

***Romans***  
***Message 18***  
***Not Ashamed 05***  
***Rom 1:13-19***

- 13 Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.
- 14 I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.
- 15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.
- 16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.
- 17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.
- 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;
- 19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. KJV

**Introduction:**

You will recall that in the last message we considered together the first part of v.18 and saw that God is indeed revealed to us in scripture as One in Whom Wrath resides. It really is a part of God's Person, just as much as Righteousness, Holiness, Love, Omnipotence or any of the other of the many Attributes of God.

Today we want to talk about how this Wrath is directed. Surely we must recognize that the scriptures which teach us of the Wrath of God also teach us that it is targeted. It is not indiscriminate. Some things provoke God to Wrath and some things do not.

The text before us, for example, is quite clear that it is "ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" which are in consideration here. But, what is this? What do these words mean?

A couple of weeks ago I was asked a question concerning the difference between Holiness and Righteousness. I do not remember having considered that question in any depth and I gave the answer that I saw little difference in them. Since then I have had occasion to re-consider my answer and now realize that it was probably not correct. It is true that Holiness and Righteousness travel together in the thought processes of scripture along with Godliness but it is also true, I think, that they are distinguishably different from each other. I do not know that we can make a great distinction between Holiness and Godliness but the term 'Righteousness' does seem to have its own distinction.

They are either different or Paul was being somewhat redundant in the text before us today and he was seldom redundant.

We consider then today under the negatives, “Ungodliness” and “Unrighteousness,” but, of course, we should establish what we mean by Godliness and Righteousness before we can consider the negatives of them.

As a brief definition, Godliness seems to indicate **a disposition of the soul** toward God and Righteousness is **the outworking of that disposition**.

This week as I was meditating on the issues of this message I picked up my Bible thinking to read a passage devotionally. **As an aside:** I find it very difficult just to ‘read’ my Bible. I find that before long I have found something which provokes me to consider it more deeply and suddenly I am studying rather than reading. I found this to be the case again. **Aside ended.**

I thought to read the Sermon on the Mount and I began in Matthew 5, but I had not read far when this passage gripped my attention.

Matt 5:6

6 **Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.** KJV

I asked myself, “who hungers and thirsts after righteousness?” I certainly know what it is to be hungry and what it is to be thirsty. I remember a time in Bible College when I had very little money and was eating from the school cafeteria. The school itself was having financial problems and the choices were sometimes not very good. Two of my least favorite foods in the world are Red Beans and Rice, especially that kind that is called ‘institutional’ that comes in those large cans distributed to cafeterias. But one weekend that was my choice. I looked at the menu and then counted what little money I had allotted myself for that week.... and hiked down the street to the Burger King and got the cheapest burger and fries they offered. I have fasted sometimes while others ate and fought down the urge to break my fast. So, I know what it is to be hungry.

But, I asked, who is hungry like this? And I realized that it is the Godly person. Something must be going on inside a person to create a longing from the depths of one’s being to know in experience the Righteousness of God and to have it functioning in his soul and in his life. And, again, what kind of person would that be? Where would those cravings be coming from? **I can think of no answer but “from a disposition of Godliness.”**

But, then I looked at the other verses there in what we called the Beatitudes and realized that the same can be said in each case.

Matt 5:3-9

3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

- 8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.  
9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. KJV

Each statement describes an element of Godliness, a disposition toward God and toward His Will coming from a core that must be called “Holy.” They are “pure in heart.” Every first phrase here could be replaced with “Blessed are the godly...”

The **behavior that flows out** of this disposition we can certainly, and biblically, call Righteousness.

These are those who actually live in obedience to the Greatest Commandment.

Mark 12:28-31

- 28 And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?  
29 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:  
30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.  
31 And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. KJV

Of course, as we see also in the Beatitudes, the one who keeps (or undertakes to keep) the First one also seeks to keep the Second.

In our text, the operative words are “all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.” The person greatly errs who thinks that because he is not as bad as others he cannot possibly be in trouble with God. The reality is that every person who fails to keep the First Commandment is under the wrath of God unless he has found mercy through Repentance and Faith, trusting the Work of Jesus Christ as his Only Hope of Redemption. Unless he loves the Lord God with the Whole of his being, he is the target of God’s Anger and Wrath.

