

Conclusion

Jesus took away the sin of the World (John 1:29). In doing so He delivered the world from God's immediate physical wrath at the time of the Atonement. The entire Creation, which includes believers and nonbelievers in Christ, share in a general salvation by Christ from divine judgement at the atonement. Thus the implications of the atonement extend beyond the elect in Christ. Even as God provides a Common Grace for all humanity through the Creation (there is physical sustenance for all living beings), so has the atonement provided a Common Grace of deliverance at the atonement of Christ of the Creation. All have been saved from God's wrath at the atonement.

Only believers in Christ receive the Special Grace of deliverance from the world's present condemning influence, and will be saved from God's future judgement at the return of Christ. As Savior, Christ is the propitiation for the world, but especially believers (1 John 1:1-2); He is the redeemer of the world, but especially believers (2 Pet. 2:1); and He has reconciled the world, but especially believers (2 Cor. 5:18,19). Thus Christ is "the savior of all humanity, but especially believers (1 Tim. 4:10). Nonbelievers, by denying Christ, remain in their sins and are storing up wrath for the day of wrath. Believers, by believing in Christ, have the debt of their sins cancelled, thus exempting themselves from wrath in the day of wrath.

The object of God's wrath is everything defiled by sin. Sin is not an abstract, viewed as separate from sinners. God doesn't simply judge sin. Everything defiled by sin is condemned with sin and must be purged of sin. Not just humanity's sins, but the entire creation, the dominion of humanity have been defiled by sin. Therefore, judgement of sin extends to the whole Creation.

Sin's defilement of the creation alienated God from His creation. God is love, but He is also truth, righteous, justice, and holy. The nature of God's character cannot be compromised. His hatred of sin is consistent with the attributes of His being. For Him to ignore sin on the basis of His love would be to deny Himself of His own nature.

God's love, justice, righteousness, and holiness (in addition to all His attributes) are expressed to their fullness in the person of His Son. Jesus Christ is the communication of God's character to humanity. The Atonement (kaphar, propitiation, redemption, and reconciliation) communicates to humanity the fullest expression of God's Character. To know Christ is to know the character of God.

Christ's redeemed (purchased) humanity and thus saved all people from the just wrath of God. The result of the purchase is that all humanity is indebted to Christ. It is because Creation is indebted to Christ that all judgement has been handed over to Christ. One's acknowledgement of (belief in) Christ's atonement is now the basis for forgiveness from sins and thus the means for deliverance from final judgement (John 3:16-18).

The wrath of God is not a pleasant subject. After all, isn't the emphasis of the New Testament the love of God? God is love (1 John 4:8,16) and sent His son into the world as a result of his love for the world (John 3:16). But, in emphasizing the love of God it is an error to omit the teaching of divine wrath. The same passage that teaches God's love also speaks of judgement (John 3:18). In fact, omitting, perverting or watering down the teaching of God's wrath weakens the understanding of the intensity of God's love for the world. It is because of His love for the world that he sent His Son to provide a means of purging from sin and escape from the consequences of sin. There is, after all, no need for a Savior unless there is something to be saved from.

"God's Wrath Postponed" teaches that Christ saved the entire world from the physical wrath of God at the time of the crucifixion. The universal passages of Scripture (Col. 1:19-20; 1

Tim. 4:9,10; 1 John 1:2; Rm. 5:18; John 1:29; 2 Cor. 5:18, 19; 2 Pet. 2:1) teach an "actual" salvation of the entire world, rather than a "potential" or "provisional" salvation (Moderate Calvinism). The world is not just the world of believers, or the world of Gentile believers combined with Jewish believers (Strict Calvinism). This "actual" salvation does not proclaim a salvation of the entire world from God's future wrath (universalism). Neither does it overemphasize the free will of man and foreknowledge of God at the expense of the clear Biblical teaching of predestination (Arminianism).

"God's Wrath Postponed" is not merely a teaching about the wrath of God, or an attempt to explain the universal passages of Scripture. It is a system of theology that eliminates the anomalies and apparent contradictions found in the other systems. It lends to a stronger literal interpretation of the Scriptures. It attempts to avoid the excesses of philosophical interpretations, and does a better job of harmonizing the New Testament with the Old.

The author believes that God's Word is pure and without error. The perceived contradictions and difficulties of Scripture are not the fault of Scripture, but man's poor attempt at interpreting the Scripture. Theologians formulate theological systems to help grasp and bring consistency to God's Word. Sometimes we become enslaved to the system and force the Scripture's to conform to it. Every system has potential anomalies that threaten the integrity of the system. When anomalies exist within a system, an attempt can be made to explain the anomalies in such a way to fit the system, reform the system to make adjustments for the anomalies, or attempt to create a better system to handle the anomalies. I've attempted the latter.

"God's Wrath Postponed" allows for the integrity of the universal passages to speak literally without sacrificing the integrity of a literal interpretation of passages teaching predestination. Previous systems have compromised one set of passages at the expense of the other. "God's Wrath postponed" is simple, rather than complex. It doesn't require manipulation of the passages to fit into the system, or use complex philosophical explanations of the system or the passages.

It was stated in the introduction, "How the tensions are resolved by the systems have enormous implications to our entire understanding of God's character, His revelation, Christ's mission and message, the presentation of His message, and man's relationship and responsibility to God and man." Though the full the implications of "God's Wrath Postponed" are beyond the intent of this introduction, two implications regarding God's character will be mentioned. Reflecting on the principles and implications of "God's Wrath Postponed" should cause a healthy balance in our perception of 1) the righteousness of God, and 2) the love of God. In regards to righteousness, we should tremble of the knowledge of God's wrath (the wrath that could have been and the wrath that is yet to be) and reflect on Solomon's fundamental principle that Fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge and wisdom (Proverbs 1:7; 9:10). The lopsided emphasis by the misguided proponents of God's love without fear, have put the church in a position of presenting a Gospel without substance. Without the warning of judgement and a God that can and will see judgement to completion, salvation is void of relevance. Regarding love, the provision of salvation from wrath through Christ, first for the elect, but also for Creation and humanity, was and is not an act of necessity, but of the purest display of love the universe has witnessed or can witness. The love of God is best understood within the context of the righteous judgement and justice of God.