

May 18, 2015

The Cause of God's Wrath

Romans 1:18e (NASB), **“who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,”**

David Platt who is the new president of the International Mission Board relates a story in his book “Radical” about how as pastors we are often asked a question that goes something like this: “What about the innocent tribesman in Africa, or South America, or Asia who has never heard the gospel? God does not judge him right? Because he’s never heard right?” Platt says that the questioner is making one very big and erroneous assumption and that is that there is such a thing as an innocent man. There in fact is no such thing as an innocent man. Romans 3:10-11 says, **“THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD...”**

You see because of our inborn sinful disposition everyone is naturally inclined to follow sin and resist God. This phrase here in verse 18 could be rendered, “who are constantly attempting to suppress the truth by steadfastly holding to their sin.” **“Unrighteousness”** is such a part of our nature or our DNA if you will that every single person has a built in, natural, compelling desire to **“suppress”** and oppose God’s **“truth.”**

The very next verse in this chapter, verse 19 says, **“because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.”** Paul’s point in this verse is that all people, regardless of their opportunities to know God’s Word and hear His gospel, have an internal God given evidence of His existence and of His nature, but they are universally inclined to resist and in fact to assault that evidence.

No matter how little spiritual light a person may have, they may always find God if they sincerely seek Him. Jeremiah 29:13 says, **“You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.”**

People however are not naturally inclined to seek God. That truth was proven conclusively in the earthly ministry of Christ. Even though men were face to face with God incarnate, with the Light of the world it says they still rejected Him. In John 3:19-20 it says, **“This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.”** Psalm 14:1 says, **“The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God.’ They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; There is no one who does good.”** Sinful man opposes the idea of God a holy God because they innately realize that such a God would hold them accountable for the sins that they love and do not want to relinquish.

Every person has enough of that “divine spark” in them to enable them to know God and be reconciled to Him if their desire is genuine. Romans 1:19-20 says, **“Because that which is known about God is evident with them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.”** It is because people refuse to respond to that evidence that they are under God’s wrath. Psalm 7:11 says, **“God is a righteous judge, And a God who has indignation every day.”**

The cause of God’s wrath then is not that God is some sort of cosmic bully, the cause is that we are innately sinners and as such we are in open rebellion towards God. The question we all must ask is: Am I so in love with my sin that I refuse to repent of my sin and believe in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior?