

## God's Wrath Part 2

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[ 0 : 00 ] Please turn with me in your Bibles to Romans chapter 1, Romans chapter 1. If you're new or visiting, welcome. My name is BK. I have the pleasure of serving here as one of the pastors.

In case you did not know, this is a portion of Scripture upon which Paul, after serving for, I would say, close to 30 years by this time, he's in the city of Corinth, and he's addressing this group of Christians that live in Rome.

He has longed to visit them. He has not had the opportunity. In fact, he is making plans for it. But before he does, he sends them this letter.

And in today's passage, contains what is not only the theme, the thesis for the book of Romans, but also the theme and thesis for our entire Bibles.

So please look at Romans chapter 1. We are starting in verse 16. Paul simply says, 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.

[ 1 : 18 ] For in it, the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith. As it is written, the righteous shall live by faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

Consider for a moment with me, to consider how very precious these verses are. The founder, or I don't know if I want to say the founder, but the one who instigated the birth of the Protestant church, Martin Luther, certainly loved these verses.

For in it, he found the secret of being right with God. If you notice, there's an argument taking place. The word for is used right at the very beginning. It says, For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for I glory in the gospel. Then he goes, For it is the power of God of salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

For in it, righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith. And that word for faith for faith is a bit of an awkward saying, but what it means is we receive the righteousness of God by faith.

[ 2 : 49 ] And then we get into verse 18, which indicates why he rejoices in this righteousness of God. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

We love talking about the righteousness that God has for us. But dare I say, we hate talking about the wrath that God has for us.

I think if we're honest with ourselves, the word wrath is not a general part of our vocabulary. Even in reading or considering these verses, we tend to read over the first section, the wrath of God, and move on to the next thought.

The fact is, can we be blamed for this? Nobody wants to face anyone's wrath, let alone God's wrath.

You see, here's the thing. When we hear that word wrath, we hear this idea of an uncontrollable anger, an uncontrollable rage.

[ 4 : 19 ] It's almost someone who's, we use the term flying off the handle, right? Just losing it. If you guys are baseball fans, and probably my favorite video, and this is a little bit old for some of you guys, but it's back in the 80s, and the New York Yankees were playing the Kansas City Royals, and George Brett, who's a Hall of Famer third baseman, comes up, and he hits a home run to win the series.

You know, he's dancing around the bases. He's cheering, and then all of a sudden, the umpires are looking at his bat, and there's this rule at that time, you can only have so much pine tar on a bat, and it's not supposed to exceed 18 inches.

So all of a sudden, there's this meeting at the mound, and they're putting it over the plate, in case you don't know, but you should. A baseball home plate is 18 inches across. They measure it, and they find that the pine tar exceeds.

So the umpire goes, you're out! And out of the dugout, comes George Brett, and he's wrathful. He is screaming, and he's got this big chew of tobacco, and his mouth, and he's just ready to, and people gotta grab him. He's just incensed.

[ 5 : 43 ] I think, I should have gotten the clip. It's on YouTube. Maybe I'll show it to you for next week. But it is by far, you rarely see anybody that angry. When we use that word wrath, that's what we think of.

If you're a college basketball aficionado, you think Bobby Knight. You just think someone who just loses it at the epitome of anger.

So to even consider for a moment what God would be like is angry. It is an undesirable, objectionable, dare I say, hated thing to do.

If there is a doctrine of God that is a teaching about God, this is probably the teaching that is the most misunderstood and most ill-informed.

This morning, the subject is the wrath of God. And my goal for us this morning is that we would truly come to appreciate the wrath of God.

[ 6 : 53 ] Let me pray. Dear Holy Heavenly Father, just as we come to this idea of understanding wrath, we think of judgmentalism, we think of hell, we think of enduring punishment.

Perhaps we do think about it as rage that is uncontrolled, that is full of hate and anger and frustration.

So many of us so easily transfer what some of us may have experienced at home, the wrath of our fathers or even our mothers, to have unholy words spoken to us.

Heaven forbid that for some of us would have been beaten or hurt or cast aside because of someone's wrath. Lord, forgive those who have done such damage to image bearers of you.

But Father, let us for a moment consider that you aren't our angry fathers or our angry mothers, but that you are indeed different and you stand above all those things.

[ 8 : 06 ] Father, I pray that we would come to a better understanding and glory in the wrath of God. It's a weird way to say it, but I pray as we make this way through this sermon that you would give us ears to hear and hearts to understand the beauty of who you are and why wrath exists.

