

ROMANS SEASON 1 THE GOSPEL. OUR NEED.

CONNECT *BREAK THE ICE AND GET PEOPLE TALKING*

- What music were you into when you were a teenager? Do you still enjoy it?
 - What are some things you'd like to accomplish between now and the end of the year?
 - What do you picture when you hear the word "wrath"?
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TRUTH *UNDERSTAND AND DISCUSS THE SCRIPTURE'S MEANING*

If the gospel is "the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes," what does humanity need saving from? Paul's going to tell us. The second half of Romans 1 is sobering, uncomfortable, and will have many of us feeling edgy. In the same way that it's uncomfortable for your eyes to adjust after walking into a bright room, moving through the discomfort will lead us to a deeper understanding of why the gospel is really good news.

The Wrath of God

READ: Romans 1:16-18

DISCUSS: What stands out to you from these verses and why?

The word "wrath" might make us think of God as an unhinged man who's lost his temper. That's not what God's wrath is. God's wrath is his righteous response to humanity's unrighteousness. Three times in chapter one, God's wrath is described as "giving up" humans to the result of their decisions. In other words, God is allowing humans to experience the fallout of rejecting him. In the same way that it would be unjust for a civil judge to withhold a sentence from a defendant who's proven guilty, God responds to humanity's ungodliness with his wrath.

Why It's Deserved

READ: Romans 1:19-25

DISCUSS: Modern westerners might not worship statues of gold, but what things do you think we tend to put in the place of God?

One of the ten commandments is to honor your parents. It makes total sense to show gratitude and honor to people who fed you, clothed you, and paid for everything you needed. Now imagine how much more God has done for humans than their parents. Breath. Life. Everything comes from him. Rather than honoring the Creator, however, humanity has worshiped created things, making them more important than God.

READ: Romans 26-32

DISCUSS: Do you agree with verse 32, that people who practice this kind of unrighteousness deserve to die? Why or why not?

One outcome of humanity suppressing truth is that human sexuality becomes shattered, unmoored from its creational design. Now, his example of homosexual activity in these verses might make us uncomfortable in our current cultural moment, but we must recognize that it's an example of his larger point—that when humans suppress the truth about God, they reject God's design for human flourishing. Envy, murder, strife, deceit, and the rest of Paul's list are other examples, and everyone can find themselves in some measure in that list. The culmination is a debased mind—a mind unable and unwilling to uphold God's moral standards because we've let go of God himself, and attempted to make sense of our world without him.

GRACE *SEE HOW THE PASSAGE CONNECTS TO JESUS*

What to Do About It

READ: Romans 1:16-17

God's righteous wrath is being revealed through the gospel, but so is his salvation. Against the dark backdrop of humanity's ungodliness, the blazing light of God's salvation is shining bright. When Jesus died on the cross, this righteous wrath of God was poured out on him. For those who believe the gospel, Jesus has taken their place under God's wrath, and they have come under God's righteousness. Thanks be to God for his salvation!

CHANGE *APPLY THE PASSAGE TO OUR THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND ACTIONS*

- In what ways does this passage challenge the way you think about the condition of humanity?
 - Do you have any hang-ups about the idea of God displaying wrath? What are they?
 - How does this passage allow you to see the gospel with more clarity?
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PRAYER *RESPOND TO THE PASSAGE IN PRAYER*

- A conviction about our true condition and about God's righteous wrath can only come through the Holy Spirit. Pray for friends and family who don't yet believe the gospel, that the Spirit would work in their lives.
- Pray for sensitivity to the leading of the Holy Spirit to renew our minds.

Discipleship Check-In

- Have you read your Bible consistently the past week?
- Who is someone you're praying to share Jesus with this week, and what's one way you can love them well?