

Parson to Person
ROMANS 1 (PART 5B)

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them” (Romans 1:18–32 NKJV).

When Paul wrote to the Romans, he indicated that the righteousness of God is revealed in the salvation provided through Jesus Christ our Lord. He also indicated that God’s righteousness is revealed by the Divine wrath poured out upon the wicked.

It is not that the wicked are pleasing to Him, or that God delights in judgment, but rather, He is vindicated in judgment against the unbeliever just as He is in the salvation of those who believe.

God is not enhanced by the faith and trust of the believer, nor is He diminished by the unbelief of the rebellious. He remains God and will be glorified in all His acts.

There is no question about the fact that God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked. He desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (see Ezekiel 33:11 and 1 Timothy 2:3–4). However, the righteousness of God demands justice—and therefore judgment upon those who reject the gracious provisions given us in Jesus.

Paul wanted all the Romans to understand their depravity and then to respond to the offer of salvation—for all have sinned. His thesis herein draws us to the needed conclusions found in a full understanding of the entire Gospel narrative.

A careful examination of the big picture takes us all the way back to the Garden of Eden and therefore an understanding of why God allowed sin, the curse, suffering, death, and hell.

If we never fell, we would have never needed salvation. If we did not need salvation, we would never have seen or experienced the mercy, grace, compassion, and forgiveness God desired to reveal to us.

God allowed man to exercise the freedom to choose right or wrong, to suffer the consequences for wrongdoing, to long for deliverance, and finally, to obtain the restoration provided by His manifest love, mercy, grace, and forgiveness. Herein God receives glory!

In consideration of the above, please note the following:

- 1) The wrath of God is revealed from heaven by the removal of restraining grace (allowing a hardening of the heart, thereby causing man to fall deeper and deeper into depravity while suffering its temporal consequences).
- 2) The wrath of God will be revealed from heaven in the coming eschaton and its future temporal and/or eternal judgment of unbelievers.
- 3) The righteousness of God will be revealed in the Gospel—vindicating God’s allowance of choice, sin, and consequence through the redemption promised in the eschaton by the rewarding of eternal life and complete restoration of believers.

4) The righteousness of God is revealed in the Gospel—vindicating God’s allowance of choice, sin, and consequence: the curse, suffering, and death.

I love you all, Pastor Paul