We ask these things in your most holy and wonderful name. Amen. There's essentially four wrong yet popular views on wrath.

The first view that is often presented in our society is the position forwarded by the unbeliever, the atheist, or even the agnostic.

These are those people that would ridicule the idea of the wrath of God if they even believe in God. The idea of wrath would be unthinkable.

They would state that if, and that is a big whiff, if, if there is a God, there's no way he would be mad at me. Right? He would love me.

[ 9 : 17 ] He'd love me because I am so kind. I am so good. Let me count the good ways of my life and count the ways that God would love me.

So any idea of God being wrathful is obviously a God that it's impossible to have that type of God because there's no way that God could be harmful.

That is, if there is a God. Secular psychologists will tell you that the understanding of wrath derives from our transference, just as I said in my prayer, the transference of an angry type of father who is stern, who rules with an iron fist, who has no understanding of grace, and who only speaks as if we are born for trouble, that psychologist will tell you that the ideas of the wrath of God is just your primitive transference on God, dare I say, your primitive belief of God.

So if you could just get out of your primitive understandings of God, you would see that there is no need for the wrath of God in this world. The second view of God's wrath comes from what I call the religious.

The religious, many religions of the world basically operate on the premise or the fear that God is an angry God. Most, if not all, other religions other than Christianity are based on this idea that there is a God who exists, who is angry with you and your goal is to find out the way to appease that God.

[ 11 : 00 ] That this God is, if at worst, hateful, at best, he is indifferent to you but the goal of most, if not all, religious systems as I've said is to figure out a way to appease this hostile and angry and dare I say wrathful God.

somehow these religious systems, they need to figure out a system that will allow them to somehow be acceptable to God.

So God does not reject them or crush them. In fact, all false religions basically seek to appease the wrath of God.

and man, either through systems, religious ceremonies, certain actions and duties of good works, these people desperately try to somehow to appease the deity so that he would withhold his wrathful and deadly fury against you.

The third understanding of wrath would come from the quote-unquote liberal Christian. This is the one who calls themselves a Christian. They may very well be a member of a church.

[ 12 : 19 ] They may come to church on a regular basis. They may be active in their churches. But they somehow begin to ask the question, did Jesus Christ really need to die?

Like, really? What kind of cruel father would kill his own son? These are some of the questions that they begin to ask. If you ask them what they thought of the Old Testament, they would object to it. They would state that the God of the Old Testament is a cruel God, a prejudicial God.

In fact, that God needed Jesus to come and kind of speak in and give God a better image, right? They would state that the Old Testament God was a bloodthirsty God.

Like, truly, what kind of God demands sacrifices? Why would he need a temple? So they start to ask these type of questions and simply state that this isn't certainly not the God that Jesus followed.

[ 13 : 28 ] And there are churches, and I know of them, that they ban the Old Testament. When our kids go off to Sunday school, they're not talking about the Old Testament, they're not reading about the Bible, they're just going to focus on Jesus and ignore God.

You will hear them say that Paul was actually a true Pharisee who stands against Jesus. In their world, the wrath of God is considered unthinkable, dare I say even blasphemous.

Then the fourth group is the group that may surprise you. It's the evangelical. Now you might be asking yourself, can an evangelical not believe in the wrath of God?

The fact is, many say they do, they accept it because it's in God's word, they believe it as theory, but actually deny it in practice. without understanding that if you deny it in practice, you deny it in theory.

The obvious question that should be on your minds right now is how do they or am I guilty of this? These are those experts that exist to share the gospel, will tell you when you speak to someone about God, you always begin with the love of Jesus.

[ 14 : 57 ] If you talk about the wrath of God, God, no one will ever want to listen to you. If we want people to come to Christ, we need to be attractive.

And let's just say the number one best seller is not the wrath of God. Experts tell us that perhaps today people are even different.

They're not ready for that. These people want to know that Jesus is their helper, their friend, their sympathizer, one who will be with them to the end.

And wonderful, that is true. But Paul, in the greatest presentation of the gospel, begins here in Romans with the wrath of God.

Why do we back away from wrath? wrath? We believe the gospels, but we always want to resort to some sort of human wisdom, human observation, or human born strategy.

[ 16 : 07 ] The key question that we need to ask ourselves is, do we believe Jesus when he says he will send us a helper in the Holy Spirit? Do we truly believe that Jesus Christ sent the Holy Spirit to be the one to light the hearts and minds of people to see and understand Jesus?

