

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

Wrath, Judgment and Salvation, Pt 2

Revelation 16

Keywords: Revelation, End Times, Seven Bowls, Wrath, Judgment

PowerPoint Presentation included: None

SermonAudio Blurb: Revelation 16 unveils the out-pouring of the wrath of God upon the world as it rebels against Him. It is a picture of terror and horror. And if we are honest, it is a hard picture to see and consider. In an effort to bring a proper perspective on this important chapter, Pastor Henry gives a pause and takes us through two key doctrines, sin and salvation with the goal to help us fear God's wrath and delight in His salvation.

I. Introduction.

- A. Last week I made the point that there are times we must give difficult news or information to people.
 - 1. Death.
 - 2. Disease.
 - 3. Consequences.
 - 4. These moments are never pleasant nor easy, but they are necessary.
- B. Judgment is hard and there is no way around that..
 - 1. As we work our way through Revelation as a book, we are confronted almost weekly with the nature of God's wrath and judgment. This can cause us to become dull to it or discouraged.
 - 2. However, I would argue that to spend a significant time thinking and learning about God's judgment against all who rebel is good for our souls **if we let it.**
 - a. The reason is that if we let the reality of God's wrath to settle upon us then we will look for salvation from it.
 - b. When the bible talks about the idea of salvation it is not speaking in general, vague terms. It is quite specific. It is salvation from God's wrath.
 - c. As I thought on this the result was last week's sermon and this week's. All of it to prepare us for the last several chapters of Revelation.

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

- C. Last week we looked at the nature of sin. Its importance is too often understated. In fact it is usually considered to be the most important doctrine for us to grasp. **Why?**
1. Sin is what captures the whole of our existence and it is our great enemy.
 2. It is what separates us from one another and from our Creator, God.
 3. It explains the reason for how things work in this world we live.
 4. It makes what God does and doesn't do make sense.
 5. When you speak about sin to your friends or family and you see eye-rolls or shrugs you know that they do not understand sin yet.
- D. Last week I said that there are only a few things that I am convinced of in this life.
1. One of those is that as Matt Miller has taught us, *hevel* is part and parcel of our existence; therefore, hold on to all things lightly except for God and gospel.
 2. Second, sin is far more toxic and destructive than any of us realize and it is our great enemy.
 3. Third, the salvation given to us through Jesus Christ is greater than all other things and though it is too often unappreciated by us it stands tall above sin and death. It is our **ONLY** hope.
 4. Fourth, you can only learn to weep and rejoice at the same time when considering God's holy judgment when you understand both sin and salvation.
- E. When we considered what brings about God's wrath we must understand that it is ever and only sin. So what I taught you last week was a basic, but solid, explanation of sin.
1. The vocabulary that the bible uses regarding sin is incredibly instructive.
 2. It is seen commonly as something that fails to reach its proper goal. It falls short or misses its mark.
 3. It is also described wander or to go astray—purposefully.
 4. We overstep and find ourselves where we don't belong.
 5. Closely connected are other terms that mean to turn aside and leaving the proper path. To act in a manner in a treacherous manner, to be a traitor and to make friends with the enemy. It is spiritual adultery.

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

6. One that is I refer to frequently is a word that speaks to being twisted and crooked.
 7. Add to all of this the terms used that describe us as rebels and stubborn of heart.
 8. Finally, is ungodliness.
- F. Because of this reality wrath is the **only** thing any person has a right to expect when he is before His Creator and God.
1. Wrath is the holy expression of God's reaction to your rebellion.
 2. God is storing up that wrath to be unleashed on the day of judgment.
- G. And it is here that we need to stop and ask, how then can we be rescued from it?
1. And it is in this context that we can speak of salvation and the gospel/good news that the bible brings to us.
 2. "Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him." (Romans 5:9)

II. Salvation.

- A. Such a beautiful truth but also such a complicated one. Keep that in mind and embrace the fact that what I teach now is only broad strokes.
- B. Vocabulary of salvation is as rich and varied as that of sin..
1. One of the most common ways the bible refers to salvation is in the idea of deliverance.
 - a. We are in a tight, constricted place. Our back is to the wall and then God makes a wide space for us and delivers us.
 - b. Another aspect is being snatched away. You are surrounded and at the point of being over-whelmed and then God snatches you away from these enemies and places you in true, eternal safety.
 2. One of the things sin does to you and I is make us slaves to it.
 - a. Before our salvation there is no escape. We are slaves to the sin and it is a terrible taskmaster.
 - b. But the bible uses various terms to speak of redeeming and all of them are beautiful to dwell on.

M i s s i o D e i F e l l o w s h i p

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

- c. Sometimes it speaks to redeeming what was lost. Like if you pawned something precious to you but could not ever buy it back and then someone does it for you.
 - d. It also has a subtle idea of redemption through substitution. You are enslaved to sin and someone takes the place of you so that you would be free to the uttermost.
 - e. Then there is the simple beauty of giving of life.
 - (1) Life is seen as more than simply existing. It is existing in relation to God. He is the giver of life, the sustainer of life and the taker of life. To be separate from God in any manner is death. We see this in one sense with the unbeliever while he yet "lives" and in the fullest meaning in the lake of fire where the separation is total.
 - (2) But God brings us into true life.
 - f. Finally, for this message, there is the terms that speak of being reconciled to God.
 - (1) We, who the bible describes as being far off from God, are brought near to Him.
 - (2) How? Through Jesus Christ.
- C. Romans 5:9 makes simple and clear how we are saved from God's wrath.
- 1. Through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ there is salvation in the fullest sense in Him.
 - 2. In the present, we have justification. It is full and complete to anyone who trust in Jesus' person and work.
 - 3. In the future, we have salvation.
 - a. From what?
 - b. God's wrath. It does not belong to the believer. God has rescued him through Jesus.
 - 4. How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered!
(Psalm 32:1)

