

# The Gracious Delay of Swift Wrath

by Richard E. Bieber

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*The sermon emphasizes the gracious delay of God's wrath and the urgent call to repentance before judgment comes.*

**Scripture:** Isaiah 1:18, John 3:16, Romans 2:4, Romans 2:6, Hebrews 9:28

**Topics:** "Gods Patience", "Divine Wrath"

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## Description

Richard E. Bieber delivers a powerful sermon on the misconception that God is dead because people can sin without immediate consequences, likening it to sailing into the ocean of sin without fear. He emphasizes that God's patience and kindness are meant to lead us to repentance, warning that every deed is seen by God and will be accounted for. The sermon culminates in the message of Calvary, where Jesus bore the wrath of God for our sins, offering a way to be cleansed and saved through Him.

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## Transcript

One of the reasons people think there is no God is because they can get away with so much and nothing happens to them. You can sin awful sins and no lightning strikes you dead. You can lie, cheat, defy your conscience in a hundred ways and life goes merrily on. So God must be dead. It must be perfectly safe out here on the ocean of sin. In the days of Columbus, men were unwilling to sail too far out on the Atlantic for fear they would drop off the edge of the world or that some horrible monster

would rise out of the sea and swallow their ship in one gulp.

But brave men began to venture farther out. They kept going farther and farther until they circumnavigated the globe and it was safe. No monsters, no abyss.

Now, in the 21st Century, men are trying to do the same thing in the moral realm - they're exploring the ocean of sin. Men used to think they'd be struck dead if they went too far out of line. But now they've discovered that you can do anything and nothing happens.

"Come on out here, the water's fine. Nobody's going to punish you!" say a host of explorers on the moral ocean who are coming back with tales of adventure.

And there are pirates who use the knife and gun without fear of any God. And they all return from their voyages with the amazing discovery that God doesn't strike you dead. The punishing angels don't pay any attention - you get away with anything.

Don't worry anymore about God. If He's there at all, He's asleep.

Go out there and do whatever your heart desires!

This defiance of conscience, this absence of the fear of God, can be found everywhere. From church dignitaries, government, business, and union leaders, down to the respectable, comfortable, average man. God doesn't punish.

There's nothing to be afraid of. If you want to do it,  
go ahead and do it!

When Columbus sailed out across the Atlantic Ocean and  
made it to the West Indies, he proved his point - you  
don't drop off the edge of the earth. It can be done.

But when you go sailing out on that sea of God defiance,  
moral perversity, and you make it out there to your  
favorite sin and back home again and nothing happens to  
strike you down, you haven't proved that God is dead,  
or blind, or doesn't care. You may think you got away with  
something because you didn't get punished on the spot. But  
you're in for a surprise.

Suppose one day you're at your favorite mall shopping for  
a blue necktie. For some reason your charge account has  
been cancelled and when you look in your wallet you  
discover you forgot to bring your money. You must have  
the necktie for an occasion that evening, and so you  
decide, "I have no choice - I'll just have to take one  
of these ties".

You slip a nice bright blue tie off the rack and are just  
about to drop it into your pocket when a clerk comes  
around the corner and catches you in the act. But instead  
of shouting at you, the clerk smiles and turns to another  
customer and pays no attention. You know he saw you, but  
he doesn't seem to care. Hesitatingly you stuff the tie  
deeper into your pocket and walk away. Why didn't he stop  
me?

The following week you're at your favorite mall again tantalized by the discovery that you could take a necktie off the rack and put it in your pocket and walk right out of the store in front of their eyes.

"I've got to find out if that was an accident - or if they really don't care."

This time you go over to the watch counter and deliberately, in front of the clerk, you put a watch on your wrist and start walking out of the store. To your amazement absolutely nothing happens.

"This is unbelievable" you say to yourself and soon you can't stop yourself from going back every day, and every day you do the same thing, openly, brazenly, without any attempt to hide what you're doing.

You walk out of the store with radios, typewriters, jewelry, hardware, sporting goods, and no one even asks you a question.

Then one day an envelope comes in the mail addressed to you from that same store. You open it and behold an itemized bill. Every single article you walked out with since you started with the blue tie is carefully listed with the price and the date of "purchase". The bill totals \$5,103.76.

No threats,

no warnings - just a bill.

