

The Character and Attributes of God
Lesson 4 – The Wrath and Longsuffering of God
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Introduction: Is the character of God contradictory?

A. Many wish to deny the wrath of God.

1. One denomination eliminated the hymn “In Christ Alone” because of this line: “Till on that cross as Jesus died/the wrath of God was satisfied.”
2. The problem with many is that they see God in light of man’s weaknesses or try to create a God from their own imagination. **(1 Sam 15:29; Isa 55:8-9)**

B. It is important that we see God as He has revealed Himself. If we deny or fail to understand one aspect of His Character then it affects everything we know about God or what we even believe!

1. The wrath of God is *always* connected with His *holiness*. **(Isa 6:4-6)**
2. The wrath of God is *always* directed at sin. **(Eph 5:5-7)**
3. This knowledge is at the very heart of the gospel. **(Rom 1:16-18)**

I. Why does God want us to know of His wrath?

A. ὀργή - wrath- as a vigorous upsurge of one's nature against someone or something *anger, wrath, indignation*; (1) as a human emotion *anger, wrath* (JA 1.20); (2) as the divine reaction against evil, bringing judgment and punishment both historically and in the future *wrath, indignation* (MT 3.7; RO 9.22); as a future culmination of judgment in an outpouring of the stored-up anger of God (ἡ) ἡμέρα (τῆς) ὀργῆς (*the day of wrath* (RO 2.5; RV 6.17)

1. “The Greek words orge and thumos are used over a hundred times in the Bible side by side, at times hardly distinguishable.”

A. T. Robertson: - “God’s anger (thumos) is his vehement fury or boiling rage. His wrath (orge) is his settled indignation or his settled anger. In other words, in God’s anger the emphasis falls on the emotional, boiling intensity of it. And in God’s wrath the emphasis falls on the controlled, settled, considered direction and focus of its application. But we dare not draw a hard line between them. God’s anger is never out of the control of his wisdom and righteousness, and his wrath is never cool or indifferent, but is always a wisely directed fury. The wrath of God is never less than a perfect judicial decree, but is always more than a perfect judicial decree because it is always full of right and fitting fury.”

B. God’s anger is consistent and absolutely righteous. **(Rom 2:5-6)**

1. It is always connected to the righteous judgment of God.
2. It is cumulative; God will not let even an idle word pass His wrath. **(Mt 12:36)**

II. God’s wrath reveals God’s grace, love and way of Salvation.

A. σωτηρία - **Salvation**, deliverance; (1) physically, as rescue from danger deliverance, preservation, safety (HE 11.7); (2) as a religious technical term safety of the soul in a spiritual sense salvation (2C 7.10); (3) of the messianic deliverance at the end of the present age salvation (RO 13.11)

1. Jesus pointed out the only alternative to salvation. **(Jn 3:36; Jn 8:24)**
2. The nature of God demands that sin be punished. **(Ex 34:6-7)**

- a. Our God will not clear the guilty.
- b. Look at some of the sins that bring the wrath of God. **(Col 3:5-7)**
- B. When we find forgiveness then we are no longer “children of wrath.” **(Eph 2:1-3)**
 - 1. What are we saved from? We are saved from the wrath of God. **(Rom 5:9)**
 - 2. There is a “wrath to come” that we do not want to see. **(1 Thess 1:10; 5:9-10)**

III. How does the longsuffering of God abide with His wrath?

- A. What is longsuffering?
 - 1. μακροθυμία, ας, ἡ as a state of emotional quietness in the face of unfavorable circumstances *patience, long-suffering*; (1) as patience under trial *endurance, steadfastness* (HE 6.12); (2) as constraint exercised toward others *forbearance, patience* (2C 6.6); (3) as God's constraint of his wrath *long-suffering, forbearance* (RO 2.4)
- B. Our God wants us to *know* this about Him. **(Num 14:17-19; Ps 86:14-15)**
 - 1. Before you begin to complain about why the world continues as it is you need to think about God waiting for you. **(2 Pt 3:9)**
 - 2. Paul wanted all men to know how God’s longsuffering changed Him. **(1 Tim 1:12-16)**
 - 3. Why does the longsuffering of God move some men and harden others? Does the longsuffering of God eliminate His wrath? **(Rom 2:4-5; 9:21-24)**

IV. How the knowledge of God’s nature changes us

- A. We should want all men to be saved (forgiven).
 - 1. When we remember what God did for us we must put on this kind of heart towards others. **(Eph 2:1-3; 4:31-32)**
 - 2. We must never forget this and lose our motivation! **(2 Pt 1:8-9)**
- B. We will be able to be comforted by the *wrath of God!*
 - 1. There are burdens that we were never meant to handle. One of these is personal vengeance! **(Rom 12:19-20)**
 - 2. Is it righteous to want evildoers punished? God wants us to trust Him and His ways. **(Rom 13:2-5)**
- C. We will be able to work in unity with our brothers in Christ. **(Eph 4:1-2)**
 - 1. What did Jesus endure with His apostles? **(Lk 9:40-41, 54-56)**
 - 2. What did your parents have to endure with you?
 - 3. This will eliminate the “short fuse,” hasty accusations and gossip.
 - 4. Longsuffering is not ignoring the person or harboring hate in silence!

Questions

1. Why do men wish to deny the wrath of God?
2. What is God’s wrath like and how is it different from the wrath of men?
3. How is the love and grace of God associated with His wrath?
4. How does God’s longsuffering and wrath work together?
5. Why do some count God’s or man’s longsuffering as weakness? Why is this wrong?
6. How can we find comfort and peace because of the wrath of God?
7. How has longsuffering in others benefited you?