

The Wrath of God Almighty

by Bryan Gibson

According to Jesus, more people will be lost than will be saved (Matthew 7:13-14). I don't know about you, but I sure don't want to be lost. I've read the descriptions of hell and of God's wrath in the New Testament, and quite frankly, they scare me to death. "Outer darkness" (Matthew 25:30); "everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41); a "lake which burns with fire and brimstone"; a place where there "be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 13:42)—no thank you. I don't want to be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord" (2 Thessalonians 1:9); nor do I want to "drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation" (Revelation 14:10). I want no part of His "fierceness" (Revelation 19:15), His "vengeance" (Hebrews 10:30; 2 Thessalonians 1:8), or His "fiery indignation" (Hebrews 10:27). Surely all of this is reserved for just the worst kind of people, the absolute dregs of society. Well, I've done some reading through the New Testament, trying to put together at least a partial list of those who will experience God's wrath. Here is that partial list—you might be in for a surprise.

- Those who do not know God (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9).
- Those who do not believe that Jesus is the Christ (John 3:36; 8:21-24).
- Those who believe in Him, but won't stand up for Him (John 12:42-43; Matthew 10:33).
- Those who say, "Lord, Lord," but do not obey (Matthew 7:21-23; Luke 6:46); who "profess to know God, but in works they deny Him" (Titus 1:16).
- Those who are "self-seeking and do not obey the truth" (Romans 2:8-9).
- Those who practice sin, whether they be His children or not (Matthew 5:29-30; 18:8-9; Ephesians 5:5-6; Colossians 3:5-6), and are unwilling to repent of their sin (Matthew 3:8-12; Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 8:22-24; Romans 2:5; 2 Corinthians 12:20-21).
- Those who serve the Lord faithfully for a time, who have their names written in the Book of Life; but who then fall away and have their names blotted out of the Book of Life (Hebrews 4:11; 10:35-39; Revelation 3:5; 20:15; 21:17; 22:19).
- Those who teach false doctrine (2 Peter 2:1-3; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; Romans 16:17-18; Galatians 1:6-9).
- Those who because they do not love the truth, believe a lie instead (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12; Revelation 22:15); and as result do not abide in the teaching of Christ (2 John 1:9; John 8:31-32).
- Those who serve the Lord half-heartedly, because He is only a "rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6).

- Those who show no mercy, either by neglecting the needs of others (Matthew 25:31-46), or by showing partiality or prejudice in their dealings with others (James 2:1-13).

If any of us be guilty of any of these things, let's keep this in mind: "The Lord...is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).