This revelation is intended to strip away all false hope and leave every human outside of Christ hopeless and helpless before God.

Rom 3:19

- 19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. KJV

**Ungodliness** is a compound of two words, ‘a’ which is a negative prefix, much as we use ‘non’ or ‘anti’, to signify that the descriptive word which follows applies in the negative. This prefix has come over into the English in some words. Amorphous means “no form.” Agnostic means

— “I don’t know” “no knowledge.” Amoral means “no morality.” etc. This negative ‘a’ is from the Greek.

The word to which it is attached in our text is the word for ‘worship,’ so the word literally means those who do not worship, but, of course, in the way that Paul was thinking about it, it meant those who do not worship

God.

So the nice moral person who does not worship God with his whole mind, soul, and strength is “asebeis,” ungodly, whether he thinks that of himself or not.

He who refuses to  
refuses to worship.  
an often missed

obey the First Commandment assaults God. He  
Be he ever so moral and nice he is *ungodly*. This is  
reality.

The word  
consideration. The

“unrighteousness” takes behavior into  
one who violates the First Commandment is very  
likely to not consistently obey the Second, he is  
prone to mistreat others even if that “only” means  
that he does not do them good. He does not pray  
for them. He does not seek the greatest possible  
spiritual benefit for their souls. He does not love  
them.

—  
So, Paul is affirming that the Gospel reveals that  
men are wrongly disposed toward God in their souls  
AND they have demonstrated that by their wrong  
behavior.

We should read Dr. Jones as he pointed out that  
men consistently fail to see the importance of this  
order and go about to fix the wrong thing.

People imagine that if everyone could just be persuaded to act  
better then all would be well. They fail to realize that the wrong behavior of men is a  
testament to their “ungodliness,” their lack of devotion, lack of worship, to God.

Unless the ungodliness is somehow addressed, the behavior, the unrighteousness, will  
continue... modified maybe, but unrighteousness all the same. The unrighteous acts of  
man flow out of deep seated attitudes and commitments.

Matt 15:18-20

18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth  
from the heart; and they defile the man.

19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries,  
fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

20 These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with

unwashen hands defileth not a man. KJV

Ungodliness, then, produces unrighteousness. But we also must know that Righteousness, proper behavior, can never produce godliness.

One cannot become godly by changing his behavior. Millions have tried and the very same millions have failed.

### **Parenthesis:**

Christians must know and embrace this principle as well. If something has gone wrong with your behavior or your attitudes, there is a problem with your worship. You will never fix the problem by striving to change your attitude or your behavior. You must reconnect with God Who will lead you to Worship and then to Repentance. Once Godliness has been reconfirmed, the behavior will take care of itself.

Don't waste time and energy.

### **End of parenthesis.**

Ungodliness and Unrighteousness must be considered together.

When it is assumed that people can be righteous before God without their heart being right, Christianity becomes a kind of moralism, a scheme promising salvation by and through works. It is literally the format of every false religion in the world.

On the other hand, if it is presumed that one who is right with God in his soul need not worry about his behavior we have what is called Antinomianism, the kind of worldly Christianity that surrounds us on every side.

Neither of these is true Godliness or Righteousness. They must always travel together and in this order. Godliness must come before Righteousness and Ungodliness will always precede Unrighteousness.

The real essence of sin is ungodliness, "a refusal to live only to God's Glory." Any failure or unwillingness to do so is sin, wickedness, ungodliness.

### **The other application we should make.**

God is displeased with "all ungodliness and unrighteousness."

The fact that we are in Christ does not make Him pleased when we stray from Him and our heart grows cold toward Him.

It does not mean that suddenly our unrighteous deeds do not make any difference.

The Holy Spirit of God has been given to guide us into righteousness.

But He knows how the order goes. In order to get us to righteousness, He will lead us into worship, into a right attitude toward God, worship.

John 16:13-15

- 13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.
- 14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.
- 15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you. KJV

He shows us the Father, shows us Christ, leads us into Truth in Worship and by this we are guided into Righteousness.

Behavior begins in and proceeds from the disposition, the heart and correcting behavior never corrects problems. Only the return of the soul to God in prayer and the renewal of real devotion to Him can ever solve unrighteousness in our actions.