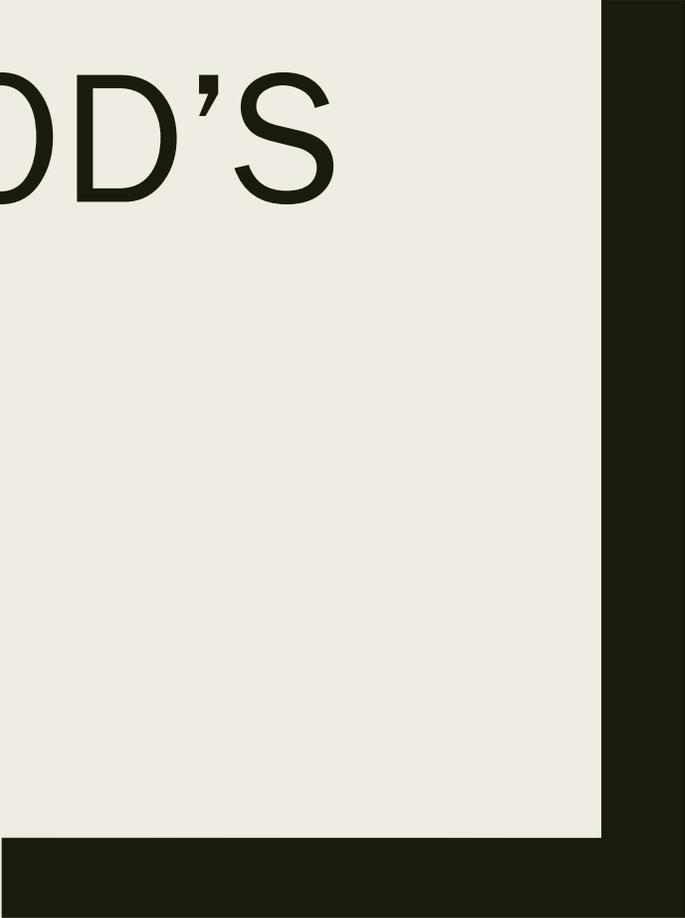




THE CUP OF GOD'S WRATH

1 Thessalonians 2:15



DEFINITION

“God intensely *hates* all *sin* and is obliged by His Holy Nature to judge and *punish* all sin.”

The Vanishing of God's Wrath

The central goal of life is to be happy and feel good about one's self; God doesn't need to be particularly involved in my life except if I need Him to solve a problem; good people go to heaven.

Radically Undemanding Faith

“A Toothless Lion of Judah?”

Is true Christian faith undemanding? No! It is the opposite. It is so demanding that God sent His Son to die for our sin – becoming the object of God’s wrath - and call us to holiness.

Major Biblical Theme

“God’s wrath is such an essential aspect of the biblical message that writers can speak of “(the) wrath”, meaning God’s wrath, without specifying that His wrath is in view: Matthew 3:7; Luke 21:23; Romans 12:19; 13:4).”

NT Presence of Wrath

John 3:36

“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; he who does not believe in the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

Hebrews 10:26-31

“...a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of fire...deserving much severer punishment...vengeance is Mine, I will repay...it is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

The Wrath of God

- Still in place; still exists; always will
- Not just an Old Testament doctrine
- Holy, just, pure, right, perfect...
- Not unloving
- Directed and specific (i.e. Romans 1)
- Man's wrath not productive; must put off

Man's Wrath

Tainted by self-serving sin nature:

Ephesians 4:26 – be vigilant against it;
destructive if it lingers

James 1:19-20 – ineffective for God's
purposes/righteousness

Romans 12:19ff - abandon all vengeance!

God's Wrath

“Principle of rational, retributive justice – not arbitrary maliciousness like other Near Eastern religions; God’s response to sin, His holy antipathy toward the unholy; induced even by ignorance of God (Job 42:7; Ps. 78:22, 32; Romans 1:18-25).”

God's Wrath

“The Apostle Paul says God’s wrath is universally revealed now and always against human impiety and injustice because they spring from suppression of the truth about God’s eternal power and Divine Nature (Romans 1).”