Can you think of what Paul was writing on that day in Corinth? Was he wondering what the attitude of the readers of this letter of Romans would think? Did he happen to ask himself, will they like what I say?

Like I said in this passage, Paul begins with the wrath of God. Now, if you're just jumping into this series without hearing last week's sermon, I would encourage you to go back to last week's sermon that would give you a better understanding.

But when I speak about the wrath of God, I'm not talking about the hell and brimstone that God brings, but ultimately the wrath of God is seen in the separation between man and God.

And then what Paul is using here in this text is the wrath of God is revealed is a present tense word. That wrath is being poured out in our culture today.

[ 17 : 29 ] It is here, it is now. Ultimate, final wrath, the destruction of sin has not happened yet, but it is coming. So it's important for us to understand that.

But we know here that Paul glories in the gospel because Paul knows that the power is in the gospel and the wrath is part of the gospel.

So like I said, maybe when we come to this verse, we ignore it, maybe we roll over it, but you can't get away from it that easy. The word wrath appears another ten times in this book of Romans. Let's just say, you said, you know, I like Paul, but I'm going to get away from Romans, but you could go to Ephesians, Colossians, the Timothys, or the Thessalonians. Guess which word you're going to find again?

Wrath. All right, let's ignore Paul. Let's go to Peter. Let's go to James. Let's go to the writer of Hebrews. You know what you're going to find? Wrath, wrath, and wrath again.

[ 18 : 37 ] Then ultimately you're going to get to Revelation. You're really going to get wrath. But most people tend to forget in the most quoted verse that we know, John 3.16, for God so loved the world that he gave his only son that whosoever believes in him should not perish.

What does that word perish mean? Right? Did they pass away? Did they die of old age? just faded away into existence? No. They're receiving the rightful condemnation of the wrath of God.

It's interesting how, I don't know if you read the obituary of the Canadian woman who was killed by Hamas and the CBC wrote in the news that she had passed away.

She was murdered by terrorists. And even them, they're trying to take a political stance. No, she was murdered, absolutely evilly murdered.

[ 20 : 02 ] She did not pass away. perish. Whoever believes in him should not experience the death and doom that is due their sin, but have eternal life.

But like I said, our problem is that we think of wrath in our human terms, or we've witnessed or experienced it in a human way. However, the character of God renders this way of thinking unthinkable.

God is not a man. Praise God. God does not fly off the handle. God is not uncontrollable.

God does not rage. So what does Paul mean when he speaks of the wrath of God? Let me give you this very simple definition.

The wrath of God is a reflection of God's hatred of sin. The wrath of God is a reflection of God's hatred of sin.

[ 21 : 20 ] Let me be clear. God hates sin. God hates rebelliousness. not only does God hate sin, but sin is abhorrent to God.

That word abhorrent means it is so repugnant it stirs up antagonism towards him. That we persist in our sin, we are stirring up the antagonism of God against us.

Think about that for a moment. It is repugnant. The wrath of God is opposed to sin.

Why? Because sin belongs in the domain of darkness. Sin belongs or it is a part of Satan's domain. God is justice. God is righteousness. God is holy. God is pure. In fact, the doctrine of holiness or the teaching of holiness means it is impossible that there be any darkness or part of darkness in the presence of God.

[ 22 : 40 ] Amen? In fact, it cannot exist in the presence of God. You see, God's holiness insists on the wrath of God.

You understand that? God's holiness insists on the wrath of God. Let me say that another way. God must hate sin.

His character demands that God hate sin. God's character demands sin.

So it begs the question, how much does God hate sin? And I'll answer that in a few minutes. Let's get back to the text for a moment.

I want us to understand here in verse 18. Notice it says, for the wrath of God is revealed, and if you were here last week, is revealed, it's an ongoing revealing, from heaven, that's a fancy way of just saying, being revealed by God.

[ 23 : 56 ] Notice it says, against all, not some ungodliness, but all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. Now, I want you, there's no mistake in the word order that exists in this verse.

Ungodliness. Let me give you an understanding of what this he's talking about. The term ungodliness refers to a lack of reverence for devotion to and worship of the true God. With me? Ungodliness is pointed to God. It is a failure to recognize God as who he is that inevitably leads to some form false worship.

So, I'm going to repeat that definition. Ungodliness refers to lack of reverence for, devotion to, and worship of the true God. The word unrighteousness encompasses the idea of ungodliness but focuses on its result.

