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WHY IS THERE SUFFERING? (Romans 1:18)

...During my recent illness I gave thought to a number of life issues. One of the big things in our lives is the whole subject of suffering and affliction. Last week we were reminded from Psalm 138 that life is filled with trouble. This is not home, this is not heaven, yet the Lord will complete His work in us.

...Why is there suffering in our world? Has it always been so? Will it ever end?

...Paul in writing to the Christians in Rome, addressed this agonizing subject telling of God's reaction to sin.

THREE WAYS THAT GOD'S WRATH IS BEING REVEALED TODAY CALLING US TO FLEE TO JESUS. ...He suffered in our place to deliver us from our sin!

I. God's Wrath Is Displayed In The Universal Death of All People. (Rom.5:15-18)

A. The original world was perfect, without suffering, trouble, or death. It was paradise!

B. When Adam sinned, the world was changed. Now death would reign, taking everyone.

..."In the day you eat of the tree of..., you will die indeed." (Genesis 2:16-17)

1. Romans 5:16: Death is called a "judgment and condemnation."

2. Romans 5:17: "Death reigned through that one man (Adam)"

3. Romans 5:18: "One trespass led to condemnation for all men..."

C. Universal death is the first way that God's wrath against human sin is being revealed.

D. Is this also true for us as Christians, who have by faith received the righteousness that saves? No!!! It is true that believers also die, but death is fundamentally altered by the Gospel of Christ crucified in our place. (Piper)

1. For us who know Christ, the "sting of death has been removed." (1 Corinth. 15:55)

2. Death is no longer the condemning wrath of God toward us, rather, it is the last gasp of a defeated enemy who opens a door to paradise.

II. God's Wrath Is Displayed In Universal Futility And Misery. (Rom.8:18-21)

...This means that sufferings are inevitable in our fallen broken world. The sense of meaninglessness...

A. It was God who subjected our world to this sense of misery, suffering, and vanity.

...It was not Adam or Satan, who at that moment were not thinking about "the hope of the human race." This reveals God's wrath against sin, but there is "hope." (Genesis 3:15)

B. This misery is seen daily in the news. It is seen in the stuff that happens...often it takes our breath away. It all seems so meaningless, so random. A flood of

tears flow every day as people everywhere weep for all kinds of reasons. “Stuff happens!!!”

...But futility and misery will not last forever...but they do reveal God’s wrath of sin today.

...One day it will all be different! God will reverse the curse and the creation will be as God created it. No suffering, no affliction, and all will be right with the world. (v.21-22)

- C. Is this also true for us as Believers? No! For us the futility is removed from suffering, because we know that God has a purpose in it. (Romans 8:28) There is purpose!!!!
1. For us God turns punishment into purification. Destructive forces now become His tools of discipline for us...to make us like Jesus.
 2. The seeming chaos and futility of life’s calamities become the severe, but loving hand of our Father in heaven. (Hebrews 12:3-11)

III. God’s Wrath Is Displayed Against Sin In The Degrading Of Human Morality.

(Rom.1:21-28) ...When people reject God, perversion of mind and heart follow. God gives them up!

A. Three times in verses 24-28 God is said, “To give them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that they dishonored their bodies among them.”

...In this, God reveals His wrath against sin by giving people up to be more sinful.

...God gives them up to “a reprobate mind.” This is a mind and heart that is “twisted.”

B. This is the tragic result of rejecting the Lord Jesus. We see this playing out in our nation today. It is the death spiral that only falls downward. It is only the grace of God that can intervene and save us from ourselves.

C. Is this also true for the believer? No! The dominion of sin is replaced by a love of righteousness. (Romans 6) God does not give us over to a depraved mind, but gives us the gift of the Holy Spirit. Praise His name!!!!

SO WHAT? WHAT DIFFERENCE SHOULD THIS MAKE IN MY LIFE?

1. Suffering happens because of human sin. Adam sinned, we sin, and others sin. When you are suffering listen to God’s voice...as He uses our pain to call us to Himself. He tells us in our suffering, that hell is like this but far worse...and in our moments of pleasure, that heaven is like that but far greater.
2. Jesus changes everything! Since He has taken upon Himself the wrath we deserve, we are set free to live and serve Him forever. Death and suffering are forever changed for you if you know the Savior.
3. Remember ours is a suffering God. No one ever suffered like Jesus. When you find yourself suffering think about Jesus who endured such anguish for you. Enter into that holy room!
4. Rejoice that nothing comes into your life by chance, but in all things God is working His purpose for you...He is making you like Jesus.
5. Flee the wrath that is and that is to come by running to Jesus today. Receive Him as your personal Lord and Savior. Jesus is calling...will you come?