

Does Anyone Believe in the Wrath of God Anymore?

[2 Peter 2:4-10](#)

2 Peter, Day 7

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment; if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; and if he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked (for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard); then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority.

- 2 Peter 2:4-10, ESV

In the 1970's, fashion took a turn in a strange direction. I know because my elementary school pictures feature me dressed in polyester shirts with flower prints and huge, pointy collars. Bell bottoms, platform shoes, polyester leisure suits and more all went out of fashion - thankfully - when the 1980's rolled around. In fashion, trends come and go, but when it comes to what we believe, the truths of God's word do not change.

Sadly, even though the truths of God's word don't change, the changing winds of cultural pressure often cause the church to soften its stance on certain core doctrines or simply to ignore aspects of our faith. One aspect of the Christian faith that has been badly neglected by the church lately is the doctrine of the wrath of God and the coming day of judgment.

You might respond: "Well, of course! Who wants to spend time pondering the wrath of God? It's scary and offensive and drives people away from the church." But the wrath of God and the coming day of judgment is clearly taught repeatedly in Scripture, including in today's passage, and it should be a source of great comfort for believers, especially in times of distress.

Without coming wrath and judgment, how can we believe in a God of perfect divine justice? Life in this world doesn't make sense and doesn't appear just. It looks like the wicked get away with their wickedness and the righteous suffer for their faith in God.

In Romans 12, we're told that one of the keys that allows Christians to live peaceably with their neighbors and not seek out revenge is a confidence in the coming wrath of God: "*If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."* (Romans 12:18-19, ESV)

So, the doctrine of Judgment Day helps believers trust in God's justice and suffer with patience and forbearance. It also warns those who would exploit and manipulate Christianity for their own selfish gain. Thousands of people all around the world prey on professing Christians for personal gain, often either financial profit or sexual pleasure. It is sickening and distressing whenever we learn about these cases, but many of them go undetected and unpunished in this life. Yet God always sees, and He will repay.

The Bible is not an easy or simplistic book. It doesn't pretend we live in a cushy world. It's relentlessly realistic and powerfully hopeful. Central to the realism and hope is that God takes note of the wicked oppression and exploitation of His people, and He will repay. We don't need to hide from this truth. We need to rejoice in it! Our God is truly good, and His justice and wrath are central to His goodness and His love for His own!