All right? They're not the same thing. Ungodliness leads to unrighteousness. That is sin's pattern. Sin first attacks God's majesty and then it attacks God's law.

[ 25 : 23 ] Quote one author wrote, just simply said, men do not act righteously because they are not rightly related to God who is the only measure and source of righteousness.

Ungodliness unavoidably leads to unrighteousness. So basically because man's relationship to God is wrong, man's relationship to his fellow man is wrong.

You with me on this? We've talked about this. If your horizontal is broken, the vertical is broken. The vertical powers the horizontal.

The reason men treat other men they do with so much wickedness is because they treat God the same way. Man's enmity with his fellow man originates with him being at enmity with God.

Another author simply said, lack of respect for God is always followed by injustice and a loss of concern for the rights of other people.

[ 26 : 35 ] When we look at our society today and we see how stark, raving, crazy it is, it is because we've thrown God out.

I remember when 9-11 happened and someone asked the question, where was God in it all? Someone responded, well, since we so politely asked God out of our society and threw out the Ten Commandments, he did exactly what he wanted us to do.

See, and I want you to see, because this exists in the Ten Commandments, I'm going to read you the Ten Commandments, which are found in the books of Deuteronomy or Exodus. And I want you to see and note the order upon which God presents the laws to his people.

God begins, we covered this last week, just the first one, you shall have no other gods before me. That's the first law. No other gods. None. Zip.

Zero. Number two, you shall not make for yourself a carved image or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or that is in the water under the earth.

[ 27 : 53 ] So not only are you going to have no other gods, you're not even going to make a representation of what I look like. All right? You're not going to do that. Number three, you shall not bow down to them or serve them.

We talked about this. We tend to worship as we're going to get into this next couple of sermons. We tend to make graven images. We worship nature.

We worship all the things that God has created which are incredibly beautiful and wonderful and yet attribute that to being God. How insulting is that to him?

Then he says, you shall not bow down to them or serve them for I am the Lord your God, am a jealous God. That word jealous, people get hung up on that.

What that means is he's a jealous God because all worship rightfully belongs to him. Amen? Every worship, jealousy isn't a sin if it's not rightfully wanted.

[ 29 : 01 ] Like, I rightfully am jealous for the love of my wife and she is the same. If I was to give my love anywhere else, she would be rightfully jealous and I of her.

That is the promise that we make before the Lord. And then obviously the fourth one is you shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

So respect your Lord. But then there's a transition. He talks about the Sabbath and how to think about God but then he transitions to our relationships.

Honor your mother and father. Do not murder. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness and do not covenant. Do you see the principle that's working out that we learn about the wrath of God?

There's that principle horizontal to God leads to an effectual understanding of how we relate to one another. If you keep your focus and love for God, you will love your fellow men.

[ 30 : 06 ] If you jettison God, what reason do you have to treat men? When Jesus was asked what the greatest commandment was, he simply said, you shall love the Lord your God with all your

heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.

That is the great and first commandment. Then he said, in the second, like it, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. You can't have one without the other.

What's interesting is that men innately understand this is true, that we understand, and we're going to get into this greater in the next couple of sermons, but there is a natural sense within us what is right and what is wrong.

even people are shocked by wicked and evil things. There's a great story going on now. You probably haven't been following it because you're not like a news junkie like I am, but anyway, there's this great story going on in the state of New York.

There is a mass murderer, and the state of New York does not allow the punishment, the death penalty, but they recognize that this person's murders have been so hideous and so evil that he deserves to die.

[ 31 : 24 ] So they're trying to get the federal government to take on the case because federal law does allow for the death penalty. You get that? So they've started off, they've already judged, we don't want a death penalty, but oh man, this guy's so bad, right?

We would say, how we can't be so cruel to have that, but oh boy, how can I sleep at night? So even these people who do not believe, do not understand, God understand what this person has done to destroy us as image bearers, that deserves some penalty that deserves death.

Fact is, we want law and order. Like right now, there is a war going on, we know it politically, Israel and Hamas. And I do believe many people are labeled anti-Semitic because they're looking at the war, what's been presented and it's horrible.

The Lebanese people that are living in Gaza are being basically massacred and killed and the bombs are coming from, the bombs and bullets are coming from Israel as they're seeking to wipe out all of Hamas.

And everybody's cheering against it, you know, they want to shut down Israel. And I don't believe these people are anti-Jewish because Israel, in case you don't know, is going under their right to destroy an entity that stands against their nationhood, right?

