

A dramatic, high-contrast image of a stormy sky. Dark, heavy clouds are illuminated from within by bright, glowing light, creating a fiery, orange and yellow glow. Several jagged, bright white lightning bolts are visible, striking down from the clouds. The overall mood is intense and powerful.

Lawlessness in Romans 1

Does God Give Up?

(Romans 1:18-32)



Romans 1:18-20

18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, **19** since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. **20** For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

The background image is a dramatic landscape. It features a dark, stormy sky with a bright, jagged lightning bolt striking down from the upper left. In the center, a single, bare, gnarled tree stands on a flat, cracked, and dry earth. The ground is covered in a network of deep, dark cracks, suggesting severe drought. The overall mood is somber and ominous, reflecting the themes of the text.

Romans 1:21-23

21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.

22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools **23** and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.



Romans 1:24-32

24 Therefore **God gave them over** in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. **25** They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen. **26** Because of this, **God gave them over** to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. **27** In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.



Romans 1:24-32

28 Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so **God gave them over** to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. **29** They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, **30** slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; **31** they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. **32** Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

Outline:

- I. God's Wrath
- II. Reasons for God's Wrath
- III. Consequences of God's Wrath
- IV. Conclusion

I. God's Wrath

- against godlessness and wickedness (v18)
- suppression of the truth (v18)

Godlessness/Unholiness - Man's offenses against God

Wickedness/Unrighteousness - Man's offenses against Man





I. God's Wrath

- Jonathan Edwards
→ Sinners in the hands of an angry God.

Deuteronomy 32:35 ... their foot shall slip in due time

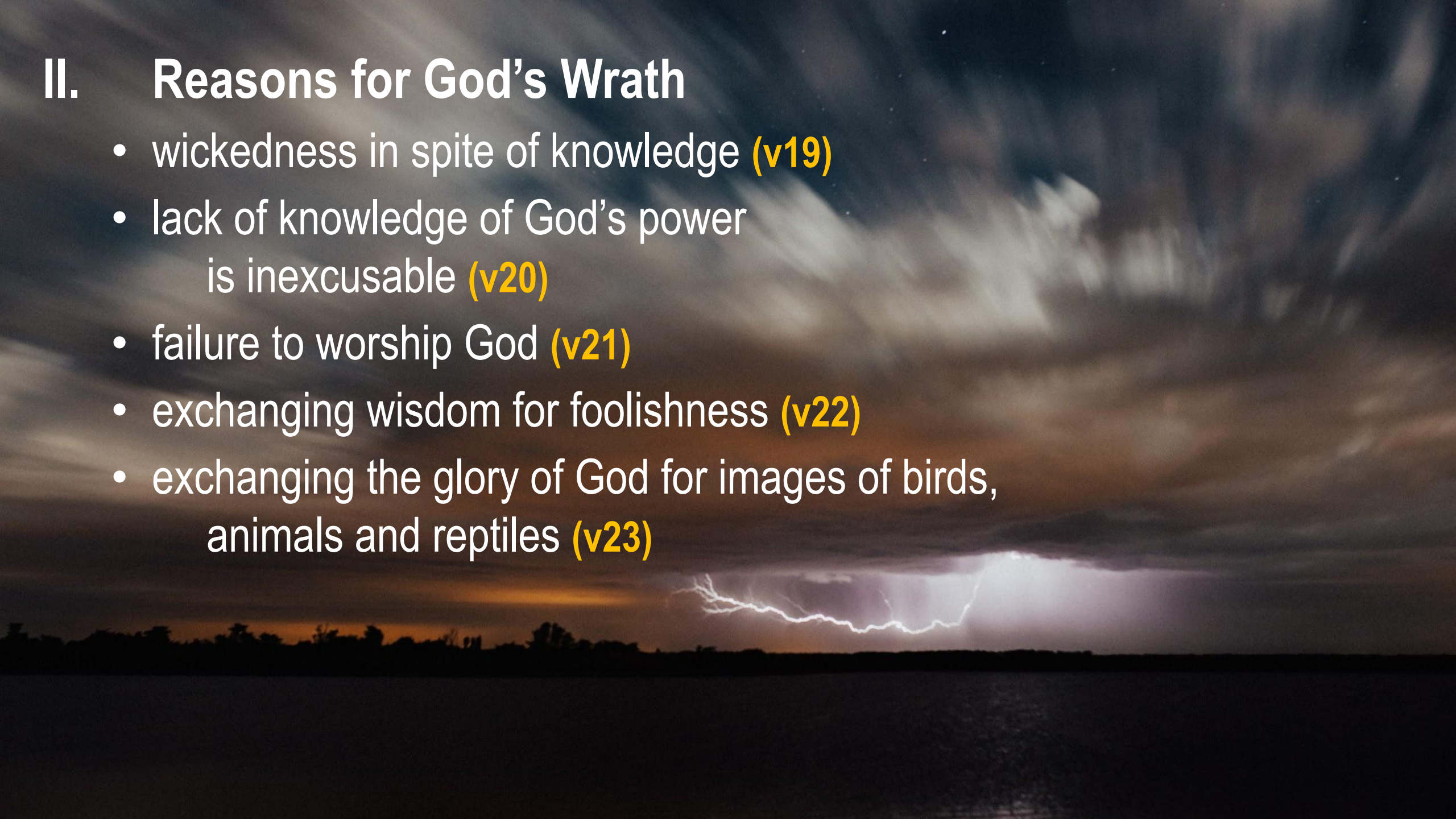
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It is everlasting wrath. It would be dreadful to suffer this fierceness and wrath of Almighty God one moment; but you must suffer it to all eternity. There will be no end to this exquisite horrible misery. When you look forward, you shall see a long for ever, a boundless duration before you, which will swallow up your thoughts, and amaze your soul; and you will absolutely despair of ever having any deliverance, any end, any mitigation, any rest at all. You will know certainly that you must wear out long ages, millions of millions of ages, in wrestling and conflicting with this almighty merciless vengeance; and then when you have so done, when so many ages have actually been spent by you in this manner, you will know that all is but a point to what remains. So that your punishment will indeed be infinite. Oh, who can express what the state of a soul in such circumstances is! All that we can possibly say about it, gives but a very feeble, faint representation of it; it is inexpressible and inconceivable: For “who knows the power of God’s anger?” How dreadful is the state of those that are daily and hourly in danger of this great wrath and infinite misery!

