

A BOOK STUDY IN THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE ROMAN CHURCH  
LESSON #4 ROMANS 1:18-32

FIRST GROUP – THE GREEKS -
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paul's point of view they were called Gentiles - from all parts of the Empire</li><li>• Held together by a common language.</li><li>• Slaves, freedmen, and low-class citizens</li><li>• All about knowledge. (two sub groups: the wise and the foolish)</li><li>• Christianity was a belief that would create a common bond (labor union)</li><li>• God is the ultimate Judge.</li><li>• As long as you believe, it is good enough</li><li>• My works are more important than your faith, or ethnicity</li><li>• God was up there and he was angry and full of wrath. A feeling of never living up to expectations.</li></ul>
The Gentile Greeks themselves as part of the church.

**Must be clear here.**

**These groups were in the Church.  
Paul**

**Group 1 – The Greeks – Gentiles Romans 1:18-32**

**Identity** – Primary language was Greek. Spoke some Latin for political needs. The Greeks were always found in the lower third in the Roman hierarchy of classes. The Greeks were followers of logic and intellectual understanding. This group included slaves and freed slaves from all over the empire. They were alien emigrants living in Rome. They were constantly needy and quickly understood their place. Greek culture allowed them a way of living in the hope to move up to the next level of Roman life.

**History** – They were a very large group in Roman life. At the time of the writing of Paul's letter to the Roman church, there were more slaves in Rome than citizens. They were classified as Greeks because it was the only common language for the Empire.

**Orthodoxy** – With the diversity of ethnic lives came a litany of personal cultural understandings. There was no common and accepted behavior in this group. Christianity was seen as a faith structure that would satisfy the guilt of living in a lawless life. They knew God but they did not glorify Him. They knew the truth but did not live it. Eat drink and be merry because God loves a sinner. As long as you believe it is good enough.

**Issue** – They were marginalized by the other two groups. They were the sinners in the middle of self-righteousness and head-wagging believers.

**Sin** – Behavior is all relative. Sin is something that depends upon the circumstance. We all sin but sin is not enough to keep you out of heaven. God Loves the sinner so why not just keep on sinning? Christianity is a sinning religion. Sin is bad, but God loves me.

**Works** – In the grand scheme of things my actions are driven by a hope that God is the judge and no one else. My works are the essence of who I am. Belief is a good thing, but my

actions speak louder than my knowledge of God. Look at my works and be grateful that I am doing something.

**Salvation** – Salvation by perfected knowledge.

## WRATH: orgé

### Thayer

1. Anger, the natural disposition, temper, character
2. Movement or agitation of the soul, impulse, desire, any violent emotion, Most likely ANGER
3. Anger, wrath, indignation
4. Anger exhibited in punishment. Used for punishment itself

### Mounce

Wrath, anger, the feeling and expression of strong displeasure and hostility; this can range from petty human anger to the righteous anger of God toward sinful disobedience.

### Merriam-Webster

1. Strong vengeful anger or indignation
2. Retributory punishment for an offense or crime: chastisement

**Wrath.** The word alone instills fear and creates an image of someone on a warpath exacting revenge on all their enemies.

There are no warm fuzzies here.

No hallmark moments.

If the wrath of a human can be scary, then what is the wrath of God going to do to a person?

- **Is God a loving God?**

We are asked to display a Godlike love in I Corinthians 13

I have seen bumper stickers: (God is LOVE)

John said: For God so loved the world that he gave his SON

- **How can God have wrath?**

- **If the GOSPEL IS GOOD NEWS, GOD'S ANGER MUST BE THE OPPOSITE.**

We don't often talk about an angry God in church. We would rather talk about "Happier" subjects.

- **How could He have wrath?**

- **How can an all loving God be angry?**

**Is God's wrath like ours when we are angry?**

Merriam-Webster

two definitions

One about vengeful anger ---- Anger that is getting back for something done to you

The other about the actual punishment because of something done to you or the social standard.

Both are definitions of human wrath, human anger.

Wrath in human terms is an appetite or desire, a driving force that takes priority over all. It is an intense effort.

And it is particularly applied to the desire that a man has to take vengeance who is injured, and who is enraged.

For you and me, wrath may well be translated as **REVENGE**

- **Is HIS anger trying to get even for something done to Him?**

**NO**

**God's definition is different from our definition.**

**Our definition can not be laid upon God**

We are created in HIS image but that does not mean God would do everything like us.

