

"Vengeance and a Winepress"
(11th in our series, Jesus Everywhere)

Isaiah 63:1-6; Revelation 14:1-15:1, 19:15-16; Romans 12:19-21*

Pastor Peter Hiett

March 18th, 2012

*All scriptures are ESV unless otherwise noted.

Opening

*Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord:
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored.
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword:
His truth is marching on.
In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea.
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me:
As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free
While God is marching on.*

"He's trampling out the vintage and let's join Him," – that's the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*. The tune was first written in 1856 and titled "*Canaan's Happy Shore*." It was a Gospel song but they changed some lyrics and conscripted the song into the military during the Civil War. And you can see why

"Righteous Indignation is Useful in War"

Prayer

Lord God, will you help us understand your Indignation; your Vengeance; and our own Vengeance. In Jesus' name we ask it, Amen.

Sermon

Clip from movie *Mystery Men*

Mr. Furious: *Don't mess with the volcano, my man, because I will go Pompey on your butt.*
Policemen hold up hands and make a noise. Mr. Furious, Blue Raja and Shoveler jump back.
Policeman: *You keep dreamin, Wanna Be.*
Mr. Furious, Blue Raja, and Shoveler sitting in a booth in a diner.
Blue Raja: *Trifle strident with that bit of crumpet, weren't we Furious.*
Mr. Furious: *Well I am a ticking time bomb of fury.*
Mr Furious: (clinching hands together making a noise) *That little sucker just saved your life.*
Man laughing at Mr. Furious. Mr. Furious is standing in the street yelling and and standing on a Corvette and begins to bang on the car. Shoveler is banging on the Corvette with his shovel.
Mr. Furious talking to Girlfriend: *You know that actually could work. I mean, I'm Mr. Furious right? I'm unpredictable. I'm a lose cannon. I go storming off. Why can't I come storming back? Huh? I mean its all in how you play it, right?*
Girlfriend: *Or don't play it. Just go back, say you're sorry and help him save Captain Amazing.*
Mr. Furious: *You think there's a really angry way I could say I'm sorry. Just cuz, that's kind of, my, I gotta stick with the anger thing cuz people kind of like that.*

I love that line, “*Do you think there’s an angry way to say ‘I’m sorry’?*”... an angry way to have sorrow. That’s Mr. Furious in one of my all-time favorite movies, *Mystery Men*. If you want to understand the male psyche, just watch *Mystery Men*. It’s all about a group of regular guys that want to be super heroes and so each needs a super power. *The Shoveler* shovels well, *The Spleen* has really potent gas, *Invisible Boy* is invisible, but only when no one is looking and Mr. Furious gets angry (that’s his super power). It covers his insecurities and protects him from pain and sorrow, but it doesn’t seem to be helping anyone, including his would-be girlfriend.

I heard Father Richard Rohr say that in his work mentoring men, he’s discovered that so much male anger is really sadness. And I get that: Sorrow feels so powerless and at least wrath makes you feel like you’re getting something done; something accomplished.

Later in the movie, Mr. Furious is counseled by his girlfriend and gets in touch with his “feelings” and loses his super power. But then he gets it back when he becomes angry on behalf of his girlfriend.

- He’s angry over another person’s wounds.
- Some call that Righteous Indignation and it feels more “right” but it’s still his anger and his vengeance.

Last week a 38 year old staff sergeant, in the Kandahar province of Afghanistan, saw the leg blown off of a fellow soldier. I bet it was someone he loved. Early last Sunday morning that soldier murdered 16 Afghans (9 of them children) – one a 3 year old girl and 11 heaped in a pile and set on fire. Of course Afghan Mullahs are swearing vengeance for the Vengeance. Leon Panetta is talking vengeance (the death penalty) and it’s ironic for war is all about vengeance:

- 12,973 is the documented number of civilian casualties in Afghanistan so far.
- Somewhere between 60,000 and 700,000 civilian casualties in Iraq.

Far more than the civilians killed in 9-11. And we say “*Well something had to be done!*” “*Justice had to be served!*”

- And that’s just what Osama ben Laden used to say.
- And that’s just what Israel would say.
- And just what Palestinians would say.
- And you can trace the Vengeance back through Germany and WWI and Empirical Britain and Crusaders and Turks and Romans and Jews...

All fighting over Jerusalem (literally or figuratively) – Jerusalem (City of Peace).

