

HOW I LEARNED TO STOP WORRYING AND ENJOY THE WRATH OF GOD

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Multiple Choice Test

What historical event most expressed the wrath of God?

- A. The great flood of Noah
- B. Destroying the Tower of Babel and scattering the tribes
- C. Assyrian conquest of Israel
- D. Babylonian conquest of Judah
- E. The crucifixion of Christ

Without a doubt E is the answer. All the wrath of God for all the sins of all the world was poured out on Jesus at the crucifixion. God's wrath was appeased at the crucifixion. The enmity between God and man was ended. God's righteous indignation against all unrighteousness was calmed. The righteous demands of the justice of God were satisfied. Jesus is the greatest manifestation of God's wrath and the solution for mankind's greatest need.

Before Jesus, I consciously or subconsciously worried. In the back of our minds there is an element of guilt, and a fear of death. The great psychologist Menninger who started the famous clinic named after him said, "If I could convince my patients that they were completely forgiven, and thus absolved of all guilt, I could empty this clinic".

After Jesus came into my life, I believed I was forgiven based on His atoning work on the cross. The burden of sin, which is there, whether people know it or not, was removed. I could stand up straight again. I admit from time to time I worry, I'm stressed, and I get down, but ultimately Jesus has enabled me to stop worrying and enjoy the wrath of God. What I mean is the wrath I deserve has been taken by Jesus. The death I deserved, Jesus died. This is exciting, joyful, and truly good news for sinners. The self righteous people who don't need Jesus, can look forward to a different kind of wrath.

What about unbelievers? How is God presently manifesting His righteous wrath upon unbelieving sinful humanity? Romans 1:18-32 gives us the answer. There is no fire from heaven, and no flood to wipe them out. God's wrath presently consists in simply letting humanity go its own way without restraint. Three times Paul says "therefore God gave them over"(Rom.1:24,26,28). The punishment for sin now is simply-sin and evil. God delivers sinful humanity over to its own desires. God punishes sin by letting people have control of their own destinies with its evil result. Instead of striking them with lightning, God gives them a free hand. God withdraws His gracious lordship and allows other lordships to run their lives. Obviously, experience tells us the consequences. Just look around and see the mess the world is in.

Ultimately, God's wrath will end this fallen world and all will be judged when Jesus comes back, but now it remains to be seen which kind of wrath we who are living now will participate in—the wrath God poured out on Jesus enjoyed by we who believe, or "the wrath of God which is being revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness on earth"

God's wrath on Jesus at the crucifixion was in fact the greatest demonstration of His love for us—"for God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...", but don't forget the rest of that passage—"that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." To receive the love of God we must believe in Him in the fullest sense. Turn your life over to Him, live for Him, base your life on Him, and trust your destiny to Him.