

TEXT SERMON

SERIES: *THE GOD WHO IS*

Message #4: **“FINDING COMFORT IN THE GOODNESS OF GOD”**

Texts: **Rom. 11:22**

“... consider the goodness of God”

Psalm 31:19

“Oh, how great is Your goodness, which You have laid up for those who fear You, which You have prepared for those who trust in You”

The Apostle Paul wrote, “consider the goodness of God” and David, the writer of Psalm 31 had already done that and said, “Oh, how great is Your goodness.” Is that your testimony, or do you doubt that God is always good?

The great Missionary Statesman, Oswald Chambers, said, “The root of all sin is the suspicion that God is not good.” This was the erroneous thought that entered the minds of Adam and Eve in Eden. They believed that God was withholding from them that which was good for them when He prohibited them from eating of the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. So they violated God’s prohibition and did that which they thought was for their own good.

Life comes with no guarantees that all that happens will be good. Bad things do happen. But do you believe that standing behind all the events of life, be they good or bad to our perception, is a good God who “works in mysterious ways His wonders to perform?” Have you studiously considered the goodness of God? Do you remember how the 23rd Psalm ends? It ends with these words: “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”

Don’t look now, but you are being followed! The goodness of God is on your trail. As we look back through the years of our lives we can see the goodness of God, can’t we? Every meal, every possession, every night’s sleep, every moment of health and safety, every ray of sunshine, everything that sustains and enriches life is the gift of the goodness of God!

What do we mean when we talk about God’s goodness? We mean that, “God’s goodness is the sum total of all of His excellencies: His truthfulness, trustworthiness, tenderness, long-suffering, kindness, mercy, love and grace are all summed up in the attribute of goodness.”

And we who follow the Good Shepherd can attest to that goodness! But let me be quick to state that unless we are extremely careful we will take the goodness of God for granted and gradually our focus will be switched from the Benefactor to the benefits; from the Giver to the gifts; from the Provider to the provision and in so doing forget the God who is good.

Therefore, we need to do what Paul said and “consider the goodness of God.” And when we do we will say with David, “Oh, how great is Your goodness.” Therefore, let us “consider the goodness of God” by looking at (1) the Revelation of God’s Goodness; (2) the Reasons for God’s Goodness; (3) and our Response to the Goodness of God.

I. THE REVELATION OF GOD’S GOODNESS.

Let us begin this investigation by thinking about three of the most significant and obvious revelations of God's goodness.

A. God's Goodness Is Revealed In Nature.

The Creator is revealed in His creation; The Artist is revealed in His art; The Designer is seen in His designs and in nature we can actually view the goodness of God.

God created a good world. When He finished creating the world, the Bible says, "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good." (Genesis 1:31). Acts 14:17 reminds us that "He did good, and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness."

B. God's Goodness Is Revealed In His Son.

Jesus said, "He who has seen me has seen the Father." (Jn. 14:9) Jesus is the goodness of God personified !

Consider His Comforting Words:

- "Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."
- "Let not your heart be troubled, you believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions...";
- "I will never leave you nor forsake you.."
- "Blessed are the meek, blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are the merciful, blessed are those who mourn, blessed are the peacemakers."

Consider His Compassionate Works:

Acts 10:38 tells us that Jesus "went about doing good." Consider some of the good works that He did:

- Matt 14:14 "When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick."
- Matt 15:32 "Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, or they may collapse on the way."
- Matt 20:34 "Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him."
- Mark 1:41-42 "Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cured." On and on the record goes! What a good God! Furthermore,

C. God's Goodness Is Revealed In His Word.

- Psalm 33:5 "earth is full of your goodness."
- Psalm 119:68 "You are good and do good."
- Psalm 145:9 "The Lord is good to all."
- Nahum 1:7 "The Lord is good."

- Zech. 9:17 “Great is his goodness.”
- Rom. 2:4 speaks of “the riches of his goodness.”

The witness of the Word underscores the undeniable truth of God’s goodness! Reviewing the revelation of His goodness convinces us that God is Ultimate Good and that He wants to do only good in relation to us. The knowledge of that truth causes those who know Him to say, “Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name!”

II. THE REASONS FOR GOD’S GOODNESS.

Why is God good? That is a legitimate question at this point, it seems to me. And there are at least two answers as to why God is good:

A. **God Is In Essence Good.**

Goodness is God’s very essence. He is good because that is His nature. He cannot be other than good. There is nothing in His nature that is deficient or defective, nothing can be added to His nature to make it better.

