

We've been engaged in a topical study on the Glory of God in His Nature and Attributes. Thus far, we've considered His glory in His Knowability, Spirituality, Triunity, His Perfect Knowledge, and Infinite Power—this brings us this morning to the Glory of God in His Goodness.

- I. God is Good
- II. God Does Good
- III. Applications

I. God is Good

1. The first thing that needs mentioning with regards to God's goodness, many of the older theologians do not describe God's goodness as a single attribute but a collection of attributes.
2. And there are Biblical reasons for this, as at times, Scripture speaks of God's collective glory as His goodness.
3. For example, if you remember in Exodus 33, Moses asked God to show him His glory, to which God responded in v19—"I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you."
4. And then in Ex.34:6-7, God made His goodness known to Moses, as existing in a long list of His divine perfections.
5. Ex.34:6-7—"The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in lovingkindness and truthfulness."
6. And thus, the Scripture often summarizes God's attributes of all good's gracious dealings with His people as His goodness.
7. Rom.11:22—"Behold, the goodness and severity of God"—the goodness of God in engrafting believing Gentiles, and the severity of God in cutting off unbelieving Jews.
8. In fact, many of my favorite Systematic Theologies, actually place God's mercy, grace, and love, under His goodness.
9. Baptist Catechism (Q.7)—"What is God? A. God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth."
10. Notice our catechism says nothing about God's mercy, grace, or love. Why? Because it's assumed under His goodness.
11. And thus, as we read our Bibles, it becomes very evident that God's mercy, grace, love, and patience, are closely related to His goodness (perhaps we could say they are all expressions of His goodness).
12. And it's for this reason, that many theologians speak of God's goodness in the more narrowed sense as His kindness.
13. God's mercy is His kindness toward those the miserable, and God's grace is His kindness toward the guilty and undeserved.
14. Thus, terms such as goodwill, compassion, generosity, and benevolence are all closely related to God's goodness.
15. Personally, I think this is the best way to explain God's goodness—it refers to His benevolent kindness to His creation.
16. By benevolent is meant generous and bountiful—God's goodness is His generous and bountiful kindness to creation.
17. And thus, at this point I want to suggest three things about God's goodness—God is good in Himself, His law, and His works.
18. (1) God is good in Himself, Ps.119:68—"You are good"—that is, God is good in His very nature and essence.
19. In fact, some theologians consider God's goodness with His holiness—God is morally good and free from evil.
20. He is pure light in whom there is no darkness—God is essentially, eternally, and perfectly good—He defines good.

21. In fact, the English word God actually comes from the word good—God and goodness are one and the same thing.
22. Matt.19:17—"No one is good but One, that is, God"—this is to say, only God is essentially and perfectly good.
23. And yet, keep in mind when we speak of God as being good, we are not primarily speaking about God's holiness.
24. It is true, when we say God is good we do mean He's morally good or pure, but we are mainly speaking about His kindness or benevolence.
25. God is infinitely good—He's infinitely kind, compassionate, merciful, and gracious—He's abundantly generous.
26. And so, while God's goodness includes His holiness and moral purity, it more directly refers to His bountiful benevolence.
27. (2) God is good in His Law—that is, in His commandments—the 10 commandments are a reflection of His goodness.
28. Rom.7:12—"Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good"—the law is good because it's the reflection of God's goodness.
29. And thus, we learn that God is not only good in Himself, but He's the only perfect standard or rule of what is good.
30. Morally speaking there is good and there is evil, and who determines what is good and what is evil but God Himself.
31. And so, He's given us a reflection of that goodness in His moral law, as it's summarized in the Ten Commandments.
32. (3) God is good in His works—that is, because God is good in Himself, He bestows goodness upon His creation.
33. James 1:17—"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning."
34. Every good thing comes from a good God—I take this to mean, not only every grace, but every good thing in general.
35. Everything that's good in and of itself, comes down from heaven—it comes down from a God who is infinity good.
36. And thus, all that God gives He gives as a good God—He gives as an expression of His general or common love.
37. Every good gift that comes down from heaven, is bestowed upon God's creation, as the result of His benevolence.
38. All that God does and gives is good—this includes salvation and it includes damnation—God is good in all His works.

II. God Does Good

1. Ps.119:68—"You are good, and do good"—because God is good in and of Himself, He does good to His creation.
2. Perhaps I can put it more theological—because God is essentially good, He is relationally good to His creation.
3. Lk.6:45—"The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good"—and so too, God because He is good He does good.
4. Brethren, just as we would expect a pleasant smell from a field of flowers, so we would expect nothing but good coming from God.
5. (1) He is good to His creation—by this I mean, the goodness of God is evidenced in His care of nonmoral creation.
6. Ps.145:9-16—"The LORD is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works...The eyes of all look expectantly to You, and You give them their good in due season. You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing."