You can trace it all the way back to a Garden and a Tree.

And even now, as I speak, you may feel it
Vengeance.

Perhaps you think “*I know where you’re going with this preacher boy. It’s easy for you to stand up and tell us we need to be nice, while others fight your battles – to make you free. Well Sin and Evil are not nice, not okay and something must be DONE! JUSTICE matters. RECOMPENCE matters. VENGEANCE matters!*”

And you know what – That’s Right!

Vengeance really does matter and God wants us to know it matters. You know the *Battle Hymn of the Republic* is mostly Scripture. It’s Isaiah 63.

Isaiah has made it clear: (34 & 61) The Lord has an appointed day at Vengeance – “*The Lord’s day of Vengeance.*” So don’t let anyone tell you that “*Vengeance doesn’t matter*” or that “*Vengeance is evil.*”

The LORD has vengeance.

You know in recent years some have been angry at me because I've said

“God’s Mercy is over all He has made” as the Psalmist says.

“That He may have Mercy on all” as Paul says.

“And make all things new” as Jesus says, from the Throne.

Well people get angry at me 'cause they think I'm saying "Vengeance doesn't matter."

Few things piss me off more so I want to be absolutely clear:

Vengeance Does Matter;

Vengeance is Holy;

Vengeance is GOOD;

Vengeance belongs to God.

And so, of course, we all want to take Vengeance. The problem is that once we take Vengeance, we see that we all deserve to receive Vengeance. Scripture is clear "*The soul that sins shall surely die.*" In the Garden "*We tried to steal Life – God's Life – from the Tree.*" We stole our Life and now must surrender our Life – Vengeance requires it.

So Vengeance is Holy. It's just not ours to take. Kinda like that tree in the Garden was Holy - it just wasn't Adam and Eve's to take. Even in all those freaky, scary, Old Testament passages where Israel is commanded to wipe out cities. God makes it clear: the people are devoted to Him for the "*Vengeance is His*" and Israel must not make it her own for "*Vengeance belongs to the Lord.*"

Deuteronomy 32:34

³⁴ ‘Is not this laid up in store with me, sealed up in my treasures? ³⁵Vengeance is mine, and recompense [I will repay]...’

Vengeance is His, and check it out: His Vengeance is a Hidden Treasure.

Leviticus 19:88

⁸⁸You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.

Remember why Jesus got crucified? He taught: Samaritans are your neighbor and even Romans and so they took Vengeance – they took His Life on the Tree in the Garden.

James 1:19-20

¹⁹Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger;
²⁰for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

The anger of man cannot produce the Good. It only exposes the Evil.

Romans 2:1

¹Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things.

That's the way anger seems to work. I start out being angry at others. But on reflection I become angry at myself and then angry at God, my maker. I'm angry at God because I'm not God. When I'm angry, with my own anger, it exposes a Lie buried deep in my flesh and this is the Lie: I believe somebody owes me something, because from me, they've taken something. And that means I think I deserve something which means I don't believe everything is Grace and I have been created by Grace.

My anger exposes the fact that I don't have Faith in Grace.

My anger, my vengeance, exposes the fact that I stole from the Tree and now believe I am the Creator; I am the Judge; I am God.

So Vengeance belongs to me.

See? If I really believed I didn't create myself and thus own my Self; my Self would be impossible to offend. My Self would feel sadness and sorrow (most definitely) but not Vengeance – at least not my own Vengeance.

It's just logic. No one can owe you anything if you never had anything or if you have "surrendered everything" like a steward. That is you can't seek Vengeance if there's nothing to avenge, so seeking Vengeance is the Revelation of Original Sin

AND

If you seek Vengeance – you reject the Kingdom of Grace.

If you refuse to forgive – you reject the Kingdom of Heaven and cast yourself into Hell.

- It's why Jonah went to hell in the belly of the whale. He was offended at Grace and so swallowed by Vengeance.
- It's why "Sons of the Kingdom weep and gnash their teeth in outer darkness." I think they're offended by those that "came from East and West and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."
- It's why the early workers cast themselves out of the vineyard – they're offended at the Master's Grace.

Maybe Vengeance is Hell or I should say unsatisfied Vengeance is Hell for Vengeance itself is Holy. Vengeance belongs to God. But to be perpetually angry, bitter and resentful – "*weeping and gnashing teeth in the darkness.*" Wrath (that doesn't end); Vengeance (that is never satisfied) must be Hell. Do you think God is stuck in Hell? If His Vengeance is never satisfied, it sounds like He is.

