

**QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION
& SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION
FOR JANUARY 15 THRU 21, 2023**

—Here is the passage from which this study is based. For starters this week, it would be beneficial to carefully read and observe the details of what Paul wrote. Especially notice the words in bold print.

—Romans 1:18–32 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 within them; for **God made it evident (obvious) 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 honor 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.

24 Therefore God gave them over in the **lusts of their hearts** to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. 25 For they exchanged the truth of God for a 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 their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, 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.

28 And just as **they did not see fit to acknowledge God** any longer, God gave them over to a **depraved mind**, to do those things which are not proper, 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, 30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31 without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; 32 and **although they know the instructions 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.**

—After carefully observing this passage, what are some personal thoughts that come to your mind about the reasons why God's wrath is something we need to understand in an accurate way?

—Here are some quotations that are intended to motivate us toward looking at the contrast and comparison between God's mercy, grace, & love and His wrath over people's sin.

—Truth is tough. It will not break, like a bubble, at a touch; nay, you may kick it about all day like a football, and it will be round and full at evening. —*Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr.*

—Romans 3:23 All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

—“Within evangelicalism is a distressing drift toward accepting a Christianity that does not demand a life-changing walk with God. Many evangelicals (today) do not realize that the church has always been an island of righteousness in a sea of paganism, but as a result they turned the world upside-down. —*Erwin W. Lutzer*

—“If there is one single reason why good people turn evil, it's because they fail to recognize God's ownership over their kingdom, their vocation, their resources, their abilities, and above all their lives.”

—*Erwin W. Lutzer*

—Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

—“To make sure our convictions, views, and assumptions about our Creator stay based on biblical truth and not on popular consensus, we must continually check what we believe against the Scriptures.”

—*Erwin W. Lutzer*

—“Wherever Jesus has been proclaimed, we see lives change for the good, nations change for the better, thieves become honest, alcoholics become sober, hateful individuals become channels of love, unjust persons embrace justice.” —*Josh McDowell*

—“There is a moral and spiritual war for the souls of Americans. And this war must be waged by preaching the Gospel, prayer, and obedience to God's Word.” —*David Jeremiah*

—In salvation, God both declares us guilty and pays our debt. Only he can satisfy his own requirements. A savior less than God would be disqualified; God must do it himself. —**Erwin W. Lutzer**

—*“The most violent expression of God's wrath and justice is seen in the Cross. If ever a person had room to complain for injustice, it was Jesus. He was the only innocent man ever to be punished by God. If we stagger at the wrath of God, let us stagger at the Cross. Here is where our astonishment should be focused.”* — **R.C. Sproul, *The Holiness of God***

—**Here are some questions that might promote or provoke discussion:**

—**1}** Here is an accurate definition/explanation of the meaning and importance of truth, followed by some questions to consider.

—*Truth is an ABSOLUTE standard that MEASURES REALITY & ESTABLISHES JUSTICE. It's God's point of view on any topic & TRUTH NEVER CHANGES! It doesn't matter whether we agree or not, TRUTH is ALWAYS TRUE! It's TRUE because God says it. It's NEVER determined by our feelings or personal opinions.*

TRUTH governs everything that exists because God is the author of TRUTH. God's will & desire for all followers of Christ is that we always adjust ourselves to God's point of view!

—*Deuteronomy 29:29 “The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those that are revealed belong to us and our descendants forever, so that we might obey (observe & follow) all the words of what God says.”*

—**How has the concept of truth been changed by our culture?**

—**Why do people have a difficult time accepting the reality that truth doesn't change?**

—**Truth is outside of us. No one owns their own truth. Why is this important? How has our society adopted the idea that “it doesn't matter what you believe as long as your belief helps you are makes you happy?**

—**How does this relate to our understanding of the Bible?**

—**2}** Based on Romans 1:18–23, why should we recognize that there is no such thing as an atheist?

—How does God's creation reveal that God exists?

—Darwin and many “so-called” scientists have tried to persuade people that evolution is true. How would you explain to someone that evolution is a deceptive idea meant to eliminate God's authority over us?

—**3}** Often the topic of God's wrath is seen as the **elephant in the room** that no one wants to acknowledge. Why does the reality related to God's wrath offend people? How do most people seem to look at the concept of God's judgment over sin? How is God's character harmed by the way many people look at His wrath?

—**4}** Some have said that things like the AIDS epidemic, Covid, and other catastrophes cannot be God's judgment because the innocent suffer along with the guilty. What thoughts do you have about this? (Please realize that we need to use wisdom and caution about saying in a definitive way that certain events are God's judgments. What we can say is that sin has resulted in a curse over the world that causes disease and other problems. Being specific about whom God is judging and how His wrath is being carried out must be backed by biblical truth. What additional ideas do you have about this?)

—**5}** How would you respond to someone who is supporting an organization that claims to be Christian and to have biblical values, but is dedicated to “theistic evolution?” What Bible passages would you use to respond to this argument?

—**6}** Why are “glorifying God” and “giving thanks” foundational to our relationship to the Lord and to our belief system? How can we practice these qualities more faithfully?

—**7}** Jesus prayed that we would be **sanctified in the Truth**. What are some steps we can take to make this happen? This is something God has always desired for His faithful followers, but do you believe that 's it's become more necessary as we move toward the end times? Why?

—**8}** Can a person whom God has given over to his sins (lusts, sensual passions, and increasing depravity) be a faithful follower of the Lord? (Please understand that God deals with people on His terms and not according to what we might think. This should lead us to analyze the way we acknowledge God's authority and trust in the truth of His Word. What personal thoughts do you have on this?)