

The Wrath Of God

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.

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Forward

Wrath or anger can be one of the most intense, destructive, and unhealthy emotions that we can experience.

If not handled in the properly, it can have drastic life-changing consequences.

Anger may be caused by pressures of work, family or even from being the innocent victim of another's wrong-doing. Left unresolved, anger creates an intense desire to destroy something.

Regardless of the reason for anger, the Bible has answers on what causes anger, examples of good (righteous) and bad (unrighteous) anger and how we should deal with it as Christians.

Our earnest prayer should be that God changes our heart as we allow Him to mold us into a vessel fit to carry His gospel to the world. Take a look at these Scripture quotes that talk about anger or wrath. And see how you can be inspired to refuse such a way of life.



Chapter 1

The Wrath Of God

Rom. 1:18

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness”

The Wrath of God

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;

Paul uses the phrase “I thank my God through Jesus Christ” to emphasize the point that Christ is the one and only mediator between God and humans. Through Christ, God sends his love and forgiveness to us; through Christ, we send our thanks to God (see 1 Tim. 2:5).

The Roman Christians, at the Western world’s political power center, were highly visible. Fortunately, their reputation was excellent; their strong faith was making itself known around the world. When people talk about your congregation or your denomination, what do they say? Are their comments accurate? Would you rather they noticed other features? What is the best way to get the public to recognize your faith?

The wrath of God abides on the unbeliever.

John 3:36

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Jesus says that those who believe in him *have* (not *will* have) everlasting life. To receive eternal life is to join in God's life, which by nature is eternal. Thus, eternal life begins at the moment of spiritual rebirth.

John, the author of this Gospel, has been demonstrating that Jesus is the true Son of God. Jesus sets before us the greatest choice in life. We are responsible to decide today whom we will obey (Joshua 24:15), and God wants us to choose him and life (Deut. 30:15-20). The wrath of God is God's final judgment and rejection of the sinner. To put off the choice is to choose not to follow Christ. Indecision is a fatal decision.

Recompense to man evil for evil.

Romans 12:17-21

Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

These verses summarize the core of Christian living. If we love someone the way Christ loves us, we will be willing to forgive. If we have experienced God's grace, we will want to pass it on to others. And remember, grace is undeserved favor. By giving an enemy a drink, we're not excusing his misdeeds. We're recognizing him, forgiving him, and loving him in spite of his sins—just as Christ did for us.

In this day of constant lawsuits and incessant demands for legal rights, Paul's command sounds almost impossible. When someone hurts you deeply, instead of giving him what he deserves, Paul says to befriend him. Why does Paul tell us to forgive our enemies?

- (1) Forgiveness may break a cycle of retaliation and lead to mutual reconciliation.
- (2) It may make the enemy feel ashamed and change his or her ways.
- (3) By contrast, repaying evil for evil hurts you just as much as it hurts your enemy.

Even if your enemy never repents, forgiving him or her will free you of a heavy load of bitterness.

Forgiveness involves both attitudes and actions. If you find it difficult to *feel* forgiving toward someone who has hurt you, try responding with kind actions. If appropriate, tell this person that you would like to heal your relationship. Lend a helping hand. Send him or her a gift. Smile at him or her. Many times you will discover that right actions lead to right feelings.

Inhabits of the earth will be punished for their iniquity.

Isaiah 26:21

For, behold the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

When God comes to judge the earth, the guilty will find no place to hide. Jesus said that the hidden will be made known because his truth, like a light shining in a dark corner, will reveal it (Matthew 10:26). Instead of trying to hide your shameful thoughts and actions from God, confess them to him and receive his forgiveness.

The unbelievers will be cast into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:15

And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

At the judgment, the books are opened. They represent God's judgment, and in them are recorded the deeds of everyone, good or evil. We are not saved by deeds, but deeds are seen as clear evidence of a person's actual relationship with God. The book of life contains the names of those who have put their trust in Christ to save them.

Death and Hades are thrown into the lake of fire. God's judgment is finished. The lake of fire is the ultimate destination of everything wicked—Satan, the beast, the false prophet, the demons, death, Hades, and all those whose names are not recorded in the book of life because they did not place their faith in Jesus Christ.

