

The Merciful Winds of Judgment: The Glory of God's Wrath

Day 1

Wrath and Love

To understand how God's love and God's wrath connect, check out this great article:

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/wrath-not-attribute-god/>

Verses: John 3:16, Romans 3:25, Romans 5:8

Prayer Topics: Discipline, Redemption, Order

Day 2

Judgment and Glory

Most of us have a negative view of the judgment of God, and I used to fall into this camp myself. When I was growing up, sermons about the judgment of God, hellfire and brimstone messages, were something that terrified me. As I got older, I still had a dim view of this aspect of the character of God and I didn't really understand how it fit into the character of God if He was love. I read a book some time ago that explored how the central theme of the bible was God's glory as it was revealed through judgment, and that book completely changed my mind about God's judgment. I discovered that I was making a profound mistake, and that this mistake made me see everything backwards. What was that mistake? When we see God's judgment as the

problem rather than the solution we are actually seeing sin as good and righteousness as bad. What do I mean by this? Imagine that you went to the doctor and he told you that you had a terminal disease, but that it was caught in time and that with treatment you can be healed of the disease and live a healthy life. In fact, this disease has slowly been making you sicker over the years, so that when you are healed you will feel far better than you have in your whole adult life. The judgment that the doctor rendered was absolutely vital to your salvation, without it you would die. If he had not found out and declared what was wrong in you, you would be without hope. It would be foolish to tell your friends about this experience and say that you wish the judgment had not occurred or that they should be frightened by the prospect of judgment. You would instead talk about how wise the judgments of the doctor were, how you owe everything to his judgment and you would encourage your friends to undergo judgment by this doctor immediately. God's judgment saves us, for in his judgment he establishes his righteousness by destroying sin. Everyone who is saved will be saved because of His judgment, and everyone who is not saved will find death because they refused to be saved by his judgment. We are justified, vindicated, and made clean and whole because of the glorious judgment of God.

Verses: 1 Corinthians 4:5, 2 Corinthians 5:10, Matthew 12:36-37

Prayer Topics: Wisdom, Discernment, Repentance

Day 3

To judge or not to judge...

The word "judge" has a couple of different meanings, and because of that, Christians often experience confusion and buy into the world's attitude toward

judgement. The reason for these multiple meanings and the confusion is that the outcome of judgment is varied. If you were to go to court and be judged, the outcome might be acquittal. If that were the case, judgment would be very welcome as it would have freed you from the accusation that brought you into court. The word "judge" can mean to acquit, to make a distinction, or to condemn, depending on the context and usage. To understand this more fully, check out this article:

<https://davidschrock.com/2023/02/08/salvation-from-judgment-a-survey-of-johns-good-news/>

Verses: John 3:18–19, Romans 5:12, 18–19, Acts 10:42; Revelation 2–3

Prayer Topics: Amends, Atonement, Knowledge

Day 4

God's Wrath and Our Forgiveness

Starting in Genesis 37, we are introduced to the story of Joseph. If you haven't read it in a while, go ahead and check it out. In it we have a story of betrayal, God's providence, God's wrath, and wise forgiveness. Romans 12:19 invites us to leave room for the wrath of God to accomplish vengeance on evil, and the story of Joseph is a great example of just that. Joseph is betrayed by his brothers who want to kill him but realize there is good money in selling him as a slave. In his slavery, rather than being bitter Joseph does his best and climbs the ranks eventually leading the house of an important man in Egypt. Although things do not go smoothly, Joseph eventually ends up as second in command in all of Egypt, where he encounters his brothers as they go looking for some food to buy in the midst of a famine. Apart from Joseph, his family

has been dealt with by God, especially Judah, but Joseph is unaware if they have changed or not, so he devises a set of tests for them. When he sees that the hearts of his brothers have changed, he reveals his identity and is reunited to his family in forgiveness. This story is a great example for us in how to be wise as well as gracious, and how God's wrath often accomplishes its purpose of bringing people to repentance. Joseph is able to forgive his brothers because he has let God deal with them, and therefore has no need to settle the score personally. Joseph also shows us how to be as wise as a serpent while being innocent as a dove by skillfully devising a way to understand the current family dynamics and the states of the hearts of his brothers. As Christians, we must deal with reality as it is, not how we wish it would be. Joseph does not just assume his brothers have repented and plow ahead, ending up in the same situation. Instead, he develops the circumstances of the interaction so that he might discern through their actions rather than their words if they have truly changed. Forgiveness does not mean continued victimization, and it is important that Christians understand this. God's word contains the wisdom we need to be restored to Him through Christ, and the wisdom we need to live a fruitful life. Check out the story of Joseph, and let God bless you with wisdom.

Verses: Romans 1:18, Ephesians 4:32, Proverbs 3:13-18

Prayer Topics: Judgment, Understanding, Insight

Day 5

Thanks to Sylvester Warsaw, Jr for our devotional today

“Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it

by their own ways and deeds; to Me their way was like the uncleanness of a woman in her customary impurity. Therefore I poured out My fury on them for the blood they had shed on the land, and for their idols with which they had defiled it. So I scattered them among the nations and they were dispersed throughout the countries; I judged them according to their ways and their deeds. When they came to the nations, wherever they went, they profaned My holy name-when they said of them, these are the people of the LORD, and yet they have gone out of His land. But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations wherever they went.

Therefore say to the house of Israel, thus says the Lord GOD: "I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went. And I will sanctify by great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst: and the nations shall know that I am the LORD," says the Lord God, when I am hallowed in you before their eyes.'(Ezekiel 36:17-23)

Many claiming to be followers of Christ Jesus, don't truly understand the gravity and depth of God's love and His love for His creation and created being including myself. The only way to even begin to try to understand is in our relationship with Him in and

through Christ Jesus. God has given every person on earth the freedom of choice and this is where the challenge lives, choice. We have the freedom of choice, whether to choose God's way or the way of this world order of fallen man where deceit lives. As children of God, daily, we must make the decision of how we're going to carry Him as we engage and interact with people. As children of God, does our lifestyle testify of dependence on God or do people see something different than what you're saying? Therefore, the question is how do you and I respond to God's love, how do we treat Him given the fact that God always gives us His best? Do we truly love Him and our neighbor as ourselves or whitewashed tombs? Peter records these words, "For the time has come for the judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with

us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Now if the righteous one is scarcely saved, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?"(1 Peter 4:17-18) God didn't create man to be separate from Him and it pains His heart when man rejects Him, however, God isn't a wimp nor chopped liver and He can deal with rejection and will never cease being who He is, Luke 19:41-48. Daily we must consider our ways. God vindicates His name so we as His children can use and be judged by how we carry His name, John 14:13-14; Philippians 2:5-16. As children of God, we carry a name above every name because we're priests in a royal priesthood.