wrath was awful than by all tokens God had before given of His displeasure against sin.”
6. **Packer**, “If we would know God, it is vital that we face the truth concerning His wrath, however unfashionable it may be, and however strong our initial prejudices against it. Otherwise we shall not understand the gospel of salvation from wrath, nor the propitiatory achievement of the cross, nor the wonder of the redeeming love of God.”

C. Applications...

1. **There ought to be a true fear in our souls toward God!**
 - a. Far too often, we take sin far too lightly... Understanding God's wrath restores to us a right sobriety in regards to unrighteousness.
 - b. **Hebrews 12:28** Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe.
 - c. **1 Thessalonians 1:9-10** For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, *that is* Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.
 - d. **Luke 12:5** "But I will warn you whom to fear: fear the One who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him!"
2. **We ought to praise God for the coming day when He will set things right!**
 - a. **Psalm 103:8-9** The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness. He will not always strive *with us*, Nor will He keep *His anger* forever.
 - b. **Mark 9:47-48** "If your eye causes you to stumble, throw it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell, where THEIR WORM DOES NOT DIE, AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED.
 - c. **Revelation 19:1-3** After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; BECAUSE HIS JUDGEMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER." And a second time they said, "Hallelujah! HER SMOKE RISES UP FOREVER AND EVER."
 - d. **Pink**, "Great will be the rejoicing of the saints in that day when the Lord shall vindicate His majesty, exercise His awful dominion, magnify His justice, and overthrow the proud rebels who have dared to defy Him."
 - e. **Packer**, "The essence of God's action in wrath is to give men what they choose, in all its implications: nothing more, nothing less." – *they receive what they deserve!*
3. **We ought to praise God for His marvelous patience...**
 - a. **Romans 2:4** Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?
 - b. **William Gurnall**, "The greatest miracle in the world is God's patience and bounty to an ungrateful world... the great God who could wink all His enemies into destruction, bears with them, and is at daily cost to maintain them... Nothing so sweet as the patience and goodness of God, and nothing so terrible as His wrath when it takes fire.
 - c. **Matthew 3:7** But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? – *Flee from the wrath to come by fleeing to Jesus, the Savior!*
 - d. **2 Corinthians 5:11** Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are made manifest to God...
 - e. **2 Peter 3:9-10** The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.