John's vision does not permit any gray areas in God's judgment. If by faith we have not identified with Christ, confessing him as Lord, there will be no hope, no second chance, and no other appeal.

In his righteousness, God will make war and judge.

Revelation 19:11-21 –

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him [was] called Faithful and true, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

John's vision shifts again. Heaven opens and Jesus appears, this time not as a Lamb, but as a warrior on a white horse (symbolizing victory). Jesus came first as a Lamb to be a sacrifice for sin, but he will return as a Conqueror and King to execute judgment (2 Thes. 1:7-10). Jesus' first coming brought forgiveness; his second will bring judgment. The battle lines have been drawn between God and evil, and the world is waiting for the King to ride onto the field.

God will execute great vengeance.

Ezekiel 25:17 –

And I will execute great vengeance upon them with furious rebukes; and they shall know that I [am] the LORD, when I shall lay my vengeance upon them.

The Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries.

Nahum 1:2-6

The Lord is a jealous God, filled with vengeance and wrath. He takes revenge on all who oppose him and furiously destroys his enemies!

The Lord is slow to get angry, but his power is great, and he never lets the guilty go unpunished. He displays his power in the whirlwind and the storm. The billowing clouds are the dust beneath his feet.

At his command the oceans and rivers dry up, the lush pastures of Bashan and Carmel fade, and the green forests of Lebanon wilt.

In his presence the mountains quake, and the hills melt away; the earth trembles, and its people are destroyed. Who can stand before his fierce anger? Who can survive his burning fury? His rage blazes forth like fire and the mountains crumble to dust in his presence.

God alone has the right to be jealous and to carry out vengeance. Jealousy and vengeance may be surprising terms to associate with God. When humans are jealous and take vengeance, they are usually acting in a spirit of selfishness.

But it is appropriate for God to insist on our complete allegiance, and it is just for him to punish unrepentant evildoers. His jealousy and vengeance are unmixed with selfishness. Their purpose is to remove sin and restore peace to the world (Deut. 4:24; Deut. 5:9).

God is slow to get angry, but when he is ready to punish, even the earth trembles. Often people avoid God because they see evildoers in the world and hypocrites in the church. They don't realize that because God is slow to anger, he gives his true followers time to share his love and truth with evildoers. But judgment *will* come; God will not allow sin to go unchecked forever. When people wonder why God doesn't punish evil immediately, help them remember that if he did, none of us would be here. We can all be thankful that God gives people time to turn to him.

No person on earth can safely defy God, the Almighty, and the Creator of all the universe. God, who controls the sun, the galaxies, and the vast stretches beyond, also controls the rise and fall of nations.

How could a small temporal kingdom like Assyria, no matter how powerful, challenge God's awesome power? If only Assyria could have looked ahead to see the desolate mound of rubble that it would become—and yet God would still be alive and well!

Don't defy God; he will be here forever with greater power than that of all armies and nations combined.

To people who refuse to believe, God's punishment is like an angry fire. To those who love him, his mercy is a refuge, supplying all their needs without diminishing his supply. But to God's enemies he is an overwhelming flood that will sweep them away.

The relationship we have with God is up to us. What kind of relationship will you choose?

Chapter 2



The wages of sin is death.

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin [is] death; but the gift of God [is] eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

You are free to choose between two masters, but you are not free to manipulate the consequences of your choice. Each of the two masters pays with his own kind of currency. The currency of sin is death. That is all you can expect or hope for in life without God. Christ's currency is eternal life—new life with God that begins on earth and continues forever with God. What choice have you made?

Eternal life is a free gift from God. If it is a gift, then it is not something that we earn, nor something that must be paid back. Consider the foolishness of someone who receives a gift given out of love and then offers to pay for it.

A gift cannot be purchased by the recipient. A more appropriate response to a loved one who offers a gift is graceful acceptance with gratitude.

Our salvation is a gift of God, not something of our own doing (Ephes. 2:8-9). He saved us because of his mercy, not because of any righteous things that we have done (Titus 3:5). How much more we should accept with thanksgiving the gift that God has freely given to us.