Jonathan Edwards: Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God

II. Reasons for God's Wrath

- wickedness in spite of knowledge (v19)
- lack of knowledge of God's power is inexcusable (v20)
- failure to worship God (v21)
- exchanging wisdom for foolishness (v22)
- exchanging the glory of God for images of birds, animals and reptiles (v23)



III. Consequences of God's Wrath

- gave them over to sinful desires of their hearts (v24)
- gave them over to their shameful lusts (v26)
- gave them over to a depraved mind (v28)



III. Consequences of God's Wrath

- gave them over → Greek Word **paradidomi**

Romans 4:25

Romans 8:32



III. Consequences of God's Wrath

- **Romans 1:29-32** - They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity.
- They are full of:

Envy

Murder

Malice

Deceit

Strife

No mercy

Gossips

God-haters

Slanderers

No understanding

Disobey their parents

Boastful

Insolent

No Fidelity

Arrogant

No love

Invent ways of doing evil

They are not only do these things,
but also approve of others who practice them.

III. Consequences of God's Wrath

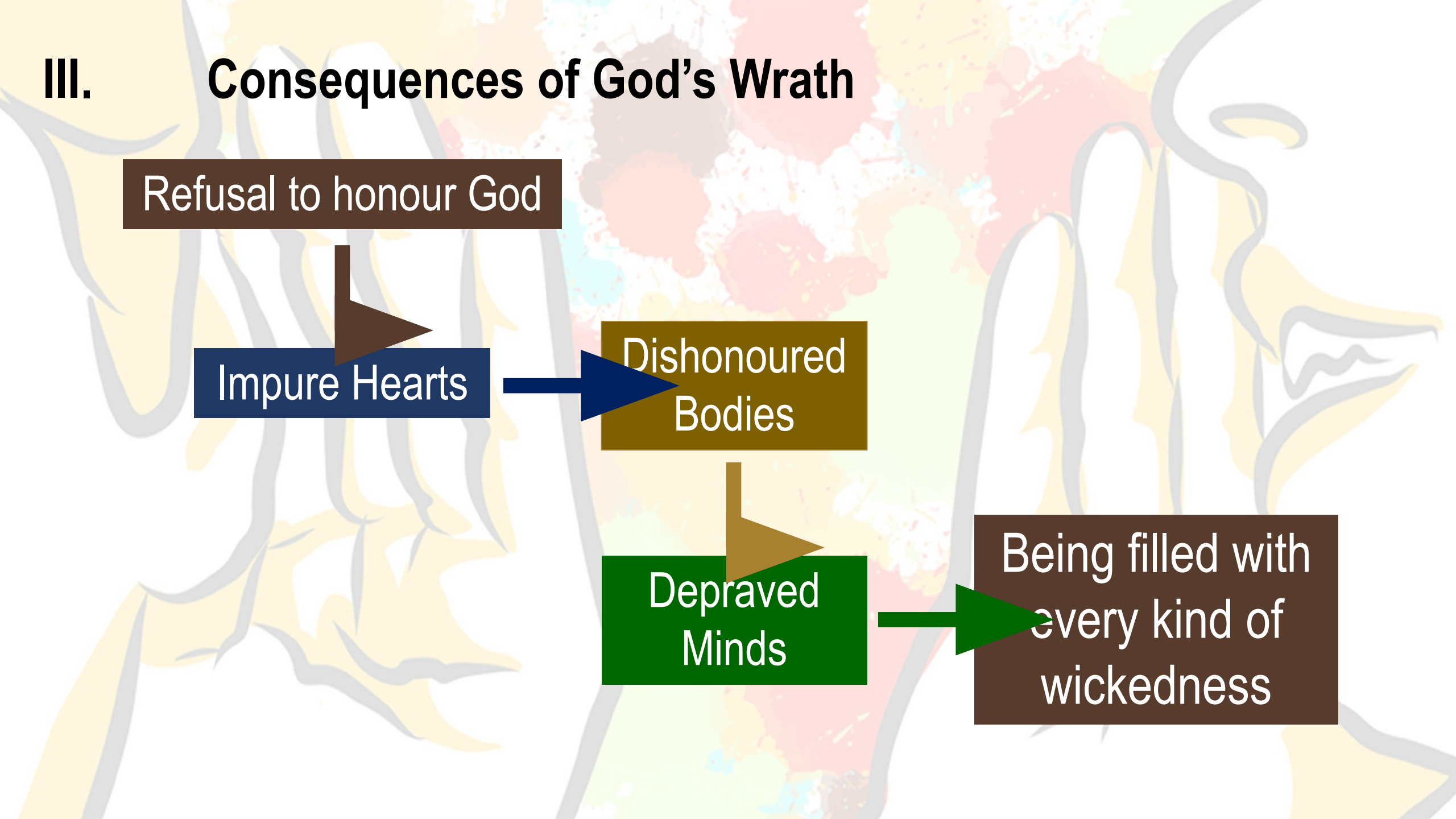
Refusal to honour God

Impure Hearts

Dishonoured
Bodies

Depraved
Minds

Being filled with
every kind of
wickedness



IV. Conclusion

- Romans 1 : warnings for the wicked and the unrighteous
- Romans 16: commendation for the good



IV. Conclusion

Does God give up?

Romans 8:

v28 : all things work for good ...

v31 : if God is for us, who can be against us?

v37 : in all of these things, we are more than conquerors,

v38 : nothing will be able to separate us
from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus
our Lord.



IV. Conclusion

**We are protected by
God's mercy and restraint**



The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked: his wrath towards you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else, but to be cast into the fire; he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight; you are ten thousand times more abominable in his eyes, than the most hateful venomous serpent is in ours. You have offended him infinitely more than ever a stubborn rebel did his prince; and yet it is nothing but his hand that holds you from falling into the fire every moment. It is to be ascribed to nothing else, that you did not go to hell the last night; that you were suffered to awake again in this world, after you closed your eyes to sleep. And there is no other reason to be given, why you have not dropped into hell since you arose in the morning, but that God's hand has held you up. There is no other reason to be given, but his mercy; yea, no other reason can be given why you do not this very moment drop down into hell.

Jonathan Edwards: Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God



IV. Conclusion


In these end-times, lawlessness will increase.

The bright light of Christian witness,
courage and love however gets brighter.

Romans 1:16-17

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the **power of God** that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.

17 For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”



IV. Conclusion

Watchman Nee: **The Life That Wins**

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Not just a changed life
But an exchanged life!