

Attributes of God

Week 8 – Goodness and Patience

Goodness: God's perfect and unwavering moral **excellence** and **benevolence** toward His creation.

Outworkings of God's goodness:

- a. **Patience:** God's goodness in withholding of **punishment** toward sinners over a period of **time**.
- b. **Mercy:** God's goodness toward those in misery and distress through His **compassion** and **forgiveness**.
- c. **Grace:** God's goodness toward those who deserve only punishment through His unmerited **favor** and **generosity**.
- d. **Love:** God's goodness toward people unconditionally through His **affection**, **care**, and **delight**.

"Goodness, in the Scriptural sense of the term, includes benevolence, love, mercy, and grace. By benevolence is meant the disposition to promote happiness; all sensitive creatures are its objects. Love includes complacency, desire, and delight, and has rational beings for its objects. Mercy is kindness exercised towards the miserable and includes pity, compassion, forbearance, and gentleness... Grace is love exercised towards the unworthy... All these elements of goodness... exist in God without measure and without end. In Him they are infinite, eternal, and immutable."

– Charles Hodge

Recognition of God's goodness: Exodus 33:19; Psalm 86:5, 23:6, 31:19, 34:8; Romans 2:4, 11:22

"The goodness of God means that God is the final standard of good, and that all that God is and does is worthy of approval." – Wayne Grudem

1. God is **generous** (Exodus 34:6, Job 38:39-41; Psalm 104:27-28; Matthew 6:26; Psalm 23:5, 145:9)

"Generosity means a disposition to give to others in a way which has no mercenary motive and is not limited by what the recipients deserve but consistently goes beyond it... Generosity is the quality which determines how all God's other excellences are to be displayed." – J.I. Packer

2. God is **gracious** (Matthew 5:45)

Common grace: God extending His goodness to all people, including to unbelievers.

3. God is **judicious** (Psalm 34:10, 84:11; Matthew 7:8-11)

4. God is **guiding** (Psalm 23:1-3, 5:8, 31:3; Romans 8:14)

5. God is **guarding** (Genesis 2:17)

You may be asking:

- Why does God seem to distribute His blessings and goodness unequally among people, leading to disparities in health, wealth, and opportunities? (Philippians 4:11-13)

"God dispenses gifts as His wisdom directs Him. Not every person experiences the same measure of gifts, but God is still wholly good." – Steve Lawson

Earthly blessings are temporal, God is sovereign over all things, there are consequences of the Fall, sometimes our faith is being tested.

- Why are unbelievers blessed, sometimes far more than believers? (Psalm 73:3-5, 17-18)

Take aways – Goodness

1. When your circumstances or the world around you tempts you to doubt God's goodness, remember His word that affirms His abundant goodness. (Romans 8:28-29, Nahum 1:7)
2. Demonstrating the goodness of God to others is encouraging to believers and an effective witness to unbelievers.

Patience: God's goodness in withholding of **punishment** toward sinners over a period of **time**.

"God's patience speaks of His being perfectly placid in Himself and toward sinners in spite of their continual disobedience and disregard for His warnings." – MacArthur/Mayhue

"God's patience is the power of God over Himself. God's patience with man is only surpassed by His patience with Himself... Except for the infinite restraint God puts on Himself, this fallen world could not exist a moment. Mercy withholds judgment, goodness restrains justice, patience curbs power, and thus the patience of God is the salvation of man." – Octavius Winslow

1. God is **long-suffering** (2 Peter 3:9)

"Long-suffering is an ability or power in God not only to delay the execution of His wrath for a time towards some, but to delay it in order to show grace in the salvation of others." – John Flavel

2. God is **slow** to **anger** (Exodus 34:6; Numbers 14:18; Psalm 86:15)

"God's slowness to anger is a greater argument of His power than the creating of a world or the power of dissolving it by a word; in this He has a dominion over creatures, in the other over Himself." – Stephen Charnock

3. God is **forbearing** (Nehemiah 9:28-30)

4. God is **steadfast** (Psalm 100:5)

"There is nothing little in God; His steadfast love is like Himself – it is infinite. You cannot measure it. His mercy is so great that it forgives great sins to great sinners after great lengths of time and then gives great favors and great privileges and raises us up to great enjoyments in the great heaven of the great God." – Charles Spurgeon

You may be asking:

- If God is patient with our mistakes and shortcomings, does it mean He is unconcerned about the pain and struggles we experience? (1 Peter 5:6-7)

Take aways – Patience

1. God's patience is meant to lead sinners to repentance. (Acts 17:30)

"I believe that the most universal gift, the most universal blessing that comes from God's common grace to humanity is time; time to repent, time to believe, time granted by God's patience." – John MacArthur

2. If you're a believer, praise God for being patient with you. (Psalm 63:3)

"I think of all the questions that I ask the Lord, and then I think of my stubborn streak against Him; I think of my inability or refusal to learn. I think of how many times God shows me the way of righteousness and how I turn away. I think of my faltering and failing steps and my outright rebellion against Him – even as a believer. Oh the patience of God and the riches of His forbearance and grace!" – Harry Reeder

3. Never presume on God's patience. (Romans 2:4)

"God's patience with us, when we sin, must not be mistaken for His permission for us to sin." – Alistair Begg

4. Be patient with others, as God has been for you. (Colossians 3:12)

"When tempted to be disgusted at the dullness of another, or to revenge one who has wronged you, remember God's infinite patience with you." – A.W. Pink