You know sometimes we're stuck in Vengeance because we feel it toward those we love. Actually, it's the ones we love that can really hurt us, for they cannot only take our things, they can take our hearts and nail them to a tree.

That's why the Civil War was so painful – they were all brothers.

Like Ishmael and Isaac – that's the Arabs and the Jews.
Like Jacob and Essau – that's the Jews and the Edomites.
Like Judah and Samaria – that's the Jews and the Samaritans.

Have you ever felt Vengeance toward your own children? You want to destroy them because you love them and so you're trapped.

Have you ever felt Vengeance toward your bride? You want to kill her because you love her and so you're trapped. Read Isaiah – the whole book is like that.

Isaiah 43:1

¹ But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine...

²⁸Therefore I will profane the princes of the sanctuary, and deliver Jacob to utter destruction and Israel to reviling.

Isaiah 49:16

¹⁶*Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are continually before me.*

Ya see? Jacob is God's Son and Jerusalem, His Bride. So it's not just them that need saving – it's God that needs saving. Who will save God?

Well let's look a little closer at Isaiah 63. In chapter 63 of Isaiah, it's like a watchman on the City Wall of Jerusalem calls out to a great and mysterious Warrior approaching from the East.

¹Who is this who comes from Edom. [Edom is Essau (Genesis 36:8). Remember? Essau, the first born, from whom Jacob/Israel stole the Blessing.] Who is this who comes from [Essau], in crimsoned garments from Bozrah, he who is splendid in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength? "It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save." [6 times already Isaiah has told us "The Lord is your Savior, the only Savior." This is the Lord.] The watchman asks ²Why is your apparel red, and your garments like his who treads in the winepress? [This Dread Warrior answers:] ³I have trodden the winepress alone.

"The winepress," as if there is only one. So the Lord comes from Essau to Jacob, talking about the Winepress and Vengeance.

Isaiah has already told us that Israel is a vineyard (Isaiah 5:1ff) that hadn't produced the desired fruit and so God would burn it down to the root. The Holy Seed – the root of Jesse (Isaiah 6:13; 11:1). And one day the Vineyard would quote "*Fill the whole world with fruit*" (Isaiah 27:1-6) the fruit of the vine – trampled and turned into wine. To tread a winepress is to crush the grapes and make wine. The Dread Warrior (covered in blood) answers the question:

³I have trodden the winepress alone [no army – alone] and from the peoples no one was with me; I trod them in my anger. Isaiah 63:3

I trod them: “the peoples.” Isaiah has made it clear that all “the peoples” (including Israel) need to be trodden – crushed. Yet “all the peoples” are the Lord’s creation, even His Bride; even His Children. So, if He crushes them, doesn’t He crush Himself?

In Isaiah 53, Isaiah prophesied about “*a servant*” (53:11); the “*Arm of the Lord*” upon whom the Lord “*has laid the iniquity of us all*” (53:6); a “*Lamb*” (53:7) and “*it was the will of the Lord to*

“crush him” (53:10); “He was crushed for our iniquities, upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace” (Isaiah 53:5).

³ I trod them in my anger and trampled them in my wrath; their lifeblood spattered on my garments, and stained all my apparel. ⁴ For the day of vengeance was in my heart, [It's a "day of vengeance" not an eternity of Vengeance, without end. In fact, the "Day of Vengeance" is the End. Listen to the next line.] and my year of redemption had come.

“A day of Vengeance” and a *“year of Redemption”* and not just any year – the Jubilee Year: the 49th Year, 7X7, the Sabbath of Sabbaths, God’s rest and Day of Vengeance and Year of Redemption – Isaiah 63.

In Isaiah 61 “Year of the Lord’s Favor and Day of Vengeance.” Jesus quoted Isaiah 61 in the synagogue in Capernaum, saying it was fulfilled somehow in their hearing.

In Isaiah 63 the Dread Warrior answers the Watchman

⁴ “For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and my year of redemption had come. ⁵ I looked, but there was no one to help; I was appalled, but there was no one to uphold; so my own arm [The Arm Isaiah has been prophesying about – the Suffering Servant; the Dread Warrior.] brought me salvation, and my wrath upheld me. ⁶ I trampled down the peoples in my anger; I made them drunk in my wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth.” Isaiah 63:4-6

- *"My Own Arm brought me salvation – brought me salvation."*
 - Somehow, in some way, at the Winepress God saves God, even as God saves us.