[ 32 : 54 ] That's the premise upon which they act upon. If you guys knew about World War II and that pretty much the allies bombed Germany pretty much into oblivion.

Like if they showed that on the news, we would have been stop, stop, right? Because they were white people just like us for the most part and people that had churches who lived like us, they just spoke a really longer language, but they were being decimated by bombs and fire and it was horrible and horrific.

And that's what's going on because even in our hearts, we do not want to see image bearers dying. But history always bears out that the first step to wanting to kill peoples to get rid of God out of the picture.

If you're a student of history, you will know that was the Russian purges which killed over 70 million people. The Chinese revolution killed over 100 million people.

people, and they all start the same way. Death to God leaves death to man. And it is only in God that we understand that you and I are both image bearers.

[ 34 : 24 ] Even just this past week, as I'm preparing this sermon, a new video comes out and it's someone from, who's apparently one of the main thinkers for the WEF.

And his old idea is, human rights are just a story. You really don't deserve human rights. That is a horribly objectifiable video and philosophy that they have.

That is a Marxist philosophy that we are just products, and once our expiry date is met, we're disposed of. Without an understanding.

And our government, our progressive, liberal government, just announcing now that even 13 year olds can be eligible for the MAID program. That's what they're fighting for.

Right? Depression and mental illness is enough to destroy the image bearer of God, because they're going through tough times. How does God feel about these things?

[ 35 : 25 ] Well, in the third commandment, I didn't read it all to you, it says, you shall not bow down to these false gods or serve them, for I am the Lord your God, I'm a jealous God.

There's a penalty. And if you do so, he says, I will visit the iniquity of the fathers of the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me.

But I keep steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commands. So when people accuse God of being cruel, God's actions are simply against those who hate him. Cain didn't simply hate his brother Abel, he hated God. The people in the days of Noah did not hate Noah, they hated God.

the Tower of Babel, when God gave them many languages and separated them, they wanted to rise to God because they hated God. The people of Sodom and Gomorrah, which God destroyed, they hated God.

[ 36 : 43 ] In fact, Israel eventually hated God by giving their worship to the false pagan gods, brought God, brought a people, a wicked people called the Babylonians to absolutely destroy their capital and their temple.

When Old Testament nations came against Israel, they were destroyed. You see, when God's wrath comes, it's because God, these people hated God and they hate the things of God. God, which eventually leads to the destruction of those who are created in the image of God. Now, let me go back to the question I asked you a few minutes ago.

How much does God hate sin? Well, he gives us an answer. It's found in the book of 2nd Corinthians, chapter 5, 21.

It simply says, for our sake, God made Jesus to be sin who knew no sin so that in Jesus we might become the righteousness of God.

[ 38 : 10 ] You see, if we preach or we share the righteousness of God, we have to preach and teach the wrath of God. You see, the unbeliever rejects both the wrath and the righteousness of God.

The believer accepts and glories in both. Now, notice what Paul does here in verse 7, 18. Paul does not argue these points.

Paul does not attempt to prove these points. Paul does not try to convince the hearers of these points. Paul simply proclaims this truth. Paul announces this truth.

Paul preaches this truth. It's not our job to convince anybody of God's wrath.

Notice it says it is revealed. That word revealed means made clear. And where did God make his wrath most clear?

[ 39 : 11 ] The cross. one author stated, one of the biggest sins we can ever do is to sentimentalize the cross.

If we as Christians do not see the wrath of God when we look at the cross, we probably do not see the love of God either. Our dangers when we focus on the love is to mistakenly believe that we are somehow worth it.

that the value is found in me rather than the great love that God has for us. You with me on that? God doesn't love us because we are somehow great.

He loves us because he is great in love. It's what Dave read to us this morning from Ephesians chapter 2. Understanding the wrath of God through the cross means we understand that we deserve death and everything that God hates about sin.

But because of his great love despite of who we were or who we are, Christ still died for us. Scripture says Christ died for us when we were still enemies.

[ 40 : 31 ] See, the cross is where God's wrath was revealed. The cross is where God's attitude towards sin is revealed. sin. The cross is where God shows us that he does not wink at sin.

The cross shows us that God does not accept excuses for our sin. The cross is where God shows us where God cannot look over sin.

Finally, it's the place where God shows us that God cannot pretend that he did not see our sin. You see, God's attitude towards sin demanded the death of his only begotten son because God hates sin because sin is abhorrent to God.

God was determined to punish sin because God's righteousness demands it. sin. Most people believe that Jesus Christ came to declare that God was love.

