



October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015

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## Turning To God's Holiness

### 1. Reject the FALSE NARRATIVE:

#### GOD IS A BIG OLE TEDDY BEAR

*A God without wrath brought men without sin into a kingdom without judgment through the ministrations of a Christ without a Cross – H. Richard Niebuhr*

### 2. Embrace the JESUS NARRATIVE:

#### THE JUDGMENT OF GOD IS JUST

*Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice<sup>29</sup> and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment. - John 5:28-29 (ESV)*

*I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak,<sup>37</sup> for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned. - Matthew 12:36-37 (ESV)*

*Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him. - John 3:36 (ESV)*

## God's Wrath Is...

### 1. CENTERED IN PATHOS NOT PASSION

- HUMAN ANGER: *Proverbs 29:22; Genesis 49:7; Amos 1:11*
- DIVINE WRATH: *Ezekiel 18:23; Jeremiah 26:3*

*The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent. - 2 Peter 3:9-10 (NLT)*

Scriptures on God *relenting*: *Exodus 32:14; 1 Chronicles 21:5; Psalm 106:45; Jeremiah 18:7-8, 11–12, 17; 26:3; Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11; Jonah 3:9-10; 2 Peter 3:9-10*

## 2. AN ACTION NOT AN ATTRIBUTE

*In a burst of anger I turned my face away for a little while. But with everlasting love I will have compassion on you,” says the Lord, your Redeemer. - Isaiah 54:7-8 (NLT)*

*Hosea 11:8-9; 14:4; Micah 7:18; Lamentations 3:31-33*

*For the Lord will rise up... he will be roused; to do his deed—strange is his deed! and to work his work—alien is his work! – Isaiah 28:21 (ESV)*

God’s holiness: *Exodus 15:11; Leviticus 11:44; Isaiah 6:3; God’s love: 1 John 4:8,16*

## 3. BASED ON HIS RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT

*But because you are stubborn and refuse to turn from your sin, you are storing up terrible punishment for yourself. For a day of anger is coming, when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed. <sup>6</sup> He will judge everyone according to what they have done. - Romans 2:5-6 (NLT)*

*Psalm 62:11-12; Proverbs 24:12; John 3:18-19*

## 4. AGAINST SIN & FOR ME

*For God is not an indifferent bystander. He’s actively cleaning house, torching all that needs to burn, and he won’t quit until it’s all cleansed. God himself is Fire! - Hebrews 12:28-29 (MSG) (see also: Romans 1:18)*

## 5. COVERED IN THE CROSS

*He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. - 1 John 2:2 (ESV)*

*Romans 3:23-24; 5:9-10 (MSG); 1 Thessalonians 1:10*

*Talk and act like a person expecting to be judged by the Rule that sets us free. For if you refuse to act kindly, you can hardly expect to be treated kindly. Kind mercy wins over harsh judgment every time. - James 2:12-13 (MSG)*

## I Will Turn To God by...

- Memorizing **2 Peter 3:9**
- Working to honor God's holiness for my life.
- Accepting that God loves me enough to correct me.
- Surrendering my life, for the first time, to Christ as my Savior.

## WALK THE TALK A Growth Group Guide

1. Have you found it to be true that people often err on both sides of God's character by seeing him as too angry or too gracious? Why do we tend to adopt the extremes instead of embracing the middle ground?
2. When you read the words of Jesus on judgment (First part of outline above), why do you think so many of us want to skip over these and go to the passages on love?
3. Look over the section called, *God's Wrath Is...*, and state the one that helped you the most in embracing this difficult aspect of God's holiness and love. Explain why you picked that one.
4. If God's love were to burn something out of your life that is holding you back, what would it be?
5. If God wasn't concerned with sin and evil, how might that hurt us?
6. If the "doors of Hell are locked from the inside," as James Bryan Smith says in *The Good and Beautiful God* on page 125, how does that help you to see Hell as more of a place that is self-chosen?

# SOUL TRAINING – MARGIN

## A Personal Transformation Exercise

### The Principle:

Every piece of paper has a margin. It's the space on the top, bottom, and sides that is blank. Generally speaking, there is nothing there and it serves to give the document a form. A page with no margins would look too crowded. It would be hard to focus, and follow along, because there would be too much happening. Our lives can get like this. More and more today, we crowd the margins of our lives to the point where things become chaotic. We plan our schedules so jam-packed full of things to do that we barely have any room to slow down and breathe. We can have a hard time focusing, following along, and even keeping track of our life. The more we run our lives with little to no margin, the more likely we are to eventually break down. "Marginless" lives lead to stress, exhaustion, and a world of other health, mental, spiritual, and emotional problems. When we lack margin in our lives, we become tired, lonely, and joyless, which invites temptation.

Margin is important. This is different than vacation or Sabbath (those are important and we'll get to that). Margin is *regular*, and maybe even *scheduled*, space in our day and/or week where there is nothing. This is a regular time of rest, and even silence, that causes us to slow down. Margin restores and balances our soul, thus increasing our capacity for joy. Margin is directly related to holiness because it allows our bodies to function correctly, our minds to be at peace, and our souls to be joyful. These things push back against temptation and put us in a healthier and holier place.

### The Plan:

The goal this week is to create some margin. You may even want to think about cutting stuff out of your life. Take an inventory of your regular schedule, figure out what is absolutely essential, and try to start removing or scaling back the rest. Here are some tips:

1. Get up ten minutes earlier and create a space for silence before you begin your day. Take this time to maybe pray or read a devotional thought or scripture.
2. Cut out *unnecessary* entertainment activities.
3. Explore the things you do most often and find ways to reduce their frequency without cutting it out of your life.