

The wrath of God is revealed from heaven

by William MacDonald

Transcript

“The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.” (Rom. 1:18)

The wrath of God is His fierce anger and retributive punishment directed against unrepentant sinners in time and in eternity. A. W. Pink has pointed out that it is as much a divine perfection as is His faithfulness, power and mercy. We need make no apology for it.

In pondering the wrath of God, there are a few facts we should keep in mind.

There is no conflict between God’s love and His wrath. True love punishes sin, rebellion and disobedience.

If men refuse God’s love, what is left but His wrath? There are only two eternal abodes, heaven and hell. If men refuse heaven, they thereby choose hell.

God did not create hell for men, but for the devil and his angels (Mt. 25:41). The Lord does not desire the death of the wicked (Ezek. 33:11). But there is no alternative for the Christ-rejecter.

Judgment is spoken of as God’s strange work (Isa. 28:21). The suggestion is that He prefers to show mercy (Jas. 2:13b).

There is no vindictiveness or spite in God’s wrath. It is righteous wrath, without any stain of sin.

The wrath of God is an attribute we are not called to imitate. It is peculiarly His in the sense that He alone can exercise it with absolute justice. Thus Paul writes to the Romans, “Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord’” (Rom. 12:19 NASB).

The Christian is called on to display righteous anger, but it must be righteous. It must not overflow into sinful wrath (Eph. 4:26). And it should be exercised only when God’s honor is at stake, never in self-defense or self-justification.

If we really believe in the wrath of God, it should move us out to share the Gospel with those who are still on the broad road that leads to destruction. And when we preach the wrath of God, it should be with tears of compassion.

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