**Series: God Bent Down to Lift Us Up**

**How the Anger of God Sets us Free, John 2:12-25**

May 1, 2016

Miroslav Volf: God isn't wrathful in spite of being love. God is wrathful because God is love.

1. Jesus unleashes His anger on the obstacles that keep us from God. (vv. 12-16)

A. Jesus gets angry with the noise that keeps us from God.

* V.14 *he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons*

B. Jesus gets angry with the greed that keeps us from God.

* V.15 *he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables.*
* Matthew 13:22 *As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.*

C. Jesus’ anger with sin is an expression of His love for us.

* N. T. Wright: If God does not hate racial prejudice, he is neither good nor loving. If God is not wrathful at child abuse, he is neither good nor loving. If God is not utterly determined to root out from his creation, in an act of proper wrath and judgment, the arrogance that allows people to exploit, bomb, bully and enslave one another, he is neither loving, nor good, nor wise.

Q. Have you ever struggled with the idea of God’s anger? Is there anything about God’s wrath that is still difficult for you to accept?

Q. The Roman Empire in the 1st c. was characterized by terrible injustice, gross immorality, and wide-spread corruption. Why would Jesus focus His anger on people in the temple there to help people with their sacrifices instead of those other issues?

Q. What’s some of the noise that gets in the way of your relationship with God?

Q. What are some of the ways that greed, either in the church or in a person’s heart, can keep a person from following Jesus?

2. Jesus bore God’s anger for the sins that drew us away from God.

(vv. 17-22)

A. It was Jesus’ zeal to cleanse the temple that led to His death.

* V.17 *His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.”*

B. Jesus’ authority for all He says and does lies in His resurrection.

* Vv.18-19 *So the Jews said to him, “What sign do you show us for doing these things?” Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”*

C. Jesus was the true temple that was ‘destroyed’ and ‘raised in three days.’

* V.21 *he was speaking about the temple of his body.*

Q. How would you describe your attitude toward church compared to the zeal that Jesus had for the temple?

Q. What do you think a Jesus-style zeal for the church would look like in your life?

Q. How does the resurrection of Jesus give authority to all He says and does?

3. Jesus invites us to get angry about the corruption of our heart.

(vv. 23-25)

A. Jesus doesn’t trust all who claim to trust Him.

* Vv. 23-24 *many believed in his name … But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them.*

B. Jesus sees the obstacles in our heart we need to take a whip to.

* V.25 *he himself knew what was in man*
* Romans 8:13 *For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*
* Colossians 3:5 *Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.*
* John Owen: "Be killing sin or it will be killing you."

Q. Why didn’t Jesus trust all the people who trusted Him? Was there something wrong with the way they trusted?

Q. How can you know that your faith is real?

Q. How would you rate your zeal or anger toward the sin in your life?

Q. How do we put to death the sin in our lives?

**Notes:**