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12 April 2013

We Do the Same Things

Romans 1:18-20: 18. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; 19. Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. 20. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and [divine nature]; so that they are without excuse: The phrase known of God has to do with what mankind can know about God, who we cannot see, but can know about Him by the visible things of creation. The phrase wrath of God does not pertain to God, but to those who do not believe in the Son of God (Jn 3:36).

The Greek word for wrath is *orge*⁽³⁷⁰⁹⁾. The word means *to desire eagerly or earnestly*. It is by analogy that the meanings of *anger, indignation, vengeance, wrath & abhorrence* are obtained. All these words describe a state of mind. We know mankind carries this state of mind, but does God also? In the minds of many, He does because they do not believe in the Son of God. **Romans 12:19-21:** 19. Dearly beloved, *avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.* 20. *Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.* 21. *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.* If man's instruction is to not seek revenge, but do good to your enemies, why would God do any different? How does God take vengeance? Example: By a few decades after the cross, the majority of Jews had rejected Jesus as the Messiah (wrath of God abides on them, Jn 3:36). The Romans were Pagans, worshipping many gods. The Jews and Romans were manifesting the gods they worship. The Jews were rebelling against God and the Romans. So God backs off and allows the Romans to destroy them. On a much smaller scale, consider the verses in Romans 12 as they apply to individuals who refuse to let go of their anger and wrath, and seek their own vengeance. The principle remains the same at any level.

When the wrath of God abides on a person, it is not that God is angry with them, it is the attitude they carry based on how they perceive God, whether conscious or subconsciously. **Romans 2:5:** *But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasure up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;* Look at wrath: **Revelation 14:8-10:** 8. *And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.* 9. *And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, 10. The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: Beasts are symbols of man's character traits and ignorance of God (Ps 73:22). Wine is a metaphor for teaching (Mic 2:11). Babylon's wine is her false teaching about God. But God's wine (truth) will expose Babylon's wine (error). People refusing the truth worship the beast (self). **Psalms 11:5-6:** 5. *The Lord tries the righteous: but the wicked and him that loves violence his soul hates.* 6. *Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.* Horrible is literally a glow (of anger) tempest is the word spirit. The phrase should be angry spirit. The fire & brimstone is a person's angry spirit which destroys them. Sodom & Gomorrah was destroyed with fire and brimstone - what was there sin? The very things Paul describes in Romans one. Here, wine is truth from God that torments those refusing it. (example of those tormented with truth: Acts 7:54, 57-58)*

What can be known about the Father and Son from the Bible today is twisted and perverted with men's opinions. Here is an example of how a person can know from the *invisible things that are made*: From the parable of the sower we learn that Jesus is the Sower (Mt 13:37); the seed is the word (Mt 13:20; Lk 8:11); the four types of soil are four types of people in the world (cf Mk 4:14-20). We cannot see Jesus, the words he speaks (spirit) or what is in the heart of man. Yet, by considering the parable, the seed planted needs good soil, water and sunlight in order to grow and produce fruit, all symbols of something spiritual and inward.

Romans 1:21-23: *21. Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, 23. And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four footed beasts, and creeping things.* The root, *doxa* ⁽¹³⁹¹⁾, of the Greek verb *doxazo* ⁽¹³⁹²⁾, translated *glorified*, means *be of an opinion or a view, to judge, to think or recognize a person or thing for what it is*. God's glory is His character, based on how He thinks and manifested by what He has done. Man's glory is based on what he thinks, and which is manifested by his character also. To give glory to the Father and Son is to praise them for what they have done and are doing. A "fool" has no understanding (Pr 18:2) from God, but his eyes are in the ends of the earth (Pr 17:24), i.e. in self. Do not think of the birds and beasts as literal idols created by man, but as metaphors of something inward, of the mind.