The unjust will be reserved until the Day of Judgment.

2 Peter 2:9

The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the Day of Judgment to be punished:

Just as God rescued Lot from Sodom, so he is able to rescue us from the temptations and trials we face in a wicked world. Lot was not sinless, but he put his trust in God and was spared when Sodom was destroyed. For more information on Lot, see his Profile. God also will judge those who cause the temptations and trials, so we need never worry about justice being done.

Fear him that is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Matthew 10:28 –

And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Jesus said that God is aware of everything that happens even to sparrows, and you are far more valuable to him than they are. You are so valuable that God sent his only Son to die for you (John 3:16). Because God places such value on you, you need never fear personal threats or difficult trials. These can't shake God's love or dislodge his Spirit from within you.

But this doesn't mean that God will take away all your troubles (see Matthew 10:16). The real test of value is how well something holds up under the wear, tear, and abuse of everyday life. Those who stand up for Christ in spite of their troubles truly have lasting value and will receive great rewards (see Matthew 5:11-12).

All the wine of God's wrath will be poured out on the wicked.

Psalms 75:8

For in the hand of the LORD [there is] a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poured out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring [them] out, [and] drink [them].

The cup of wine represents God's judgment. The judgment of God is coming against the wicked. God will pour out his fury on his enemies, and they will be forced to drink it. Drinking the cup of God's judgment is a picture used frequently in Scripture (Isaiah 51:17, 22; Jeremiah 25:15; Jeremiah 49:12; Habakkuk 2:16; Rev. 14:10; Rev. 16:19; Rev. 18:6). It gives the impression of taking a dose of one's own medicine. To drink it down to the dregs means to be punished completely.

Many will enter into the gate of destruction.

Matthew 7:13-14

Enter you in at the strait gate: for wide [is] the gate, and broad [is] the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in there at:

The gate that leads to eternal life (John 10:7-9) is called "narrow." This does not mean that it is difficult to become a Christian, but that there is only *one* way to live eternally with God and only a few that decide to walk that road.

Believing in Jesus is the only way to heaven, because he alone died for our sins and made us right before God. Living his way may not be popular, but it is true and right. Thank God there is one way!

God is angry with the wicked.

Psalms 7:11

God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry [with the wicked] every day.

Without the shedding Christ's blood, there is no remission of sins.

Hebrews 9:22

And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

Why does forgiveness require the shedding of blood? This is no arbitrary decree on the part of a bloodthirsty God, as some have suggested.

There is no greater symbol of life than blood; blood keeps us alive. Jesus shed his blood—gave his life—for our sins so that we wouldn't have to experience spiritual death, eternal separation from God.

Jesus is the source of life, not death. He gave his own life to pay our penalty for us so that we might live. After shedding his blood for us, Christ rose from the grave and proclaimed victory over sin and death.

The difference between Christianity and other religions is that Christians believe that the only way to God is through Jesus Christ.

Fear him who has the power to cast you into hell.

Luke 12:5

But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

Fear of opposition or ridicule can weaken our witness for Christ. Often we cling to peace and comfort, even at the cost of our walk with God. Jesus reminds us here that we should fear God, who controls eternal, not merely temporal, consequences. Don't allow fear of a person or group to keep you from standing up for Christ.

Chapter 3



Examples of Righteous Anger

Psalms 7:11

God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.

Solomon turned from God and brought God's anger.

1 Kings 11:9, 10

And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice and had commanded him concerning this thing that he should not go after other gods. But he did not keep what the LORD commanded.

Solomon didn't turn away from God all at once or in a brief moment. His spiritual coldness started with a minor departure from God's laws (1 Kings 3:1). Over the years, that little sin grew until it resulted in Solomon's downfall. A little sin can be the first step in turning away from God. It is not the sins we don't know about, but the sins we excuse, that cause us the greatest trouble.

We must never let any sin go unchallenged. In your life, is an unchallenged sin spreading like a deadly cancer? Don't excuse it. Confess this sin to God and ask him for strength to resist temptation.

An angry God removed Israel from his sight.