God has no motive for what we call vengeance

Our want to punish because of wrongs done or a crime committed on us can not be applied to God.

God's wrath is without motives that may well be understand as evil.

## REVEALED: apokalýptō - APOCALYPSE

### Thayer

1. to uncover, lay open what has been veiled or covered up, Disclose, make bare
2. to make known, make manifest, disclose what before was unknown

Found to two parallel verses

1:17 The righteousness of God **REVEALED** from faith to faith...

1:18 The Wrath of God **REVEALED**

## UNRIGHTEOUSNESS: adikía

### Thayer

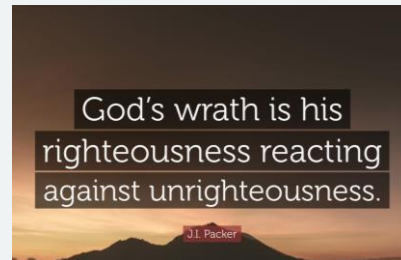
1. Injustice, of a judge
2. The unrighteousness of heart and life
3. A deed violating law and justice, act of unrighteousness

### Strong

1. Injustice
2. Moral wrongfulness, iniquity, unjust

### Mounce

Wickedness, evil, wrongdoing



## GOD'S ANGER REVEALED

- *“The **wrath of God** is being revealed from **heaven** against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness.” (Romans 1:18).*
- *“But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God’s wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.” (Romans 2:5).*
- *“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on them” (John 3:36).*

In all three of these verses, we see mention of the wrath of God.

What I want you to pay attention to is what the wrath of God is in response to.

You will see God is responding to godlessness, wickedness, stubbornness, unrepentant hearts, and rejecting Jesus as savior.

A simpler way of putting it is God’s wrath is in response to man’s sin.

- **Is God Just in this anger?**

The short answer is yes. God stands as the judge of all mankind.

Each of us will have to give an account for what we have done and how we have lived.

God gives us the freedom to make the choice in how we will live.

What remains is that whatever decision we make we must be aware of the consequences of those choices.

**WHO IS GOD ANGRY TOWARD 1:18-32**

Romans 1:18	}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All ungodliness and <u>unrighteousness</u> of men - toward the actions</li><li>• Men who suppress the truth in <u>unrighteousness</u></li></ul>
Romans 1:19 - 21	}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All the world is the revelation of God</li><li>• In knowledge they did not honor HIM</li><li>• Professing to be wise they became fools</li></ul>
Romans 1:21 - 32	}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gave them over<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <i>Lusts of their hearts</i></li><li>- <i>Degrading passions</i></li><li>- <i>Depraved mind</i></li></ul></li></ul>

1. God's revelation of anger
2. God's revelation of nature
3. God's revelation of human sin
4. God's revelation of the fallen state
5. God's revelation of His reaction.

God revealed from heaven against ungodliness and wickedness  
And they actively, with a decision of their own wills, suppressed the responsibility, blame, guilt.

Because they knew what was not God's will for their lives.

Because God had made it plain from the creation of the world  
Because of God's invisible qualities.  
His external power to bring it to being  
GOD MADE EVERYTHING GOOD.....  
FROM THE EXPANSE BETWEEN THE NUCLEUS AND THE SURROUNDING ELECTRONS  
TO THE EXPANSE BETWEEN THE EARTH AND THE FARTHEST STAR.  
Nothing was made that HE did not make.

Because they were people without excuse.  
Paul is saying here there is no one that can say "I did not know it"

To these Greeks Paul pointed out.

21. They knew God from nature and did not give glory, did not give thanks. They became foolish
- They claimed to be wise but became fools
  - They exchanged the glory of God for images
  - And **God gave them up** to their desires



- They exchanged the truth of God for a lie
  - **God gave them up** to their passions
  - They perverted the plan of God in homosexuality
  - They gave up on God and **God gave them up** to their depraved mind
    - They were filled with all kinds of evil... evil, murder, strife, deceit, malice, gossip, slander, God haters, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil
    - They disobeyed parents, they had no understanding of what they were doing
    - There was no fidelity, no love, no mercy.
32. They knew what was right and they did not do it. God's decree was they deserve death.
- They continue to do these things and approve of anyone who did the same.

By is Divine nature

**This is the moralist's fate**

I can live right and therefore I am right  
 I can do good things and bad things it doesn't really matter  
 I can ignore God and still be right.  
 I can just be a good person or even a bad person  
 I can do all things through Me in my own strength.

