

# THE GOODNESS OF GOD

## Psalm 34:8

### INTRODUCTION

- How often we use the word “good” in our daily lives
- The world has taken the word “good” and perverted its meaning
- There are many “that call evil good, and good evil” (Isaiah 5:20)
- “Good” has become a throwaway word that has little meaning in conversation, but has infinite meaning theologically
- As we study God’s goodness, it is not merely an academic or intellectual exercise; those who will understand and embrace God’s goodness are eternally transformed

### I. GOD’S GOODNESS RESIDES IN HIS ESSENCE

- A. Goodness along with truth and beauty is regarded as a *transcendental*
  1. The transcendentals are divine qualities that are not subject to time or place, and do not change with the opinions of men
  2. Goodness is absolute and constant – what was good 6000 years ago is good today, and will be good in ten billion years
- B. Goodness is one of God’s attributes
  1. God’s goodness refers to the perfection of his nature (1 John 1:5)
  2. “*Goodness is that perfection of God whereby he delights in his own works, and is beneficial to them*” (Stephen Charnock)
  3. He requires nothing outside of himself to be good
  4. His goodness is not merely *part* of his essence, but *is* his essence
  5. “*He is originally good, good of Himself, which nothing else is; for all creatures are good only by participation and communication from God. He is essentially good; not only good, but goodness itself: the creature’s good is a super-added quality, in God it is His essence.*” (Thomas Manton)

6. God's goodness is a *communicable* attribute – that is, it can be shared with his creatures
7. The Scriptures repeatedly make the declaration: “the LORD is good” (Psalm 54:6; 86:5; 100:5; 106:1; 107:1; 135:3; Nahum 1:7)
8. As God is eternal, so “the goodness of God endureth continually” (Psalm 52:1)
9. God's goodness is in stark contrast to man's want of goodness
  - a. Jesus said, “There is none good but one, that is, God” (Matthew 19:17)
  - b. Man's “goodness” is “as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away” (Hosea 6:4)
  - c. Paul confessed “in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing” (Romans 7:18)
  - d. Yet “most men will proclaim every one his own goodness” (Proverbs 20:6)
10. God's glory is his goodness (Exodus 33:18-23)

## **II. GOD'S GOODNESS IS REVEALED IN HIS ACTS**

- A. As God is essentially good, all his workings are good
  1. “Thou art good, and doest good” (Psalm 119:68)
  2. Throughout the creation week, God looked upon his work, “and God saw that it was good” (Genesis 1:4,10,12,18,21,25,31)
- B. God is good to all
  1. The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works. (Psalm 145:9)
  2. He supplies the needs of all his creatures, and “they are filled with good” (Psalm 104:28)
  3. The earth is full of the goodness of the LORD (Psalm 33:5)
  4. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above” (James 1:17)

5. The goodness of God to mankind in providing rain, seasons and provision, is in itself a witness of his power and benevolence (Acts 14:17)
  6. God is “kind [good] unto the unthankful and to the evil” (Luke 6:35)
- C. The height of God’s goodness is manifest in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ
1. Christ’s incarnation showed God’s “good will toward men” (Luke 2:14)
  2. During his ministry, the Lord Jesus “went about doing good” (Acts 10:38)
  3. In his death and resurrection, Christ showed his goodness by offering himself for the ungodly (Romans 5:6,8)
  4. He will come again to establish his righteous and good kingdom
- D. God is especially good to his children (Psalm 4:6; 84:11; 31:19; Nahum 1:7; Lamentations 3:25; Ephesians 2:7)

### **III. GOD’S GOODNESS REQUIRES A RESPONSE**

- A. The goodness of God ought to lead us to repentance (Romans 2:4)
1. Think of God’s goodness in giving us life and sustaining us until this day
  2. Think of God’s goodness in his forbearance and longsuffering, in not sending immediately to hell
  3. Think of God’s goodness in his striving in our hearts by his Spirit
  4. Think of God’s goodness in giving his only begotten Son for our sins
  5. Think of God’s goodness in afflicting us in order to cause us to look to him (Psalm 119:71)
  6. All this should cause us to cast ourselves at his feet in repentance, and cry, “God be merciful to me, a sinner!”
  7. To neglect repentance is to wickedly despise God’s goodness (cf. Hebrews 10:29)
- B. We are exhorted to “taste and see that the LORD is good” (Psalm 34:8)

1. The only way to truly know God's goodness is by personal experience; that is by coming to him by faith, trusting in him
- C. Psalm 107 exhorts those who have experienced God's deliverance to "praise the LORD for his goodness" (Psalm 107:8,15,21,31)
- D. While in ourselves, we possess no good, God gives us his goodness and enables us to be good by his indwelling Spirit
1. The Bible speaks of the "good man", and such are made good through regeneration, justification and sanctification (Psalm 112:5; Proverbs 12:2; 13:22; 14:14; Luke 23:50; Acts 11:24)
  2. Goodness forms part of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 5:9)
  3. God "fulfils all the good pleasure of his goodness" in the lives of his people (2 Thessalonians 1:11; Philippians 2:13)
  4. As we yield to God, we prove in our lives his good, acceptable and perfect will (Romans 12:2)
- E. God's children prove they are his by doing good to their enemies, even as their Father in heaven does (Matthew 5:43-45)

## CONCLUSION

1. Satan's work from the beginning is to convince man that God is not good towards us
2. Many people foolishly question God's goodness and even blame him for their troubles, hardening their hearts against him
3. Those who reject God's goodness will suffer his severity (Romans 11:22)
4. But those who receive him can be assured that "all things work together for good" (Romans 8:28)
5. God's goodness *leads* us to eternal life (Romans 2:4), and then it *follows* us through eternity (Psalm 23:6)
6. As God's people, we have a duty to "abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness" (Psalm 145:7)
7. As missionary Allen Gardiner died of starvation, he wrote these final words in his diary, "*Wonderful grace and love to me, a sinner. I am overwhelmed with a sense of the goodness of God.*"