



The Exchange

Romans 1:18-32 | Jan 19, 2020 | Willowdale Jennersville

Today we come to a shift in the text from the previous two weeks in the book of Romans. Verses 16 & 17 of chapter one talk about the gospel revealing the righteousness of God. In verse 18 we come to an attribute of God being revealed: God's wrath. The wrath of God is something we'd rather skip over or just ignore. For some of us, we have a wrong understanding of God's wrath that comes complete with a Zeus-like character throwing lightning bolts. God's wrath, however, is something that can draw us closer to Him when realize how much we need Him.

The text tells us that God's wrath is revealed because of "godlessness and wickedness". Human beings choose to suppress the truth about God and worship idols. Because of this, and this is key to understanding God's wrath, "God gives them over". In other words, God's wrath comes upon people when He lets them do what they want. If they want to be separated from Him and live according to what they think is best, God says "so be it". People exchange the truth of God for lies.

We see this evidence in our world daily. People do what they want with their bodies, their minds, and are corrupt even down to their core. Why would God let something like this happen? One possible explanation is that, at some point, their lives will get so dark that they have to go looking for the light. As humans, we need to realize that every single one of us has sinned and falls short. The wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus. God showed His love for us like this: While we were still sinners, Jesus died for us. This means that if you profess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. Even though we have resisted God's grace and forgiveness, Jesus paid the price to overcome that resistance. This means that while we have exchanged the truth for a lie, we have the opportunity to make an even greater exchange: our life handed over to God.

Discussion Guide

1. What typically comes to mind when you hear the phrase "Wrath of God"? Where do those ideas come from?
2. In Romans 1:18-20, Paul shows us that no one is without excuse when it comes recognizing that there is a God. The reason people don't acknowledge God is because they suppress the truth. What do you think it looks like when someone suppresses the truth about God? What has it looked like in your life?
3. Suppressing the truth about God leads to idol worship and idol worship leads to corrupt relationships and poor human behavior. Why do you think Paul started with the internal life of

the human rather than pointing out the poor behavior first? What is the significance of the order in which he describes the progression of God's wrath being revealed?

4. Paul speaks of people exchanging the glory of God and exchanging the truth for a lie. Why do you think he chose to use the word "exchange"? What does it mean to exchange something and why is it significant to describing God's wrath as it pertains to this passage?
5. The "how" of God's wrath being revealed can be summed up in this little phrase: "God gave them over..." God gave them over to their desires. What kinds of feelings does this idea bring up in you? Does this system seem wrong or not fair to you? Why? Do you think it makes perfect sense? Why?
6. By God giving people over to their desires, what do you think is His desired outcome? Is there a different way to get that same outcome?
7. Discuss this phrase: Without judgment, salvation has no meaning. Do you agree or disagree? How do judgment and salvation go hand in hand? What significance does salvation carry without judgment?
8. Have you made the great exchange of handing your life over to Jesus? If yes, what role did understanding God's wrath play in your salvation? If you haven't, would you be willing to make that exchange now?