M i s s i o D e i F e l l o w s h i p

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

- a. Remember how sin is described as stepping beyond what and where we are allowed. We transgress God's law and will.
 - b. For the one who is forgiven there is nothing but good. He is to be envied.
 - c. Here we get a sense of the joy David has in this thought...one who has not just gone over the "line" but one who has openly rebelled, yet is forgiven.
- D. Salvation explained—Isaiah 52:1-10.
1. This passage is referred to, in part, in Romans 10.15 “(And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!")”.
 - a. As a result there is often the assumption that Isaiah was referring to getting saved from sin.
 - b. This idea, however, is very short-sighted and fails to see the fulness of what salvation involves.
 2. Salvation in its fullest sense is the declaration that God reigns! Note this idea in Isaiah 52.7.
 - a. The peace referred to there is shalom and refers to the day when God brings all things under His rule and reign. Which is what we are witnessing in Revelation.
 - b. Where the righteous are finally vindicated (acquitted), (the meaning behind the term “justification.”).
 3. What is fascinating about this text in Isaiah is how it uses terms with which we are very familiar.
 - a. (Vs 7) “. . . who announces (evangelizes) peace And brings good news (evangelizes) of happiness. . . .”
 - b. And, of course, he uses the term “salvation.”
 4. Salvation in this passage, as well as throughout the bible is far greater and fuller than merely the battle of sin and death.
 - a. We tend to think of salvation in a point-in-time sort of way. We see it is something from which we came (looking backward), usually sin and death. And while this is acceptable to a degree, the

M i s s i o D e i F e l l o w s h i p

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

- bible more forcefully describes it as something that we and all of creation is going toward (looking forward).
- b. A simple example of this is seen in the following passages:
 - c. Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you **have been** saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.
 - d. 1 Corinthians 1:18 For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who **are being** saved it is the power of God.
 - e. 1 Corinthians 3:15 If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself **shall be** saved, yet so as through fire.
 - f. Ephesians 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you **were sealed for the day of redemption**.
5. We find that the bible says that salvation is found in the truth that God has come and accomplished the necessary work to make all things right again.
- a. Through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ the great enemies have been conquered (there is a kingly concept being described in these events).
 - b. Those enemies are sin, death and Satan. The process of this salvation, however, is still being worked out in various ways and involves the concept of the Kingdom of God—where God reigns and these enemies are forever abolished.
- E. The challenge is that we live surrounded by a culture that thinks that anything and everything has value and that nothing is absolute.
- 1. This makes us easily offended over God being offended.
 - 2. Just think about how expressions of God's loves and hates (humble heart, his glory vs lying lips, impurity, divisiveness, and such) seem to surprise us or shock us or even offend us.
 - 3. What we learn in every page of the Bible, most certainly in Revelation, is how amazed we ought to be at salvation.
 - 4. I believe many of us have a long way to go before we grasp what holy means and what grace truly is. May God grant us the capacity to see them, love them, model them and live in them.

M i s s i o D e i F e l l o w s h i p

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

5. Parents keep this in mind. You are the persons who are showing your children what they are to love and hate. You are the persons who are showing them what faith looks and feels like. You are the persons who show them why following Jesus is worth anything and everything.
- F. Finally, never forget the gospel and the effects of the gospel.
1. They are distinct but never are they to be separated.
 2. James 1:21-27; 2:14-18.
 3. Matthew 7:22.
 4. Beloved, we live in evil days where truth is seen as malleable and faith is private. They are utterly antagonistic to both the gospel and its effects.

III. Conclusion.

- A. Ultimately salvation is eschatological in that it looks to the ‘end’ of the old and the fulness of the ‘new.’
1. And that is what we will see at the end of this long section in Revelation and the wrath of God.
 2. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. 4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." 5 And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." (Revelation 21:1-5)
- B. Beloved it is very simple.
1. You and I are sinners. We have no standing with God, our Creator in ourselves.
 2. God is holy and will not ignore sin. He must be faithful to who He is. And eternal wrath is how He will do it.
 3. The answer is to flee from that wrath to come.
 4. And the way and person to flee is God, through His Son, Jesus.

M i s s i o D e i F e l l o w s h i p

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

- a. Jesus who took sin upon His perfect self and died because of it
 - b. Jesus who drank the fulness of God's wrath in Himself.
 - c. Jesus who died the death that belongs to us.
 - d. Jesus who destroyed death through His resurrection.
5. Jesus says it simply, Come to me all who are weary and heavy-laden and I will give you rest.

IV. Benediction/Doxology.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Small Group Questions

- **CGL, before discussion ask 3-5 other people to share their testimony to the group. Encourage everyone to simply hear and think about the different ways the persons came to believe, but also how they are still all the same, sinners coming to Jesus and finding life.**
- **Discuss how we can forget that there are to be clear consequences (effects) so believing the gospel. As a group work through what those effects are to look like. Use the epistles as your guide. Remember that for those written by Paul the effects of the gospel take up the second half of each of his letters.**