

How Does God Punish Sin?

Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones.

—Romans 1:26

You thought that you were outwitting God. You thought that here He is trying to reach you, while you just say, “I’ll show Him. I’ll just enjoy living in sin.”

What Paul is saying here is that God has already begun to punish you. It is a judgment of God that you remain in sin. When you think that you’re getting away with it, that’s the worst thing of all that can happen. The worst sign of God’s judgment is that you’re able to sin and get away with it.

Nor does God give us a bold sign, telling us, “Here’s what I am going to do.” He just gives up. He doesn’t push us; He doesn’t hammer us. In effect, Paul is saying this: Is it sin that you want? Sin you will get. That’s the first way God punishes sin.

The second way is by exposure at the final judgment. Say you decide to live in sin; you’re thinking, at first, that something’s going to happen as a kind of warning from God, like thunder and lightening, but when it doesn’t come you think, I don’t feel a thing; I’m able to go on and do this. When a person does what is not right, he may say, “I don’t feel any different; I feel fine.” But how does God punish—by exposure at the final judgment. God “will give to each person according to what he has done” (Rom. 2:6).

A third way is that God’s Son, Jesus, took our punishment on the cross. Eternally speaking, there are two ways whereby God punishes sin: the fires of hell and the blood of Jesus. He who knew no sin was made sin.

Let this be what lingers in your mind. It’s not a question of

whether your sin will be punished; it is the question of how. May God grant you to see why the Bible talks about “fleeing from the wrath to come.” (See Matthew 3:7; Luke 3:7.)

Excerpted from *The God of the Bible* (Authentic Media, 2002).