God’s goodness is underived goodness. He is good entirely in and of Himself. He is the source of all goodness. If you and I have any goodness it is not because it is our nature to be good. Any goodness that we have is derived goodness – goodness that has been imparted to us.

But not so with God. He is good in and of Himself. To God no goodness can be added. It would be something like trying to add light to the sun with a candle! God is the perfection of goodness, therefore, everything, I repeat everything, that God does He does because He is good. Why is God good? He is good because that is His nature – that is who He is. God is the essence of goodness. That leads to another question, how long is God good?

B. **God Is Eternally Good.**

God has declared, “I am the LORD, I change not.” (Malachi 3:6) God’s goodness cannot increase and it cannot decrease. His goodness is forever. He is no less good while we are on the earth than He will be when we get to heaven. God will not be more good to us in heaven than He is right now! Think about that because you should never get the notion that God goes through mood swings or that God is sentimental or anything like that.

I have met people who expressed themselves in such a way as to give the impression that God was good to them last week or last year but right now He is not being good to them. But God is unchangeably good! He is good regardless of the circumstances in our personal lives, our family or our church!

Why is God good? He is good because He cannot be anything else. God is essentially and eternally good! That’s just who He is. And if you and I could live to be 1,000 yrs. old we would find that God’s goodness and mercy had followed us all the days of our lives!

Since God’s goodness is obvious to all who are unbiased and since He is intrinsically

and eternally good, in what ways does He desire me to respond to Him?

III. THE RESPONSE TO GOD'S GOODNESS.

There are various responses to God and His His goodness. Paul asks "do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?" (Rom.2:4) The grateful respondent will:

A. Receive God's Goodness.

He offers His goodnesses to us gratis. His gifts come to us in many forms. The greatest gift is the gift of His Son Jesus Christ. He is God's goodness in human form. Paul wrote that the goodness of God is meant to lead us to repentance. That is why God is good to all. He wants all to repent of their badness and receive God's goodness in Jesus Christ - receive the personification of the goodness of God in the person of Jesus Christ our Savior from sin. Psalm 34:8 is an invitation: "O, taste and see that the Lord is good." And then,

B. Reflect God's Goodness.

Children reflect the traits of their parents. God is good therefore, His children should be characterized by goodness – good works, good words. Jesus said to some in His day, "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do." (John 8:44) If we are children of the God who is good, it will be our desire to do what He desires and reflect His goodness in our daily lifestyles. Furthermore we should:

C. Rely Upon God's Goodness.

Look at Psalm 31:19 once again: "Oh, how great is Your goodness, which You have laid up for those who fear You, which You have prepared for those who trust in You." That last phrase, "which you have prepared for those who trust in you" is the key that unlocks the treasures of God's goodness!

God wants us to trust Him, that is, rely upon Him. He is the good God of heaven and if we do not respond to His goodness by trusting Him we will never understand or enjoy life as He intended that we should.

To rely upon God's goodness is to trust Him in every life situation; He has been good to us regardless of what has happened in our lives. He was good to forgive our sins and adopt us into His family and declare us to be saints when we do not always act saintly.

He was good on your wedding day when He gave you your spouse to be your companion and He was good on the day when your spouse died; He was good when He gave you that little child that sat on your lap and brought laughter into your home and He was good when that little one was stricken down with illness.

He is good when you have a job and a regular income and He is good when you are in the unemployment line; He is good when you walk about in the sunshine and enjoy health and He is good when you lie in the hospital bed; He is good when the plans,

hopes and dreams that you have had are all destroyed; what He was and is He shall always be and that is good - unalterably good!

CONCLUSION

J.I. Packer, one of our contemporary theologians wrote, "God is good to all in some ways and good to some in all ways." His goodness never grows old for "His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness." (Lam.3:22,23) God's goodness is an ocean with no shore, a mountain that has no summit, a road that has no end. The more of His goodness you receive, the more like Him you will be.

The greatest proof in all the Bible and at the same time the greatest illustration that God is good, loves us and wants to make us good and fit to live with Him can be seen in one word: CALVARY! If you ever doubt that God is good, just think of Calvary. Only a good God would so love the world that He would give His sinless Son to make sinners like us good. Have you received God's goodness in the Person of Jesus Christ?

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