

THE BAD NEWS

Romans 1:18–3:20

Jumping In!

1) In an age of tolerance (and twisted logic) such as we live in, to speak of God’s wrath and judgment is to invite the wrath and judgment of all those who do not wish to hear the truth of the Scripture.

What would you say to a sincere, concerned friend who argued the following:

“I just don’t think we need to try to scare people into heaven with all this talk of fire and brimstone. Christians should be more positive and emphasize all the blessings of the Christian life, not threaten people with hell, fire, and damnation. It just gives us— and God—a bad name!”

Bible Passage... Read Romans 1:18–3:20

Digging Deeper

2) What reasons does Paul give for the wrath of God against men? *List all the words and descriptive phrases in this passage for man’s rebellion against God.*

3) Other than long-term judgment, what short-term consequences of rebelliousness does Paul cite in this extended passage?

4) According to this passage, why are not even “moral” and religious people exempted from God’s widespread judgment?

Cross-Reference... Read Psalm 14 and note how it relates to the passage in Romans.

Exploring the Meaning

5) How do these passages from both Old and New Testaments answer the popular, modern-day belief that “human beings are basically good”?

6) What specific evidence do you see in this passage to suggest that God is not impressed by mere “religious activity”?

7) Read Galatians 3:19–25. Why did God give sinful human beings a perfect law code to follow?

Reflection Time

8) R. A. Torrey wrote this: *“Shallow views of sin and of God’s holiness, and of the glory of Jesus Christ and His claims upon us, lie at the bottom of weak theories of the doom of the impenitent. When we see sin in all its hideousness and enormity, the Holiness of God in all its perfection, and the glory of Jesus Christ in all its infinity, nothing but a doctrine that those who persist in ... the rejection of the Son of God, shall endure everlasting anguish, will satisfy the demands of our own moral intuitions.”*

How can a Christian come to a deeper and more accurate understanding of the depravity of the human heart and the holiness of our God?

9) What in this study convicts you most? challenges you most? compels you to action the most? Why?

10) Write a prayer of thanks to God for sparing you from wrath and judgment and for forgiving your sin:

For further study, see the following passages: Exodus 20:3–5; Leviticus 18:22; Deuteronomy 10:16; 30:6; Judges 10:13; Psalm 2:5; 5:9; 14:1; 14:1; 19:1–8; 36:1; Isaiah 43:7; Jeremiah 25:15–16; Matthew 23:24–28; John 12:40; John 17:3; Acts 8:26–39; 10:34; 1 Corinthians 6:9–11; 10:31; 2 Corinthians 7:9, 11; Galatians 3:10, 13; 6:7–8; 1 Timothy 4:2, 10; Titus 1:1; Hebrews 6:4–6; 10:26, 29; Revelation 20:11–15.