1 Thessalonians 2:16

“the full measure of God’s wrath for their sins”

The Apostle Paul is addressing the unbelieving Jews who were hindering the work of the Gospel to the Gentiles.

Paul's Heart

The unbelieving Jews were a people to be sad for. They were the tragic antithesis of the believers in Thessaloniki. They opposed Paul, the Gospel, Christ, the Gentiles, and “all men.”

Opposites Don't Attract

Paul rejoiced over the Thessalonians, but grieved over the Jews because:

1. They killed Jesus and His prophets;
2. They hindered the Gospel ministry;
3. They would suffer God's wrath.

The Grapes of God's Wrath

Often symbolized in terms of a cup.

Paul most probably referring to God's eternal wrath on unbelievers.

Revelation 14:9-13

“...he will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger, being tormented with fire and brimstone, day and night without rest, in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb forever and ever.”

A Full Measure

“always heap up their sins to the limit.”

God brings *judgment* only when sin has reached a certain limit.

Acts 17:30-31

*“Having overlooked the times of ignorance,
God is now declaring that all people
everywhere should repent, because He has
fixed a day in which He will judge the world
in righteousness through a Man whom He
has appointed.”*

Romans 2:5-6

Because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.

“wrath HAS come to utmost”

Grammatical structure of “has come” declares that though it is future, God’s wrath against unbelievers is so certain that it can be spoken of as already happening.

“to the utmost”

God will pour out upon the unbeliever for eternity the full extent, the fullest expression, the extreme limits of His Divine wrath, judgment, punishment, and vengeance; escape and death will not be possible.

Wrath: Not the Last Word

Love Wins! ;)

God's wrath is far outweighed by His LOVE!

Common Grace

“I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you so that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rains on the righteous and the unrighteous.”

Particular Grace

“What if God, willing to demonstrate His wrath and make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, whom He called even from among Gentiles” (Romans 9:22).

Ephesians 2:1-10

“...dead in trespasses and sins...by nature children of wrath...but God being rich in mercy, because of His great love, loved us...even when dead in our trespasses He made us alive together with Christ...by grace you have been saved...”

Jesus and God's Wrath

- Jesus took the cup of God's wrath for you
- Jesus suffered for His whole life
- Jesus suffered at the cross in physical pain, in the pain of bearing sin, and in the pain of abandonment

Suffered His Whole Life

“though rich, became poor”

“man of sorrows acquainted with grief”

“learned obedience from the things He suffered, having been made perfect”

Hebrews 5:8; 2:18

Suffered at the Cross

Suffered in physical pain and death

Suffered in bearing sins

Suffered in abandonment

“My God, My God, why have you abandoned Me?”

Habakkuk 1:3

*“God’s eyes are pure; of
purer eyes than to behold
evil”*

Suffered God's Wrath

Jesus became the object of God's full wrath and intense hatred against our sin; God's vengeance and fury was poured out on all sin that had been stored up since the beginning of time and all sin to be committed in the future (Rom. 3:25).

From Wrath to Favor

Jesus was and is our propitiation.

“A sacrifice that bears God’s wrath to the very end and in so doing changes God’s wrath toward us into favor.”

Romans 3:23-26

“All have sinned and fall short of God’s glory; justified as a gift of God’s grace through redemption in Jesus Christ; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith.”

1 John 2:2; 4:10

“Jesus Christ Himself is the propitiation for our sins. Love is not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”

John 3:36

Yes indeed, love does win, BUT only for those who “believe in the Son and have eternal life,” not for those “who do not believe in the Son, for the wrath of God abides on him.”

Jesus and Wrath

The coming of salvation in Christ does not mean that Divine wrath has been eliminated.

The Gospel proclamation calls hearers to repentance and promises “wrath to come.”

Salvation through Christ is salvation from eschatological wrath.

Jesus and Wrath

Scripture such as 1 Thessalonians 2:16 and John 3:36 demonstrate that in certain respects wrath is already resting on humankind because the “eschaton,” end of all things, has already been initiated by the first coming of Jesus Christ and the preaching of the Gospel (Matthew 3:7).

Praise God for His Wrath

- In Christ we no longer fear wrath
- God must be praised for His patience
- We must urgently evangelize
- All wrong will one day be punished and a new sinless world will come!