2 Kings 17:18

Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel and removed them out of his sight. None was left but the tribe of Judah only.

The Lord judged the people of Israel because they copied the evil customs of the surrounding nations, worshiping false gods, accommodating pagan customs, and following their own desires. It is not safe to create your own religion because people who do tend to live selfishly.

And to live for yourself, as Israel learned, brings serious consequences from God.

Sometimes it is difficult and painful to follow God, but consider the alternative. You can live for God or die for yourself. Determine to be God's person and do what he says regardless of the cost. What God thinks of you is infinitely more important than what those around you think. (See Romans 12:1-2; 1 John 2:15-17.)

Jesus was angry with the keeper of the law.

Mark 3:4, 5

And he [Jesus] said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent. And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

Jesus was angry about the Pharisees' uncaring attitudes. Anger itself is not wrong. It depends on what makes us angry and what we do with our anger. Too often we express our anger in selfish and harmful ways. By contrast, Jesus expressed his anger by correcting a problem—healing the man's hand. Use your anger to find constructive solutions rather than to tear people down.

Jesus drove the money changers out of the temple area.

John 2:13-16

The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. And he told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade."

The Passover celebration took place yearly at the temple in Jerusalem. Every Jewish male was expected to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem during this time (Deut. 16:16). This was a week-long festival—the Passover was one day, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread lasted the rest of the week. The entire week commemorated the freeing of the Jews from slavery in Egypt (Exodus 12:1-13).

Jerusalem was both the religious and the political seat of Palestine, and the place where the Messiah was expected to arrive. The temple was located there, and many Jewish families from all over the world would travel to Jerusalem during the key feasts. The temple was on an imposing site, a hill overlooking the city. Solomon had built the first temple on this same site almost 1,000 years earlier (949 B.C.), but his temple had been destroyed by the Babylonians (2 Kings 25). The temple was rebuilt in 515 B.C., and Herod the Great had enlarged and remodeled it.

The temple area was always crowded during Passover with thousands of out-of-town visitors. The religious leaders crowded it even further by allowing money changers and merchants to set up booths in the court of the Gentiles. They rationalized this practice as a convenience for the worshipers and as a way to make money for temple upkeep. But the religious leaders did not seem to care that the court of the Gentiles was so full of merchants that foreigners found it difficult to

worship. And worship was the main purpose for visiting the temple. No wonder Jesus was angry!

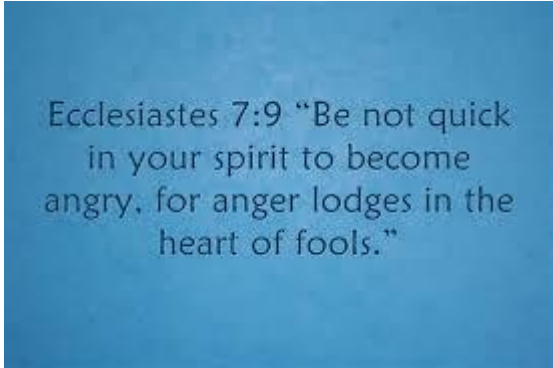
The temple tax had to be paid in local currency, so foreigners had to have their money changed. But the money changers often would charge exorbitant exchange rates. The people also were required to make sacrifices for sins. Because of the long journey, many could not bring their own animals. Some who brought animals would have them rejected for imperfections.

So animal merchants would do a flourishing business in the temple courtyard. The price of sacrificial animals was much higher in the temple area than elsewhere. Jesus was angry at the dishonest, greedy practices of the money changers and merchants, and he particularly disliked their presence on the temple grounds. They were making a mockery of God's house of worship.

John records this first clearing, or cleansing, of the temple. A second clearing occurred at the end of Jesus' ministry, about three years later, and that event is recorded in Matthew 21:12-17; Mark 11:12-19; Luke 19:45-48.

God's temple was being misused by people who had turned it into a marketplace. They had forgotten, or didn't care, that God's house is a place of worship, not a place for making a profit. Our attitude toward the church is wrong if we see it as a place for personal contacts or business advantage. Make sure you attend church to worship God.