Verses 18-32 of Romans chapter one seem to be describing hard-core sinners. **Romans 1:28-29:** *28. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; 29. Being filled with all unrighteousness...., etc.* When I look at religions today, whether organized or not, I see the attributes described here manifest in many. And yet, I see also a few souls here and there who are sincere - i.e. for this reason God's mercy is still there and He has not turned away. Why are the sincere still associated with the others who are rejecting truth? How are they relating to others who do not believe the same as their group? Remember the wrath of God abides on those who deny the Son of God (Jn 3:36), i.e. they are carrying anger, resulting from corrupted ideas about God and other teachings of truth. Now, notice what is said about them: **Romans 1:32:** *Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.* Even though there are those who are sincere, they still mingle with the insincere. The situation can be likened to the Amorites when God made a promise of delivering Abram's descendants: **Genesis 15:16:** *...in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.* The Gentiles today have not yet reached the fullness of their iniquity, as did the Jews in AD 70, when Jerusalem was destroyed.

There is a principle presented in these next verses that I learned several years ago. No matter what fault I see in another person, I have the same fault, or the same problem. I am not speaking of the outward manifestation of a person's sin, but the underlying spiritual principle that causes it. This is quoted from the Revised Version:

Romans 2:1-4: *1. Therefore you have no excuse, O man, whoever you are, when you judge another; for in passing judgment upon him you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, are doing the very same things. 2. We know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who do such things. 3. Do you suppose, O man, that when you judge those who do such things and yet do them yourself, you will escape the judgment of God? 4. Or do you presume upon the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience? Do you not know that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?* (RSV) By manifesting kindness, we can lead others to repentance.

Everyone can go back into chapter one and read verses 27 through 31 and pick out certain things and say we have not done them - like murder, or a homosexual relationship. But, spiritually we would be deceiving ourselves.

Jesus defined murder as hating another person in your heart (Mt 5:22). Jesus used the word “anger” because it is the outward manifestation of spiritual murder. When a person is angry they manifest jealousy, hatred and envy, and the character of the other person is assassinated. **1 John 3:14-15:** *14. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loves not his brother (or sister) abides in (spiritual) death. 15. Whosoever hates his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.* We are all guilty, but are we seeking God to understand why? What corrupted way of thinking is still in our hearts to cause anger to rise up? One type of it is the word satan. It is a Hebrew word that means adversary. Christianity has made a god out of this person called Satan. He is made out to be a supernatural being (from writings outside the Bible) that cannot be resisted by the will of man. Inwardly, satan refers to man’s adversarial attitude toward God and others. **1 Peter 5:8-9:** *8. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour: 9. Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.* The roaring lion is a figure of a person’s anger which has risen up because of pride (lion) (Ps 22:13; Pr 19:12; Pr 20:2). At some point in their life, every person has to deal with the root cause of their anger in order to stop manifesting hate.

Romans 1:26-27: *26. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: 27. And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet (or, must be).* Paul was writing to the Christian church in Rome who were living among others who worshiped Pagan gods. He included same sex relationships among those who rejected the truth of the gospel, and *they did not like to retain God in their knowledge* (verse 28). While Paul referred to physical relationships, I want to put this inward to illustrate how we do the same things in our hearts. We may have never been in a same-sex relationship, but spiritually we have in our ignorance.

In Paul’s day, all churches were autonomous, where today the various religious organizations with many churches have a central control, some more rigid than others. To be a church in one of these organizations, you must accept the major doctrines of the central control group - i.e. churches are not autonomous. Women with women: Outwardly, a woman is a symbol for a church, pure or impure (2Cor 11:2; Jer 6:2; Nah 3:13). Looking at men & women inwardly as ways of thinking, women with women and men with men - i.e. mankind listening to and following the way man thinks and being governed by man’s teachings, instead of that which Christ teaches. God intended that a man and a woman were to be in a marriage relationship, as a symbol of Christ and the church (Eph 5:23-32). By applying these scriptures inwardly to the heart, we can see that church organizations are in illicit relationships, as well as the individuals within them, as they are not free to promote, within their group, any belief different from the main body. The Jewish church was the same: **John 12:42:** *Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: **John 9:22:** These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.*

Romans 2:1: *Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judge: for wherein thou judge another, thou condemn thyself; for thou that judge do the same things.* We have to break the habit of condemning others, we have to break habits where we manifest the wrath of God, and learn to love our enemies. That does not mean that we condone bad behavior, but let the Lord lead if you feel impressed to address an issue. God may use you to speak to a person, but vengeance belongs to Him. **Luke 6:36-37:** *36. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. 37. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: Amen.*