"Well I'm not going to pay it!

They should have stopped me!

They should have made me sign an invoice!

Before I pay \$5,103.76 I'm going to leave town."

You drive to New York, find a job, rent an apartment, and settle down to a new life. But some weeks later the mailman brings another bill from that store. Again you ignore it.

Finally, one evening while you're finishing supper, there is a knock on the door and when you open it, two men place you under arrest.

You weren't arrested when you took the tie.

You weren't arrested when you took the radio and the typewriter.

You weren't even arrested when you skipped town for New York.

You were given plenty of time to settle your account but at last your time ran out. You pushed your luck too far and now you will face just and severe consequences of what you did.

Of course, malls don't operate that way. They couldn't and stay in business. --But God does.

Do you presume upon the riches of God's kindness and forbearance and patience?

Do you not know that God's kindness is meant

to lead you to repentance?

But by your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. For He will render to every man according to his works.

You're not dealing with an absent-minded fool, my friend, you're dealing with the Holy God. We shall receive just recompense for the deeds done in our bodies - good or bad.

"Marvel not at this. The hour is coming when all that are in the grave shall hear His voice and shall come forth. They that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation."

You get away with nothing - everything you do is seen by eyes that miss nothing and forget nothing.

Every once-in-a-while something happens in your life that's like getting a bill - it comes as a shock. It's a warning.

It may be an illness, or a setback in circumstances or a few lines from a book, or words from a friend or from an enemy - but it brings you under conviction, makes you realize that God does know what you've been doing.

Instead of striking you down with the punishment you deserve, instead of throwing you into the prison of the damned, God holds back his wrath and speaks to you a message of sheer love.

"Come now, let us reason together", saith the

Lord. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

"No matter what you've done.

No matter what you've been.

I can make you clean", He says.

Instead of striking you dead with lightning and casting you into the abyss that has no bottom and where the fire never dies, God sends his only begotten Son to a cross to die in your place, to suffer your punishment, to pay the full price for your sins in His body.

All the wrath of the Holy God that should be falling on the human race is funneled down on that one point in time and space: Calvary.

Calvary is the only place where the wrath of God touches the earth.

- If you're wondering why you're getting away with so much, look at Calvary and you will see.

- if you're wondering why others can sin and nothing happens, look at Calvary. It's going on Him instead of on us.

And, if you fix your heart, soul, strength, and mind on the crucified Christ and let your sins drain out of you and flow into Him and die with Him, you will be saved!

The wrath of God will never fall on you for it has fallen on Him for you.

God is

- giving you time to get to Calvary and get

clean,

- giving you time to get your brother there,

- giving the nations time to hear this gracious  
call to repentance.

And that call is going out with or without the help of  
churchianity. With or without the help of famous evan-  
gelists. It is going out in places in this city and on  
this earth you wouldn't believe.

The only reason for the existence of the Body of Christ on  
earth is to proclaim the mercy of God

- to the multitudes around us who think God  
is dead because they don't get punished for  
their sins

- to show them that God is not blind - He's  
just good, so good,

- to bring them into the grace of God while  
there is still time.

You don't have to tell them they're sinners - they know  
they're sinners.

Tell them God loves them.

Tell them the door of the Lamb's house is open.

Tell them He's waiting for them to come home.

Show them the way.

Show them that beautiful Cross where  
our sins were conquered.

Don't jump on a man because he does dope or drinks too much or waists his money on gambling machines..

Show him the love of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Tell him how Christ can make him clean inside.

Give him something to hope for, so he'll turn and call on his Lord.

And warn him that he does not have forever to make up his mind.

The Cross is the lightning rod taking all the lightning of God's judgment to itself. But soon the lightning rod will be removed - the age of grace will be ended.

Then, lightning and the thunder of Holy judgment will strike every man, every nation.

He will render to every man according to his works.

Every account will be settled in full and forever.

God grant that when the lightning begins to strike and the fire falls you may be in the company of those whose sins are covered by the blood of the Son of God.

If you're not in that company now, may God help you to find your way to the Christ

- who loves you,

and calls you,

- and is able to save you this very hour.

Do you not know that the kindness of God (and what else

has enabled you to live this long?) is meant to lead  
you to repentance?

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/richard-e-bieber/the-gracious-delay-of-swift-wrath/>

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