

Extinguishing the Fire of God's Wrath

Mark 15:33-34

INTRODUCTION

Many people ask why God would allow evil to exist.

Theodicy:

1. God is great
2. God is good
3. Evil exists

Why did God allow sin to enter the world?

- 1) **The ultimate purpose of God in Creation is His own glory.**
- 2) **The work of Christ at cross is the centerpiece of Creation.**

➔ that He might display His glory, His perfections and His attributes in the greatest measure

READ Mark 15:33-34

Proposition: The Wrath of God

- revealed in His presence
- revealed in His absence

I. The Wrath of God – in His Presence Mark 15:33

Point – God makes it clear that He is righteous and that there is punishment for sin

- one manifestation of the wrath of God is darkness

“And when the sixth hour had come, darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour.”

Crucifixion had begun at 9:00 am and Jesus had spoken three times:

1. to His Father - forgive them
2. to a criminal - with Him in paradise

3. to John – behold your mother

Jewish method of reckoning time → noon – 3 pm

- Jesus had been suffering and mocked already for 3 hours (Jesus was on the cross for a total of 6 hours)

God chose the time for the sun at its peak to bring darkness

- God who turned on the lights at creation turned them off
- God’s Providence that the Lamb of God is being sacrificed at the exact same time as pilgrims were sacrificing lambs for Passover in Jerusalem (3:00pm)

Darkness: In the Bible, represents hopelessness, death, ignorance, impurity, the misery of sin → judgment

- God’s salvation is seen as light
- God’s judgment is seen as darkness

Point – sin carries punishment – one manifestation of this is darkness

Judgment of God:

Zephaniah 1:14-15 – “Near is the great day of the LORD, Near and coming very quickly; Listen, the day of the LORD! In it the warrior cries out bitterly. ¹⁵ A day of wrath is that day, A day of trouble and distress, A day of destruction and desolation, A day of darkness and gloom, A day of clouds and thick darkness,”

Isaiah 45:7

Psalm 18:7-12

Psalm 97:1-5

Foretaste of Ultimate Darkness:

Matt 25:30 – “cast out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth”

- this darkening of the sun from noon until 3pm is a picture/foretaste of the eternal darkness, the eternal loneliness
- this supernatural darkness is a picture of God's judgment to sin as an act of judgment, an act of divine wrath.

Note the irony!

- Man is a willing prisoner of sin!
Man's will is in bondage to sin.

John 3:19 – “**this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil.**”

- man loves the darkness
- this is the sad state of man
- this reflects the twisted nature of our heart

Divine Justice – that which you cherish and love – you will drink deeply

Consider this illustration: while the quail was still between their teeth – **Numbers 11:31-33** – God's anger struck them with a plague

Application – Love the light of God more than the darkness of sin!
→ if you love the darkness of sin more then you will face the eternal darkness of His presence in judgment

Consider this illustration: – Hermit crabs live in shells or under rocks and only come out to move to another hiding place. The crabs will allow themselves to be pulled apart to the point of death rather than be removed from their secure dwelling.

→ In the same way, Christians should allow ourselves – figuratively – to be pulled apart rather than to be pulled into sin and come out of our shell of God's will according to the Word

→ We must use the heart of the gospel to galvanize us to greater holiness

II. The Wrath of God - in His Absence Mark 15:34

Point – “fierce wrath of God,” “the cup of His anger” – darkness, loneliness, separation, pain

Sin carries penalty – **Genesis 2:14; Genesis 3; 1 Kings 8**

Extinguishing – Jesus Christ, in His humanity, is suffering and quenching (satisfying) the wrath of God!

“And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is translated, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"”

The cross is a place of divine judgment, where the sins of the world are poured out on the sinless, perfect Son.

Gethsemane – unparalleled agony of Christ

- overwhelming agony far beyond human comprehension

Jonathan Edwards – “Sinners in the Hand of an Angry God”

There are black clouds of God’s wrath now hanging directly over your heads, full of the dreadful storm, and big with thunder; and were it not for the restraining hand of God, it would immediately burst forth upon you. The sovereign pleasure of God, for the present, stays his rough wind; otherwise it would come with fury, and your destruction would come like a whirlwind, and you would be like the chaff of the summer threshing floor.

The wrath of God is like great waters that are dammed for the present...If God should only withdraw his hand from the flood-gate, it would immediately fly open, and the fiery floods of the fierceness and wrath of God, would rush forth with inconceivable fury, and would come upon you with omnipotent power.

In Gethsemane, He had a near view of this burning furnace of wrath, into which he was to be cast; he is brought to the mouth of the furnace. He looks into it, sees its raging flames. He knows where He is going and what he is about to suffer. This is what fills His soul with darkness and agony.

- Here, on the cross, He is in the raging flames of the furnace of the Wrath of God.
- He voluntarily enters into it and bears it for sinners

Christ's work on the cross – atonement

- expiation – removing of sin
- propitiation – Jesus quenching the wrath of God

Romans 2:5

- because of our stubbornness, we are storing up wrath with God
- if not for Christ (for believers), that wrath will take infinity to pour out on us in hell – because God is just

Revelation 14:10-11

- end of v. 10 – tormented in presence of Holy angels and the Lamb
- that is what is taking place in our passage in Mark

There was much activity on the cross during the 1st 3 hours. Not a single event is recorded in the Gospels during the 2nd 3 hours until the end – **“and at the ninth hour”**

“cried out with a loud voice” – with a “mega” voice – His strong cry breaks the long silence

- only saying from the cross recorded by Mark – the 4th Word (recall first three outlined above)
- the only one of the seven words from the cross preserved in two gospels (Matthew and Mark)
- literally, He screamed! The only Word from the cross He screamed. All others... “He said”

Wrath

“forsaken” – abandon, desert

In eternity past, it is through this greatest evil God foreordained that He would bring about the greatest good. Christ, who knew no sin, was the ultimate innocent victim of evil and the evil perpetrated against Him is the greatest injustice and evil ever done.

Through the greatest evil, comes the greatest good. Through the most vile crime of humanity comes the greatest blessing upon humanity...comes the gift of a redeemed humanity that God the Father promised God the Son before time began.

The Wrath of God – in His Presence – in His Absence..

III. The Grace of God – In His Love and in His Substitution

Charles Spurgeon -

“I do not think that the records of time or even of eternity, contain a sentence more full of anguish. Here the wormwood and the gall, and all the other bitternesses, are outdone. Here you may look as into a vast abyss; and though you strain your eyes, and gaze till sight fails you, yet you perceive no bottom; it is measureless, unfathomable, inconceivable. This anguish of the Saviour on your behalf and mine is no more to be measured and weighed than the sin which needed it, or the love which endured it. We will adore where we cannot comprehend.”

Romans 5:8

- comes the gift of a redeemed humanity that God the Father promised God the Son before time began

Luke 22:20 “This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.”

- because He drinks the cup of the wrath of God, we are able to drink of the cup of the New Covenant!

He drinks the Cup of:

Sorrow

Anger

Alienation

Wrath

Darkness

So we may drink the Cup of:

Joy

Pleasure

Adoption

Mercy

Eternal Light

Conclusion: This should drive us, with zeal, to reach the lost, to overcome sin, to serve the Lord and to watch God work!

1/1/12