7. O brethren, what a tremendous thought—God cares for every living creature, because He is kind and benevolent.
8. The birds of the air are feed because God is good—the beats of the field are feed because God is good—the fish in the sea are feed because God is good.
9. The summer breeze blows upon creation because God is good—the rains fall upon the fields because God is good.
10. (2) He is good to His enemies—by this is meant, God is good and gracious even to those who are not Christians.
11. In fact, the Scripture teaches that God bestows His goodness, in the form of general blessings, even to His enemies.
12. Job 22:17-18—"They said to God, Depart from us! What can the Almighty do to them? Yet He filled their houses with good things."
13. Here we find two opposing facts—man wants nothing to do with God, and God has everything to do with man.
14. He fills their houses with good things—that is, with wives, children, grandchildren, clothing, food, oil, and wine.
15. Lk.6:35—"But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most Hight. For He is good to the unthankful and evil."
16. God is good to unthankful and evil people because they are nevertheless His creation, and as such He loves them.
17. His goodness to them intends their wellbeing—He is not good to them merely to increase their eternal torment.
18. God is genuinely and sincerely good to them—He is kind and benevolent to them—He provides for their needs.
19. Acts 14:17—"Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with good and gladness."
20. Here the apostles (Barnabas and Paul) are speaking pagan idolaters, about God's common goodness in providing for their needs.
21. And yet, prior to this, in v15, we find an even greater expression of goodness to them, as they preached the truth to them.
22. V15—"Men, who are you doing these things (worshipping them as gods)? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preachy to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them."
23. In other words, while God did them good by sending rain and giving them food to eat, He is now showing them a greater good!
24. Thus, while God is good to all of His enemies, in filling their houses with good things, He's especially good to those who hear the gospel.
25. If we can say the temporal things of this life are good, what possibly can be better than the good news of Christ.
26. (3) He is good to His people—by this is meant, while God is good to all, He is especially good to His elect people.
27. God's mercy is His goodness shown to those in misery, and God's grace is His goodness show to the undeserved and guilty.
28. Now, let me here say something that can be misunderstood—while God is good to all, He is uniquely good to His elect.
29. Remember, God's goodness is Him doing good to His creation—it's God intend to promote the wellbeing of His creation.
30. Thus, it's common for many Christians to distinguish between God's common goodness and His special goodness.
31. And it's His special goodness that results in the eternal wellbeing of certain people, the objects of His covenant goodness.
32. Ps.65:4—"Blessed is the man You choose, and cause to approach You, that he may dwell in Your courts. We shall be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, of Your holy temple."

33. What a grand text! God has an elect people chosen before the foundations of the world! And because He has chosen them from eternity, He causes them to approach Him in time.
34. He brings them to Himself by the powerful work of His Good Spirit—He effectually draws them to Himself in Christ.
35. "That he may dwell in Your courts"—that is, He brings them into His house that they might be satisfied with the goodness of that house.
36. O what a wonderful thought! He brings us into His church where we are satisfied with His saving and electing grace!
37. Ps.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 (Ps.23:6; 73:1)."
38. Here again we learn about a special goodness reserved (or laid up) for a certain people who fear and trust in Him.
39. Is God good to all creation? Yes! Is God good to His enemies? Yes! But He is especially good to His elect people!
40. Perhaps I can put it this way—if God's goodness intends the good of His creation, then there can be greater good than eternal life.

III. Applications

1. Here I want to simply suggest, five major or primary applications in light of the fact that God is infinity good.
2. (1) If God is good, then let us defend Him—now let, say at the outset there's a sense in which God doesn't need defending.
3. But there's another sense in which every Christian is called to give a defense of God, His word, and His ways.
4. Sometimes people object to the goodness of God, because of all the pain and suffering that surrounds all of us.
5. People say—How can God be good if He allows all the injustice and wrongdoing that takes place in the world?
6. Perhaps you have heard this objection put like this—either God is all-powerful or good, but He cannot be both.
7. If He is good He cannot be all-powerful, because He would stop the suffering, and if He's all-powerful, He cannot be good, or else He would end the injustice.
8. Perhaps I can put it this way—How do we respond to those who object to God's goodness because of the suffering and injustice around them?
9. (a) God made all things good, Gen.1:31—"Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good."
10. We must remember, that while this world is presently filled with pain and suffering, it was originally very good.
11. (b) God decreed evil for a good end—that is, God decreed evil so that He would glorify the totality of His perfections.
12. While God is not the author of evil He is sovereign over evil, and thus, He decreed it for sovereign and wise purposes.
13. Perhaps I can put it like this—because God is good, He intended to make known that goodness in mercy and grace.
14. And remember, mercy is God's goodness to the miserable, and grace is God's goodness to the undeserved and guilty.
15. And the only way, God can glorify His mercy and grace is by allowing sin and misery into His perfect creation.
Rom. 11:22—"Behold therefore, the goodness and severity of God"—here Paul summarizes His salvation of sinners (esp Gentile sinners) as the goodness of God.
16. (c) God will remake all things good—God is presently watching all that takes place and will one day right every wrong.

