

1. **Introduction**: Paul shows everyone falls short of the requirements necessary to be “in the right” before God (1:18-3:20). Everyone is guilty of sin. All deserve condemnation for disobedience through ungodly thoughts, words, and deeds.
 - A person not “in the right” before God is “in the wrong” before Him. People “in the wrong” before God are subject to His righteous wrath.
2. **Romans 1:18**: *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.*
 - God created Adam and Eve holy. In their fall into sin, they became unholy, acquired a sin nature, became spiritually separated from God, and subject to God’s wrath.
3. **What is God’s Wrath?** How is wrath Revealed?: God’s wrath is the holy revulsion of God’s entire being against everything in contradiction to His holiness.
 - God’s wrath is directed at ungodliness and unrighteousness that suppress the truth. To what do ungodliness and unrighteousness refer?
 - “**Ungodliness**” refers to wrong attitude and behavior toward God, i.e., “being in the wrong toward God.” Godliness refers to “being in the right toward God.”
 - “**Unrighteousness**” refers to “being in the wrong toward others.” Righteousness refers to “being in the right toward others.”
 - Idolatry and atheism illustrate ungodliness. Immorality illustrates unrighteousness.
4. **Examples of God’s Wrath**: NT - Jesus’ anger at hard-heartedness of religious leaders (Mk 3:1-6), at Temple money changers (Jn 2:13-16), the Tribulation (Rev 6:16-17; 14:9-10; 15:7; 16:1), Jesus’ second coming (Rev 19:2, 15), and at the White throne judgment where unbelievers are cast into the Lake of Fire (Rev 20:11-15).
 - OT - The flood (Gen 6-9), destruction of Sodom (Gen 19), Egyptian defeat (Ex15:7), Assyrian destruction of Israel’s ten tribes (2 Ki 17:1-23), and Babylonian destruction of the two tribes of Judah (2 Ki 24:1-4; Jer 25:1-11), the ground opening up and swallowing Korah, his family and all their possessions (Num 16:32).
 - God’s wrath is judgement for wrong-doing. Only moral creatures, angels and people can do wrong, but God’s wrath toward them can impact other things.
5. **Psalm 7:11^{NIV}**: *God is a righteous judge, a God who displays his wrath every day.*
 - God’s judicial wrath is manifested both in this life and in end-times judgment. Only God’s provision of “a righteousness apart from the Law” enables mankind to be saved from God’s righteous judicial wrath.
 - People filled with thoughts, emotions, and deeds that contradict God’s holiness are “in the wrong” before Him and are subject to His wrath. Without God’s intervention, a person’s wrong relationship with God increases and drags them deeper into sin.

- God’s wrath is directed toward human unbelief, unrighteousness, and suppression of the truth.
 - God, in His grace, has provided a way for human sinners “to be in the right before Him,” and thus able to avoid being subject to His wrath.
6. **Many People Reject the Idea of God’s Wrath:** They are appalled at the idea the Christian God required a “blood sacrifice” before forgiveness, a blood sacrifice made necessary by the need to propitiate His own wrath.
- A god having wrath toward those who fail to follow His guidelines seems to them to be an abomination, a “judging god,” a god without “love.”
 - What has led to this view of God? A surprising but key element is the development of a radical change in the way reality is perceived.
 - Before the technological age, most people accepted that reality was fixed, and people must conform to that reality. To do that, most people sought knowledge of God (the Creator) and training in self-discipline and virtue.
 - The stunning success of science & technology changed that view. The new view says reality is not fixed but can be modified by technology to suit people’s desires.
 - The earlier view assumed a transcendent moral order outside of self, a moral order built into the fabric of the universe. Violating the moral order resulted in consequences like those for violating physical reality.
 - Putting your hand in the fire damages it. Flaunting or ignoring God and His rules for living a righteous life damages spiritual and mental faculties.
 - Developing qualities of character like humility, compassion, discretion, loyalty, and courage has been replaced by each person determining their own right and wrong.
 - The advent of powerful technology meant reality could be treated as a natural order that could be changed. Reality could be shaped and controlled to fit desire.
 - Scientific achievement is not of itself bad. But technology has enabled changes in spiritual life that have been largely negative.
 - Many assume that if you don’t like physical reality, don’t worry someone can figure out how to change it, That idea has spread to spiritual things.
 - Human realities (physical, mental, and spiritual) are believed to be fluid and malleable, largely determinable by human desires.
 - Whatever physical or spiritual conditions you don’t like or approve of can be changed. You don’t have to adapt to existing conditions. Physical reality is not fixed and immutable. The attitude is modern technology can create life conditions that please you. No restrictions. Whatever “turns you on” is possible. Go for it!
 - The result is a widespread belief that people should refuse to accept or consider a God who claims to be infinitely superior, who knows what is best for me, and has the power to dictate how I should behave. If you must have a god, design your own.

7. **Paul says Ignore God at your Own Risk. Before the One God, all People are Without Excuse:** What is his basis for such a statement? Paul's says God's witness of Himself through natural revelation is unmistakable, adequate, and universal.
8. **Romans 1:19-20:** *For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.*
- God's invisible attributes (eternal power & divine nature) are perceived through what He created. Willful blindness and wicked beliefs are found among all people.
 - **Abraham Lincoln:** *"I can see how it might be possible for a man to look down upon the earth and be an atheist, but I cannot conceive how he could look up into the heavens and say there is no God."*
 - God judges' people on the knowledge they have received. All have received "natural revelation." Willful rejection of God's self-revelation, failure to honor Him as God or give thanks to Him, leads to glorification of human intellect – the all-powerful "I."
9. **Romans 1:21-23:** *For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Claiming to be wise, they became fools, ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.*
- Failing to acknowledge God causes people to foolishly worship their own ideas. They may deliberately and consciously choose to be irreligious. Today, many believe science and philosophy have made belief in God unnecessary and wrong.
 - Ignoring God, People believe themselves to be wise and superior. They are proud to be educated and free from belief in fairy tales about God. They consider God to be a product of the imagination. The result is they become irrational (futile in thinking and having darkened foolish hearts).
 - Self-deception leads them to eventually believe the foolish things they think. In their delusion they conceive and create idols (both physical and mental).
 - Because their critical problem is spiritual, more education, culture, and economic advancement cannot and does not free people from such fantasies.
10. **Romans 1:24-25:** *Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, ²⁵ because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.*
- Men made gods in their own image. Eventually worshipping birds, beasts, and bugs, becoming lower than them, since man is lower than what he worships.

- When the glory of the immortal God is exchanged for idols or devotion to self, God’s response is to remove His common-grace restraints and allow people to do as they choose. They inevitably follow the lusts of their hearts into the sensual enslavement of debauchery, drugs, and in general into moral degradation.
 - If man is his own god, he can do as he pleases, owing no allegiance and fearing no consequences. So, people exchange the truth of God for the “lie” of becoming like a god. The move toward self-deification produces self-indulgence.
 - At some point, God gives people up, meaning He permits sin without restraint, doing what they please, and reaping the sad consequences of what their actions sow.
 - That leads to spiritual enslavement in which they believe lies rather than God’s truth, ending up worshiping creatures and created things rather than the Creator.
11. ***Romans 1:26-27: God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature;²⁷ and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.***
- Sin without restraint did not cause God “to give them up.” “Giving them up” is God’s judicial action for their devotion to sin. God revealed wrath, not by external punishment but by abandoning sinful men and women to their own lustful ways.