

14011-A February 9, 2014
On Account of These Things
Colossians 3:6

I. Jesus warned people in ways that our culture finds politically incorrect: He talked about Hell and Judgment.

- A. Matt.5:21-22; 27-30. Gehenna 3 times. For things we take for granted! Contempt and lust!
- B. Matt.8:10-12; 10:26-28; 13:40-43, 47-50; 18:7-9; 23:33; 25:41, 46.

II. Two unpopular things Jesus (and the entire Bible) makes clear:

- A. The sins of humanity are worse than we imagine.
 - 1. And they include religious, self-made religion. Matt.23:33
- B. The wrath of God is the greatest threat to human life..
 - 1. Not war, financial collapse, ecological disaster, global warming.

III. So, to be rescued from the power and punishment of sin is the greatest news ever. Colossians 3:1-17

- A. You Christians have been raised with Christ.1-4
 - 1. Your life is not here in this dangerous world, but hidden in Christ
- B. So—Kill off the old evil actions and attitudes. 5-11
 - 1. More on this next time
- C. And—Put on the new eternal actions and attitudes. 12-17
 - 1. Live into who you are, Christian.

IV. Because the deeds of the old life are bringing the Wrath of God against this world. 3:6

- A. **What is the wrath of God?** orge = fury, anger, indignation, judgment.
 - 1. It is God's personal anger tangibly vented against all sin and evil of humanity. Rom.1:18;
 - a) Exactly like your anger at evil perpetrated against you or your loved ones, except that God has a holy anger.
 - 2. It is an aspect of his goodness (holiness), which is crucial to his love.
 - a) What sort of goodness does not oppose evil with sufficient spiritual and emotional intensity to meet it head on?
 - b) What sort of love ignores evil/sin against what is innocent and good?
- B. **Why does it happen? Col.3:6**
 - 1. Human evil/sin elicits it.
 - a) Sin and evil elicit it in the same way that personal offense elicits our anger.
 - b) We are judged for actual sins, not just for "rejecting Christ."
 - 2. Because retribution is the universal moral law of the universe.
 - a) And we intuitively know it is right: it is why we instinctively call for vengeance.

C. Why is it important for us to know it? 4 things:

1. It delivers us from religion. (Matt.23:33) Acts 2:37. What shall we do??
 - a) Religion is about saving ourselves by our own obedience. But it is hopeless.
 - b) But the knowledge of sin and wrath forces us into repentance and faith in Christ—which saves us totally and eternally.
2. It helps us to forgive. Rom.12:17-19
 - a) Jesus commands his people to pray for those who persecute them (Matt.5:44), but how, why? Because hell is real and it is worse than anything we could do.
 - b) A light view of hell and judgment does not promote peace, but war, because we will try to achieve vengeance if we believe that God will not do so.
3. It clarifies our decision to walk in the light. Col.3:5-11
 - a) Not because we will suffer wrath, but because we have escaped it—and we know we deserve it.. The Bible does not picture us as deserving the rescue God has provided.
 - b) *This combination of awareness of our evil, coupled with total forgiveness is the active Spirit-inspired life-changing power of the gospel*
4. It highlights the eternal power of God's love. Rom. 5:6-8; 8:32; 1 Jn. 4:10
 - a) If sin is really that bad, and God hates it personally, what sort of love must he have that he would save us?
 - (1) What the Lord says about wrath means that his Love is infinitely more than mere sentiment. The liberal god is not loving, just tolerant.
 - b) If there is no judgment then there is no hope for the world. Crime and evil will go eternally unavenged, which means essentially accepted and endorsed by default in an accidental and morally dead universe.
 - c) But if there is a righteous judgment, how will we escape?
 - d) How can there be real justice and real love in a world permeated with sin and evil?

D. The answer to the wrath of God is the Cross of Christ and only the Cross of Christ. No other message offers legal, moral, eternal justice perfectly blended with legal, moral, eternal love to sinners.