

Wrath

Introduction:

Divine wrath, the kind that God experiences, is one of judgment and action. It is God's holy reaction to sin and evil. In the same way that we might look at evil in the world with a righteous sort of anger, so does God. Though our anger may at times be misguided or lead to harmful reactions, God's wrath leads to an answer to sin. The cross of Christ is a place where God's wrath and his perfect love come together. It is where our warranted guilt meets unmerited grace. Jesus became the object of God's wrath toward the evils of this world, the bearer of our sin, so that the mercy of God might extend to us. In light of God's love, Jesus invites us to revisit our own approach to anger. His interpretation of the commandment, "You shall not murder," extends into our emotional reactions to the world around us. He reminds us that anger can be dangerous and invites us to reframe how we react to those around us.

Read Your Bible:

Numbers 22:21-34

Matthew 5:21-26

Apply God's Word to Your Life:

1. Think of a time when you were angry. Why were you angry?
2. In what ways is anger helpful? In what ways is anger hurtful?
3. What might make God angry about this world? Why would God be angry?
4. How is God's anger different than ours?
5. Revisit the story of Balaam in Numbers. What do you notice about his anger and God's reaction to it?
6. How does Balaam's story make you see your own anger differently?
7. What does Jesus say about anger in the passage from Matthew?
8. Read James 1:20. What are the practical ways that you might approach anger differently as a person of faith?

Reflect on the Text:

1. What have you learned about God?
2. What have you learned about the world?
3. What have you learned about yourself?

Pray:

God of Grace, your wrath is poured out upon this world and met in the person of Jesus. Through his death and resurrection, we are made new. Teach us to experience emotions, even anger, through your grace so that through our lives, the world might know you more. In Jesus' name. Amen.