17. Because God is a good and just Judge, He cannot leave sin unpunished, and so one day, He will punish all sinners.
18. Prov.22:1—"A *good* name is to be chosen rather than great riches"—thus, let us defend God's name as being good.
19. (2) If God is good, then let us return to Him—here of course I am thinking of those who are not yet Christians.
20. The fact that God has been good to you, and the fact that God is good in Himself, should cause you to return to Him.
21. Rom.2:4—"Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance."
22. Notice, that God's goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering are all closely related—forbearance and patience are expressions of His goodness.
23. Notice, also, Paul speaks about the "riches of God's goodness"—that is, His goodness is abundantly bestowed.
24. And then, finally, notice God's goodness leads to repentance—that is, the fact of God's goodness should lead sinners to repentance.
25. God is good to sinners—He's provided for you all these years—He's protected you from unknown harm and danger.
26. He's put you in a home that teaches you the truth—He brings you to church weekly to hear about His love in Christ.
27. Let me put it this way—there's fewer people in the entire world, who've experienced more of God's goodness than you.
28. But then let me ask this question. Why? Why has good been so exceedingly good to you from your very birth?
29. Well, Romans 2:4 tells us why—"do you not know that the goodness of God leads you to repentance"—God's goodness is designed to lead you to repentance.
30. This is why God is good to very bad sinners—this is why God causes His sun and rain to fall upon you—this is why He gives you food and clothing—this is why He gives you loving family members—this is why He tells you the gospel.
31. In short—God is good to you so that you would realize how bad you've been to Him, and what we deserve as a result.
32. What does repentance entail? Well, it basically means to agree with God concerning what He says about you, Him, and Christ in the word.
33. It means you believe that you are a sinner, that God is holy and good, and that Christ is your only hope of salvation.
34. It means you turn away from your own works, merit, and righteousness, and you humbly come to Him for grace.
35. Repentance starts in the mind—you change what you believe, which then results in a change of what you feel and do.
36. Dear friends, nothing is more effective to create repentance in your hard heart, then the goodness of God toward you.
37. (3) If God is good, then let us trust Him—by this I especially mean, let us trust Him during times of trial and affliction.
38. O my dear brethren, what an important point—while may not be able to understand all that's happening to us.
39. One thing we can be assured of—because God is good, it's ultimately intended to bring me good and Him glory.
40. Why does God cause all things to work together for our good as God's people, but because God Himself is good.
41. Nahum 1:7—"The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knows those who trust in Him"—what a refuge in the day of trouble!
42. Though I may not be able to make sense out of all that's happening—though my heart is breaking with affliction.

43. I will take refuge in the goodness of God—God is good and He does good—and thus, I can trust Him in trouble.
44. Ps.34:8—"Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him"—this is how, in part, we taste and see He is good—we trust Him.
45. (4) If God is good, then let us imitate Him—that is, if God is good to all men, even His enemies, then let us do good toward others.
46. Gal.6:10—"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith."
47. Why are we to do good to all men but because God is good to all men, and why are we to especially do good Christians, because God is especially good to His people.
48. Ps.119:68—"You are good, and do good; teach me Your statutes"—that is, since You are good and do good, help me to be good and do good!
49. O brethren, there is a real sense in which God intends, through and by the gospel, to make BAD people GOOD.
50. Hymn—"There is a green hill far away, without a city wall, where the dear Lord was crucified, who dies to save us all. We may not know, we cannot tell, what pains He had to bear; but we believe it was for us He hung and suffered there. He died that we might be forgiven, He died to make us good, that we might from our sins be freed, saved by His precious blood."
51. Did Christ die that we might be forgiven? Yes! But this is only half the reason. He also died to make us good!
52. You children, oftentimes your parents will tell you to be good. And it's right that they should tell you to be good.
53. But you know what? The only way you can really and truly be good, is through and by the gospel of Jesus Christ.
54. And remember, good is defined by the law. This is another way of saying, Christ died that we live lawful lives.
55. What a tremendous motive for Christian obedience! I should obey the law because Christ died to make me good!
56. I should put away my child ways because Christ died to make me good. I should love my wife because Christ died to make me good.
57. I should be concerned with others in the church because Christ died to make me good. I should pray for others because Christ died to make me good.
58. I should share my possessions with others because Christ died to make me good. I should obey my parents because Christ died to make me good.
59. (5) If God is good, then let us adore Him—God above all else, is our Chief Good—He is our only Perfect Good.
60. While it's true we have many good things in this world (family, possessions), but none of them are our Chief Good.
61. Ps.135:3—"Praise the LORD, for the LORD is good; sing praises to His name, for it is pleasant (Phil.4:8)"—dear brethren, while in one sense this world is filled with many good things, there is another sense in which we really only have one Chief and Perfect Good!
62. You have a wife or husband that loves you? Praise God! It's His goodness toward you! You have a parent or child that loves you? Praise God! It's His goodness toward you!
63. But you know what! None of these are Perfectly Good and thus, none of these should ever become your Chief Good!
64. There's a Latin phrase that I want to teach you in closing—it's *summum bonum*—literally, The Chiefest Good.
65. God is our *summum bonum*—our Cheifest Good—nothing in earth or heaven can compare to God, who is alone, natively and eternally good.