He didn't. The prophets from the Old Testament declared that God was love. Jesus Christ came to bear the wrath of God against sin because God must punish sin and that is the proof of God's love.

[ 41 : 58 ] without the wrath that poured out on the cross on Passover Friday over 2,000 years before is all the proof we need that God hates sin.

Our reality is if you and I are to realize it or to see or to even appreciate the love of God on the cross is we must see the wrath of God.

they always go together. To understand the depth of Christ's love we must understand the depths of Christ's wrath.

My friends sin is the only thing that God hates. God does not hate poor people. God does not hate rich people. God does not hate dumb people.

God does not hate smart people. God does not hate untalented people or highly skilled people. God only hates the sin of these people and all others who naturally practice sin and this sin inevitably brings his wrath.

[ 43 : 19 ] wrath. So the question that ultimately is asked is how can we avoid such wrath? That is the good news that he gives us in verse 17 that God offers us his righteousness the perfect righteousness that Jesus Christ lived and he gives it to us freely and we receive it by faith.

faith to believe not by works not by merit simply by faith. How do we receive faith?

Is this something I can conjure up in ourselves? It is not. It is simply a gift and all we need to do is ask to confess with our mouths and believe in our hearts that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that he came and he died for me that I did deserve the wrath poured out on the cross which he did to his Son and that can be placed on me.

Unlike the false religions of the world where the premise is fear and hate Christianity proclaims a God who loves so much so that he saves us.

He made the way for us. He made this righteousness for us who could not even know righteousness. And scripture simply states that God wants all to be saved and come to the knowledge of this truth and to enjoy fellowship with him forever and ever.

[ 45 : 13 ] Do you understand the goal? It's not to escape hell. It's to have our relationship rightly restored with our creator.

And as Adam and Eve walked with God in the cool of the day, so can we. Think about how so many of us long for this just even with our earthly parents.

and our earthly friends. Those relationships that have been broken because of sin. But with God. My friends, we do not have to appease God.

God has done the appeasing for us. There is no sacrifice that we need because he provided the sacrifice for us. and he offers us this free gift of salvation and all we need to do is ask.

Let me pray. Let me pray. Dear gracious heavenly Lord, I think upon the soberness of this wrath, but I cannot rightly but rejoice in the righteousness you give us.

[ 46 : 28 ] that your own wrath, you provided the way for us to be free of it, to never worry about it, to never come under the condemnation of your wrath.

To know that we can be enveloped by your great love, to have a relationship that is restored, a relationship that needs no shame, that none of our old faults are ever remembered or put forth again.

Sometimes it's even hard to have relationships with friends because sometimes they know us as stupid people who did stupid things stupidly way back generations, if not years ago.

We're still shamed of them. That doesn't happen with God. As far as the east is from the west, so our sins are remembered no more before God.

Father, may we be sobered by the understanding of this wrath, this hatred of sin, and may it affect us, even as believers in Jesus Christ, when we still our flesh longs for the satisfaction that sin says it gives, when all it does is it breaks that relationship with our Father.

[ 47 : 51 ] Father, let us not be a people that depends on your grace, but strives for your love.

May we see holiness not being a perfection we cannot be attained, but seeing it as a rightward direction towards you, and understanding that as an image bearer, we have a responsibility, a purpose in this life, that we are ambassadors to the true and living God, to a world that lives under your wrath, and they know it.

Father, I prepare our hearts as we get into this next section of the text, 19 to 32. Father, I ask that you'd give us gifts to speak eloquently, and with much love to our friends and neighbors.

Even when we talk politically, your hand is over everything. Even talking about this whole thing with Israel and Hamas, and so many people are against it, we can understand that children are dying, and that is an absolute wicked and horrible thing.

And our hearts should break, not only for the earthly pain, but for the eternal pain. Father, may we bring truth where there are lies.

[ 49 : 30 ] We're not talking this earthly political stuff, but the heavenly righteous stuff. Even to sit down with a person, explain the reason why they sin in such a way is because they're hiding their shame.

They're hiding their brokenness. They want to appear that they've appeased God somehow. And then we carry it on to our relationships with one another.

Father, free us of this. Free us of the hold this world has on us. God, we love you and we want to seek you and see you in all things.

And I pray that you'd give us a right understanding of this gospel. And Father, I pray that for the next moments, these next months, that we may begin praying more for our loved ones who do not know you.

we ask you these things in your gracious, holy, and loving God. Amen.