Next verse.

⁷ I will recount the steadfast love of the Lord. ⁹ In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; Isaiah 63:7, 9

Not “*an Angel*,” “*the Angel of His presence*” – His presence.

It was David that wrote "*If I make my bed in Hell you are there* (present)."

You know whatever you do to my bride, you do to me and whatever you do to my children, you do to me. And whatever my bride does to my bride, she does to me. Even if she makes her bed in Hell, she does it to me. And whatever my children do to my children, they do it to me. If one persecutes the other, they persecute me and trap me in Vengeance.

Well "*In all our affliction, He was afflicted.*" For about 15 years my wife and I prayed with a friend who had been horrifically and ritually abused. The Lord would free her from bondage by giving her visions (perhaps 100s); visions in which she'd go back to the most hellish of memories and always He was there afflicted as she was afflicted. Whenever she saw Him there, she would see Grace there and they both would be free. In one of the last visions, she heard weeping and muffled noises. She found Jesus bound and gagged in a closet alone – just as she had been bound and gagged in a closet alone (or she thought alone). The message was clear: whenever she was ashamed of herself, refusing to forgive herself, rejecting herself, and taking vengeance on herself; she took vengeance on Him and left Him alone in Hell – her Hell.

"Whatever is done to the least of these (including yourself) is done to Him." You see? Jesus really is everywhere – Afghans, Iraqis, US Staff Sargent's who lost Hope. He suffers in demon

possessed children in African villages and in untouchables beaten in India. He weeps in prostitutes on Colfax who despise themselves and feels the cold hearts of Executives in towers who no longer feel compassion. He descends into Sheol (into Hell) with murderers, adulterers, and liars just like King David.

So in the words of Isaiah *“How beautiful are the feet of them that bring good news, announcing peace, proclaiming salvation who say to Jerusalem ‘Your God Reigns.’”* When you speak the Gospel of the Winepress; Jesus, the Word of God, announces Grace to the children of God, in whom He suffers. And so *“His own Arm brings Him salvation through You!”* and the Power of the Winepress.

So what's the Winepress? Where's the Winepress? What gets trampled and who tramples it? In Revelation 14, John sees the Winepress after he watches *“the Harvest of the Earth.”* He sees a Reaper seated on a cloud like a *“son of man.”* He *“reaps the Earth.”* It's a Harvest of Grain (that's bread) and then John watches as the *“Vineyard of the Earth”* is reaped. It's a Harvest of Grapes (that's wine). The Harvest of the Earth is Bread and Wine – ding! ding! ding!

Revelation 14:19

¹⁹ So the angel swung his sickle across the earth and gathered the grape harvest of the earth and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. ²⁰ And the winepress was trodden outside the city. [That's the city of Jerusalem and who treads it. In Revelation 19, John sees the Dread Warrior.]

Revelation 19:11-16

¹¹ Then I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war.

¹³ He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God.

¹⁵ From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread [The Greek is not “will tread” but “does tread.” For some reason, the translators changed the verb to “He does tread.” John saw him tread in Chapter 14. He has trodden in Isaiah 63. And yet He does it on “One day of Vengeance.” One day that intersects all of time as if it were trodden from the foundation of the earth; just as the lamb was slain from the foundation of the earth.]

¹⁵ He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. ¹⁶ On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords. Revelation 19:11, 13, 15-16

It's Jesus Christ - strong Arm of God – Suffering Servant - Slaughtered Lamb – Word of God – 1st Born of all Creation – Dread Warrior - Prince of Peace. He treads the Winepress of the Fury of the Wrath of God.

See?

- Only He can be “Mr. Furious.”
- Only He, the Word of God – Creator of all and owner of all – has the right to Vengeance [only He has the Birthright].
- Only He is Good – He is the Good and so He tramples the Winepress alone.

And where does He trample it? *“Outside the walls of Jerusalem,”* His Bride, *“outside the walls, where He is crucified.”*

And when does He trample it? Speaking of His crucifixion, He cries out “*Now is the Judgment of this world.*”

- It was then, “*The Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all.*”
- It was then, “*He, who knows my sin, became sin.*”
- It was then, “*He died for the sins of the World.*”
- It was then, that He cried “*Father, forgive them.*” and “*It is finished.*”

Then and there. “*Once and for All.*”

And what does He trample? Well, this is the weird thing. It’s called “*the Harvest of the Earth.*” It’s Fruit and not just any Fruit – Grapes – and Israel is His Vineyard. At last He has Fruit and Fruit that isn’t bad, it’s Good.