But it does not work that way


God's response to the moralist: HE GAVE THEM OVER..  
 No lightning bolts for those who do not honor God.  
 No causing bad things to bad people

He simply give them over to what they are.  
 Because they actively suppressed the existence and presence of God.  
 Because they were worshiping the idols in life  
 Because they were thought that physical passion was enough to fill their lives

HE GAVE THEM UP.

ABANDONMENT

not the sweet tune of "Let it go" from the movie Disney.... FROZEN

<p>THE NEED OF FORGIVENESS</p>	
<p><b>Forgiveness is necessary to restore a relationship. To build again the broken bridge, to make fresh, to start over.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• With those we love.</li><li>• With those, we don't love so much.</li><li>• With God.</li></ul>	

NOT

I know I have not done so well in the relationship, and I will put on my running shoes and do something

I will go to church

I will give an extra 5 bucks

I will stand and the appropriate times

I will shake hands with those I disagree with

I will be friendly even when I don't feel like it.

I will make up my stupid and carelessness with ACTION..... WORKS

It is simply

“I have sinned”

“I need you in my life”

“Forgive me”

## QUESTIONS

- Did the actions of THEM, deserve to be abandoned?
- Are those who are morally correct but do not acknowledge God deserving of this abandonment?
- Is there a place where God just gives up on someone?
- Is the response of God equal to REVENGE?
- What do these fools need above all else?

### Other questions:

Is there any legitimate excuse for not believing in God? Why not?

But many people claim to be atheists. Why?

What does it mean that God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity? Did he cause their sin? Why allow them to go their own way instead of stopping them?

What do people worship and serve now instead of the Creator?

## WHAT IS NEEDED FROM GOD?

### Forgiveness


Three concepts of forgiveness

- Exoneration
- Forbearance
- Release



## EXONERATION

- Closest to what must think of when the word “FORGIVENESS”
- EXONERATION is wiping the slate free.
  - *Letting it go*
  - *Restoration to the previous state of innocence*
- EXONERATION is a return before the harm was made
  - *Absolute and without excuse*
- Three situations that require EXONERATION
  1. *The harm was an accident. There was no intent to do you harm, There is no fault that can be assigned.*
  2. *The person that hurt is not capable of malice*
  3. *The hurtful is truly sorry, takes full responsibility, and asks for forgiveness, AND give you the assurance it will not be repeated in the future.*



Exoneration is the closest to what we usually think of when we say "forgiveness".

Exoneration is wiping the slate entirely clean

Just putting it all behind me and letting go

Includes an absolute restoration of the relationship to the full state of innocence it had before the harmful actions took place.

There are three common situations in which exoneration applies.

1. The first takes place when you realize that the harmful action was a genuine accident

God did not do it to you

God did not cause you to sin

Your wife did not mean to burn the roast

for which no fault can be assigned.

2. Like a child not capable of malice

OR

Does not understand the hurt they were inflicting


- **The harm was an accident. There was no intent to do you harm, There is no fault that can be assigned.**

- **The person that hurt is not capable of malice**  
(((((((((((((((((((CLICK))

- **The hurtful is truly sorry, takes full responsibility, and asks for forgiveness, AND give you the assurance it will not be repeated in the future.**

## FORBEARANCE

- Partial apology
  - *Making excuses for their actions*
  - *That you caused this issue*
- Does the relationship worth your FORBEARANCE?
- FORBEARANCE means
  - *Stop dwelling on the offense. It happens No grudges. No planning their demise.*
  - *Does not break the relationship*
  - *They are not perfect and neither are you.*
  - *Not forgive and forget, but more forgive and verify.*
  - *May over time lead to EXONERATION*



Much more complex.....

The second type of forgiveness I call "forbearance."

Forbearance applies when the offender makes a partial apology or mingles their expression of sorrow with blame that you somehow caused them to behave badly.

An apology is offered

but it's not what you had hoped for and may not even be fully authentic.

While you should always reflect on whether there was a provocation on your part, even when you bear no responsibility

you should exercise forbearance if the relationship matters to you.

Cease dwelling on the particular offense,

do away with grudges and fantasies of revenge, but retain a degree of watchfulness.

This is similar to "forgive but not forget" or "trust but verify." By using forbearance

you are able to maintain ties to people who, while far from perfect, are still important to you.

Furthermore, in some cases after a sufficient period of good behavior, rise

forbearance can to exoneration and full forgiveness.

But what do you do when the person who hurt you doesn't even acknowledge that they've done anything wrong or gives an obviously insincere apology, making no reparations whatsoever?


