

THE NAME: ENCOUNTERING THE GLORY OF GOD

Romans 3:9-20, Jeremiah 31:31-37

Read the Scripture passage above and then work through the introduction below to help guide your personal study.

This weekend's sermon is week 4 in the series called "The Name" where Pastor J.D. takes a close look at God's character as revealed in Exodus 32-34. This weekend's message focuses on the wrath of God, an often misunderstood aspect of God's character. If we are going to really get to know God, we have to study every aspect of his character, not just the ones that we gravitate toward. Every aspect of God's character is good and right. So we can have confidence that, as we get to know him better, our trust, appreciation, understanding, and ultimately our worship of him will all increase.

Romans 3:9-20 is a brilliant and concise summation of what many Old Testament passages teach us about humanity's condition. No one is righteous. We cannot justify the way we've chosen to live our lives, and God is right to demand wrath for offending him at every turn. Paul makes this point from the prophets like Jeremiah, the Psalms, and other places. This is a necessary part of his explanation in Romans about what the gospel is, and why Jesus had to die on the cross.

Jeremiah 31:31-37 was a great prophecy predicting exactly how God would solve the problem of humanity's unrighteousness. Even God's people broke the Old Covenant (vs. 32), but God would never turn them away (vs. 37). God promised a New Covenant – one that would have to provide forgiveness for all their sins if he was to ever repair his relationship with them. Whenever you come across passages in the Old Testament where judgment is pronounced on sinful people, you can praise God that Jesus absorbed that kind of punishment on the cross, so that we will not have to face God's wrath.

Work through these questions before you come to small group and be ready to interact with the Scriptures and questions below.

Sermon Response Questions

1. This weekend, Pastor J.D. spoke to us about the wrath of God. How have you thought about the wrath of God differently since hearing the sermon?

2. What else from the sermon did you find helpful or significant?

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Bible Study Questions

3. Read Romans 3:9-20. Explain in your own words why God's wrath is a good part of God's just character.

4. Read Jeremiah 31:31-37. What do you learn about God's character from this passage?

5. Chapter 31 comes after many chapters earlier in Jeremiah where the prophet is lamenting over Israel's sins and warning about coming judgment (or weeping over the judgment that already came). How does the New Covenant Jeremiah talks about in chapter 31 solve the problems of humanity's sinfulness?

Small Group Discussion Questions

6. Are you more tempted to: a) focus on God's wrath toward "other" people, b) fear God's wrath being directed toward you, or c) do you find yourself forgetting this aspect of God's character all together?

7. Why is it important to keep a balanced understanding of the wrath of God?

8. While at small group, break up into groups of 2-3. Talk about how you can both recognize God's wrath toward friends and family who do not know Christ and still interact with them according to God's love.

Prayer Guide

Pray through some of the ideas in the passage we studied:

- Thank God for providing a New Covenant and forgiving our sins (Jer. 31:31-33).
- Thank God for writing his law on our hearts and putting his spirit in us (31:33).
- Ask God for forgiveness for the ways we have broken his law recently.
- Ask God for the strength, wisdom, and love for him that helps us overcome our sinful ways.
- Pray that our friends and neighbors would know God more and more. Ask God for opportunities to speak about him with non-believers (31:34).