Well maybe it’s “*Fruit that befits Repentance*” as John the Baptist put it. “*A humble and contrite spirit*” as Isaiah puts it. “*The confession of sins.*”

You know sins are bad, but confessed sins are good.

Like dirt and manure are bad, but the fruit, that the vine turns them into is good.

I think the Grapes of Wrath are sins confessed to God from all over this Earth and throughout all of time; Sins, which Christ bore in His Body of Flesh, on one particular day; as He was crushed by the Vengeance of God. It happens at the Winepress, which is the Tree on which Christ is crucified alone, outside the city walls, where all Jerusalem (His Bride) can see.

The Winepress transforms grapes into wine and it transforms our sins into the Mercy of God – the Blood of Christ – flowing from the Cross of Christ - the Judgment of God, Vengeance of God, and Mercy of God – the Blood.

Revelation 14:20

²⁰ *And the winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the winepress, as high as a horse's bridle, for 1,600 stadia.* [That's the size of the Promised Land and in that land, all the war horses are stopped in their tracks and literally begin to swim in an ocean of blood that is wine and wine that is blood – an ocean of Mercy.]

John then sees 7 Angels with and 7 bowls of Wrath; 7 bowls of blood which they will pour on the Earth and John says “*with these the wrath of God is finished*” and Jesus cried from the Cross, “*It is finished.*”

But you know we all act like Vengeance is not finished. That’s what we do every time we refuse to forgive. And maybe that’s why we like to describe the Second Coming of Christ as the Second Coming of Mr. Furious. And maybe that’s why we love the unbiblical idea that wrath doesn’t end.

- Because maybe we’re addicted to Wrath – addicted to Vengeance.
- Because we think it belongs to us.
- Because we actually believe we’re God.
- Because we’ve already got one foot in Hell.

Hell is unsatisfied Vengeance – it’s our Vengeance.

Hell is the place we hide from the Cross
the place we hide from the Mercy of God
the place we hide the illusion that we are God
the place we hide our sin – our original sin – our vengeance.
Hell is the place where we refuse to forgive and be forgiven.

So, do you see why Mercy burns Hell? Mercy is God's Vengeance and it destroys my vengeance and my vengeance is my Hell.

To refuse to forgive and be forgiven is to cast yourself into Hell
where you hide from the Mercy of God
which is the vengeance of God
the consuming Fire that is God.

Paul writes in Romans

¹⁹ Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." ²⁰ To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. Romans 12:19-21

Our vengeance is evil, God's Vengeance is Good. And I do think we're supposed to be angry with Evil. But Evil is not a person. Evil is a lie and it's destroyed by Truth. God's Vengeance is Truth which is Mercy, so when you forgive, God takes Vengeance on Evil.

When you lay down your Vengeance, you bleed God's Vengeance and join Jesus in the Winepress.

The Blood of Christ – The Grace of God – the Consuming Fire that is God.

Through some crazy experiences and “visions of folks I’ve prayed for,” I’ve seen that this is actually true.

When your Body is Broken, but you Bleed Grace – you Bleed Fire – and literally burn Satan. You are Body Broken and Blood Shed – the Harvest of the Earth – the Body of Christ when you Forgive – but it's hard to forgive.

For several years now, I've had a real battle with anger. Four years ago I lost what I spent most of my life working to build. Some people took what my heart thought was mine. I've been angry for myself and angry on behalf of others. Angry at others, angry at myself, and ultimately angry at God. (God once showed me that I went into the ministry 'cause I was angry.) I couldn't and still can't sort out all the sorrow and anger, but when it was worst and it really felt like Hell, there was only one place I found relief; and that was at the Winepress. I wanted blood and I got blood – Christ's Blood. I wanted vengeance and I got vengeance – God's Vengeance.

I gave people to Jesus and I gave myself to Jesus. Sometimes I pictured myself even nailed there with Jesus and there I'd die with Jesus and rise with Jesus.

In other words, at the Winepress I could forgive; for at the Winepress, I could see the Vengeance of God. So, at the Winepress I could surrender my vengeance, my sin.