These are the cases of forgiveness that are the most challenging. In my practice, I find this in such examples as adult survivors of child abuse, business people who have been cheated by their partners, or friends or relatives who have betrayed one another.





**HERE IS THE HARD ONE: RELEASE**

- RELEASE does not EXONERATE the offender
- RELEASE does not require FORBEARANCE
- RELEASE does not require a continuation of the relationship
- RELEASE is no longer defining your life by what someone else has done.
- RELEASE stops the hurt, the preoccupation of the negative things, things that are eating away at your chance for happiness. It is the "silent tax" that is weighing you down.
- RELEASE does not allow the ones that hurt you to live rent-free, they have more control than you do.
- RELEASE is required for both EXONERATION, and FORBEARANCE



But what do you do when the person who hurt you doesn't even acknowledge that they've done anything wrong or gives an obviously insincere apology, making no reparations whatsoever?

These are the cases of forgiveness that are the most challenging.  
From personal experience working as a Pastor and friend, I find  
adult survivors of child abuse,  
business people who have been cheated by their partners,  
friends or relatives who have betrayed one another.  
Fellow Christians that do not live up to your idea of living the life of Jesus  
Like the two factions of Romans

Still, even here there still is a solution. I call it "release" -- the third type of forgiveness.

Release does not exonerate the offender. Nor does it require forbearance.  
It doesn't even demand that you continue the relationship. But it does ask that you, instead of continuing  
to define much of your life in terms of the hurt done, allows you to release bad feelings  
and your preoccupation with the negative things that may have happened to you.  
Release does something that is critically important: it allows you to let go of the burden,  
the "silent tax" that is weighing you down and eating away at your chance for happiness.  
If you do not release the pain and anger and move past dwelling on old hurts and betrayals,  
you will be allowing the ones who hurt you to live, rent free, in your mind,  
reliving forever the persecution that the original incident started.

Whether you get there through your own efforts, through psychotherapy, through religion or some other method, release liberates you from the tyranny of living in the traumatic past even when the other forms of forgiveness, exoneration and forbearance, are not possible.

## Three Types of Forgiveness

	Exoneration	Forbearance	Release
<b>Definition</b>	Wiping the slate clean. Putting the act behind me and letting go. Absolute restoration to the relationship. Restoration of innocence	Settling the occasion of pain because the relationship is important to you. It is overlooking the hurt because of the worth of the other person.	Most difficult of the responses to hurt. There is no exoneration or forbearance, even the requirement of a continued relationship. It is letting go of the hurt for your sake.
<b>Repentant Response</b>	The hurtful is sorry and takes full responsibility, asks for forgiveness, and gives the assurance that it will not be repeated in the future	An apology is offered but it is evident that it is not without reservation. It is associated with blame pointed toward those outside of themselves.	They do not care if you are hurt or not. The selfish desire for getting whatever they want is justification for the pain they cause.
<b>Example Phrases</b>	I am truly sorry that I have hurt you. I did not understand your feelings. I did not know.	You made me angry. I was under a great deal of stress. I was having a bad day.	I just don't care. My career more important than your feelings. Your wants take a lower priority than mine.
<b>Cause of the hurt toward you</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An accident. No fault due to a lack of understanding or intent.</li> <li>2. Childlike inability to have malice. The lack of understanding of the hurt they inflicted.</li> </ol>	There was an intent to hurt. It may be done in jest, or without malice, but it still causes pain.	The pain inflicted is secondary to the needs, desires, and ambitions of the hurtful. You just don't matter.
<b>Your response</b>	The pain may remain, but forgiveness is offered. And the relationship is restored.	Trust but verify. You forgive but do not forget. Ongoing behaviors undergo inspection and suspicion. If sufficient good behavior is demonstrated forbearance can lead to exoneration.	The act of release is for you. The pain is real. It is the silent tax on your life that grows and destroys. Feelings of revenge and getting even start to rule your responses. You allow those who hurt you to live rent-free in your life and it will ultimately taint everything in your life. The release is simply letting it go.



## PREPARATION FOR NEXT WEEK

### 45 minutes

- Read Romans the second chapter. 29 verses
  - First quickly to get the basic theme
  - Second time through finding any repeated words.
  - Third time, Write any questions you may have that are revealed as you read.
- Write down the answer to these questions:
  - Who is Paul talking about in this chapter?
  - What does this mean to me in my spiritual life?

### Extending your personal study 60 minutes more.

- Outline the chapter

