

Romans Refresh

Renewing Gospel-Centrality

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¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

¹⁷ For in it *the* righteousness of God is revealed by faith unto faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS *man* SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

(Romans 1:16-17)

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¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

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Universal Indictment (1:18-3:20)

- A. God's righteous wrath against idolatry; a focus on the Greco-Roman world (1:18-32)
- B. God's impartial wrath against the self-righteous hypocrite who judges others (2:1-16)
- C. God's triumphant wrath against the Jew who has the Law and circumcision (2:17-3:20)

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¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, ¹⁹ because that which is known about God is evident to them; for God made it evident to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes—His eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

²¹ For even though they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. ²² Professing to be wise, they became fools, ²³ and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

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²⁴ Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, that their bodies might be dishonored among them. ²⁵ These who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

²⁶ For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for even their women exchanged the natural function for that which is against nature, ²⁷ and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.

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²⁸And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to an unfit mind, to do those things which are not proper, ²⁹being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; *they are* gossips, ³⁰slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, ³¹without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; ³²and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.

(Romans 1:18-32)

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God's Wrath Against Idolatry

1. Why begin the gospel with God's wrath?

- God's judgment/wrath is the essential condition of salvation; *"the vehicle by which salvation arrives"*
- God will be vindicated as God in His saving justice toward the ungodly who believe

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God's Wrath Against Idolatry

2. Why is God's wrath being revealed?

- for the primal sin of idolatry – "exchanging" the worship of the true God for man-made idols
- idolatry is the object of God's just wrath because the knowledge of God and His essential nature is innate to every person ("without excuse")

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God's Wrath Against Idolatry

3. How is God's wrath being revealed?

- in God's "giving over" idolaters to the cycle of ever-increasing sin
- God's action of transferring and subjecting people to their sinful desires resulting in dishonoring actions

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God's Wrath Against Idolatry

3. How is God's wrath being revealed?

➤ Threefold Cycle:

1:23-24: exchange, gave over, dishonoring acts

1:25-27: exchange, gave over, unnatural acts

1:28-32: rejected, gave over, improper acts

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God's Wrath Against Idolatry

➤ Implications

- Society's moral disorder is the result of God's judgment of the primal sin of idolatry
- Mankind in idolatry is helpless and hopeless apart from the saving righteousness of God in Christ

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