- I can't make it right – but God is making it right.

- I can't do anything – but God is doing everything.

So I could surrender my vengeance and trust God's Vengeance and Rest – Jubilee – God's Rest.

See? God takes my Grapes of Wrath and turns them into His wine – Mercy. You can get drunk on Mercy. I expect to spend Eternity just hammered with the stuff. That wine will be my blood; talk about a high blood alcohol content. But it won't be alcohol, it'll be Mercy.

And one last thing about the Winepress (something which that culture knew and we don't know). The Winepress was a place of incredible Freedom and Joy. It was a party, a furious party. And No One trampled the Winepress alone. But Jesus trampled the Winepress alone (crucified alone) – alone with your sin in your Hell. But when you confess your sin – when you forgive and are forgiven – you meet Him at the Winepress and He is no longer alone. Jesus meets His Bride at the Winepress.

Clip from a scene at a winepress. People are dancing around a couple and trampling the grapes in the winepress. They are singing "*Crush the grapes. Crush the grapes. Crush the grapes.*"

Scene from *Passion of the Christ*

Christ hanging on the cross.

Mary at the base of the cross looking up at Christ and crying. She reaches out to kiss his bloodied body.

Communion

And so He took the bread and He broke it saying "*This is my body given to you. Take and eat and do this in remembrance of me.*" And in the same way, after supper and having given thanks, He took the cup and He said "*This cup is the Covenant, in my blood; shed for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it, all of you, and do it in remembrance of me.*" Body broken. Blood shed. The Tree. This is the Winepress and you're His Bride.

So let's pray. Pray with me. "*My guess is that if you're a person living in this world, you're hangin on to the Grapes of Wrath. Are you angry? Are you angry at somebody else? Would you bring them to the Winepress? Now some of you have been really hurt by some of these people – maybe raped, betrayed, and this is the problem, if you think to yourself 'Oh, gosh but, something needs to happen.' Well, look something does happen. Surrender them to the Winepress. Entrust your vengeance to God's Vengeance. He knows how to judge. He knows what to do and His Vengeance is Good. Maybe you're not angry with somebody else. Maybe you're angry with yourself. I mean there's all kinds of ways we take vengeance on ourselves, isn't there? Sometimes it's slowly drinking ourselves to death. Condemning ourselves, hating ourselves – sometimes we even try to do it quickly. People try to kill themselves but you see, here's the problem, you can't kill yourself with yourself. It's just more self. But Jesus can kill you. I mean He can help you die to yourself and be free of yourself - your prison of anger and vengeance and resentment. Or just surrender yourself to the Winepress. Maybe you're angry at God. Angry at God but stop, just stop for a minute, stop and look. Do you see it? Whatever He does to the least of these, He does to Himself. He's good. So drop that vengeance into the Winepress. Take all your anger, all those Grapes of Wrath; just say 'Lord God, I forgive. I forgive others, I forgive myself, I even forgive you.' Whatever that means – I surrender all my vengeance*

to your vengeance. And now listen, He has something to say to you and this is it ‘It is finished. Let’s dance. Have some wine.’ So in Jesus’ name, may you believe the Gospel and live.”

Benediction and Prayer

Audio:

So Lord Jesus, we thank you Dread Warrior that you have taken in your terrible swift sword and you've cut us. You've cut the Grapes of Wrath from this vine and placed them in your Winepress – the fury of the wrath of God and there You trample them; there you take our anger and our bitterness and our sin and you transform it into your Mercy and you hand it back to us saying “*Drink deeply oh sweet one; drink deeply oh lover; and dance.*”

Lord God, may we drink deeply of your river for your river does not stop. Your river flows from the Throne, which is your Cross and it fills the land, it fills the face of the Earth, the depths of a horse's bridle, and so those war horses and tanks and militaries begin to swim in a river; in an ocean of blood that is turned to wine – that is your Mercy. And the river doesn't stop until this whole Earth is filled with your Glory and in fact Isaiah saw it. At the start of Isaiah the whole Earth filled with your Glory and your Glory is your love. It's a river of love and so it never stops for You are eternal and it is our hull. So thank you Lord Jesus for going to battle for us.

It's in your name we pray. Amen

Disclaimer: The author has not edited this document. Therefore, there may be discrepancies. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. When in doubt, please refer to the audio or video version of the sermon on this website and don't be shy about informing us of errors.