Chapter 4



Ecclesiastes 7:9 “Be not quick in your spirit to become angry, for anger lodges in the heart of fools.”

Results of Unrighteous Anger

Genesis 4:5-8

But for Cain and his offering he [the LORD] had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. The LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it.” Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him.

The Bible does not say why God rejected Cain’s sacrifice. Perhaps Cain’s attitude was improper, or perhaps his offering was not up to God’s standards. Proverbs 21:27 says, “The sacrifice of the wicked is detestable—how much more so when brought with evil intent!” God evaluates both our motives and the quality of what we offer him. When we give to God and others, we should have a joyful heart because of what we are able to give. We should not worry about how much we are giving up, for all things are God’s in the first place. Instead, we should joyfully give to God our best in time, money, possessions, and talents.

How do you react when someone suggests you have done something wrong? Do you move to correct the mistake or deny that you need to correct it? After Cain’s sacrifice was rejected, God gave him the chance to right his wrong and try again. God even encouraged him to do this! But Cain refused, and the rest of his life is a startling example of what happens to those who refuse to admit their mistakes. The next time someone suggests you are wrong, take an honest look at yourself and choose God’s way instead of Cain’s.

For Cain to master the sin lurking at the entrance to his desires, he would have to give up his jealous anger so that sin would not find a foothold in his life. Sin is still crouching at our doors today. Like Cain, we will be victims of sin if we do not master it. But we cannot master sin in our own strength. Instead, we must turn to God to receive faith for ourselves and faith and strength from other believers. The Holy Spirit will help us master sin. This will be a lifelong battle that will not be over until we are face to face with Christ.

This is the first murder—taking a life by shedding human blood. Blood represents life (Leviticus 17:10-14). If blood is removed from a living creature, it will die. Because God created life, only God should take life away.

Adam and Eve’s disobedience brought sin into the human race. They may have thought their sin—eating a piece of fruit—wasn’t very bad, but notice how quickly their sinful nature developed in their children. Simple disobedience quickly degenerated into outright murder. Adam and Eve acted only against God, but Cain acted against both God and man. A small sin has a way of growing out of control. Let God help you with your “little” sins before they turn into tragedies.

Fretting tends only to evil.

Psalms 37:8

Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath! Fret not yourself; it tends only to evil.

Anger and worry (fretting) are two very destructive emotions. They reveal a lack of faith that God loves us and is in control. We should not worry; instead, we should trust in God, giving ourselves to him for his use and safekeeping. When you dwell on your problems, you will become anxious and angry. But if you concentrate on God and his goodness, you will find peace. Where do you focus your attention?

A hot-tempered man stirs up strife.

Proverbs 15:18

A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger quiets contention.

The “path of the upright” doesn’t always seem easy (Proverbs 15:19), but look at the alternatives. Hatred (Proverbs 15:17), dissension (Proverbs 15:18), and laziness (Proverbs 15:19) cause problems that the upright person does not have to face. By comparison, his or her life is a smooth, level road because it is built on a solid foundation of love for God.

Strife causes much transgression.

Proverbs 29:22

A man of wrath stirs up strife, and one given to anger causes much transgression.

Chapter 5



Wisdom & Patience Key to Overcoming Anger

Proverbs 14:16, 17

A wise man feareth, and departed from evil: but the fool raged, and is confident. He that is soon angry dealt foolishly: and a man of wicked devices is hated.

He who has a hasty temper exalts folly.

Proverbs 14:29

Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly.

A quick temper can be like a fire out of control. It can burn us and everyone else in its path. Anger divides people. It pushes us into hasty decisions that only cause bitterness and guilt. Yet anger, in itself, is not wrong. Anger can be a legitimate reaction to injustice and sin.

When you feel yourself getting angry, look for the cause. Are you reacting to an evil situation that you are going to set right? Or are you responding selfishly to a personal insult? Pray that God will help you control your quick temper, channeling your feelings into effective action and conquering selfish anger through humility and repentance.

Jesus is knocking at the door of your heart.



Rev. 3:20

"Look! Here I stand at the door and knock. If you hear me calling and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal as friends.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

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