

God's Goodness

God's Goodness
Sermon Notes:

God's Goodness

Devotional - Day 1

Day 1 - God's Goodness

Silence and Stillness before God (2 minutes) – prepare your heart and mind to hear from God

Scripture: Matthew 7:9-11 (NIV)

Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

Devotional

“That God is good is taught or implied on every page of the Bible and must be received as an article of faith as impregnable as the throne of God.” – A.W. Tozer

When we think of the goodness of God our thoughts tend to go to things that make us happy and our life easier. Times when everything just seems to fall into place and we can go throughout our day without much thought or effort. In those times it's easy to explain to others that God is good, to feel loved and not question what God is doing in your life. What about when things aren't going so well? When life seems to be more than you can handle, and everything seems to be against you. Do you still think of the goodness of God?

It is not easy to go through tough times. Sometimes no matter what anyone says, it does not make it any easier. Consider it pure joy whenever you face trials of many kinds (James 1:2-4) are great verses, but in the middle of a trial it can be hard to put on a happy face. I don't think Joseph was excited about being thrown into a pit and sold into slavery by his brothers. In my own personal life, I can see how God guided and prepared me for what I am doing today. I can look back 26 years ago and see how God made a decision for me that I would not have made myself. At the time I was angry at God for what happened but looking back on it now and seeing God's hand on it, I know it was probably the only way and it was

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what was best for me. I just wasn't able to see that at the time. He got my attention the only way He could.

God is always working in our lives, and He is always going to do what is good. We can have faith that He always has our best interest in mind. We can rest in the fact, no matter what is going on in our life, He is working it out for the good of those who love Him (Romans 8:28). Whether things in your life are going well or your back is against the wall, God has a reason for it. In the end it will always be what's best. It may not be the outcome that we hoped or even prayed for, but we must realize that we are a part of something bigger than ourselves. There is a bigger plan that God is working out, and we are just one small part of it.

Questions to consider:

Do you tend to only see God's goodness when things are going well?

Do you find things to thank God for everyday?

What can you do to help remind yourself that God is good even when things aren't going according to plan?

Prayer:

Lord, I know you are good and you always have my best interest in mind. Help me to put my faith and trust in your plan for my life. When life is tough, and I am struggling, help me to focus on you and your goodness. Remind me of the times that you have come through for me and that you will see me through again. In Jesus' name, amen.

Conclude with silence (2 minutes)

Afternoon/Evening questions to consider: Where did you see God's goodness at work today in your life?

Have you thanked God for His goodness?

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Devotional - Day 2

Day 2 - God's Goodness

Silence and Stillness before God (2 minutes) – prepare your heart and mind to hear from God

Scripture: James 1:17 (NIV)

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

Devotional

“The goodness of God is the drive behind all the blessings He daily bestows upon us.” – A.W. Tozer

As we go throughout our day there are things happening all around us. Things that we take for granted and just assume will always be there. Whether we notice or not, God is always at work; our response does not change who He is or what He does. If we are not paying attention there is a good chance that we miss God showing up in the simple everyday activities. Even though God's goodness can go unnoticed by us, God does not stop being good to us. It is His nature and it brings Him joy, even if we don't take the time to thank Him for all the blessings in our life. Maybe you don't think the small things in life are a blessing from God. After all, with so many little things that happen throughout the day, could He really have a hand in everything?

God is good. It is not just what He does; it is who He is. No one is good except God alone (Luke 18:19). We try to be good, but we often fail no matter how hard we try. Our sin nature is always going to get in the way at some point. We can have the best intentions but will eventually let others down. I may be able to do it for a day or I string a couple days together, but eventually the streak will end. God on the other hand continues to be good to us daily. He never lets us down and even in the smallest details He is able to let His goodness shine through.

Life is non-stop. The older I get the faster things move. Sometimes days, weeks and even months can go by and I will look back and think, “Where

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did the time go?" Because of this it is easy to overlook the goodness of God in our everyday lives. We get to the end of the day and either feel like it was a good day, or we are totally exhausted and can't wait to go to bed and start over again in the morning. It's really an easy pattern to fall into. If we don't want days, weeks, or months to go by without experiencing God's goodness, we must be intentionally looking for it, keeping our focus on Him. God promises that His goodness will follow us all of our days (Psalms 23:6). So if we miss the blessing, we have no one to blame but ourselves.

Questions to consider:

Do you notice God's goodness in the simple things in life?

What are some things or people that you take for granted that are actually the goodness of God?

How can you slow down today and experience God's goodness?

How can you bless others today with the blessing God gives you?

Prayer:

Lord, thank you for being so good to me even when in my busyness I do not notice all that you do for me. Help me to see you at work in all things and not miss the blessings that you put in my life daily. Help me not only to recognize your goodness in my life but also find opportunities to share your goodness with others. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Conclude with silence (2 minutes)

Afternoon/Evening questions to consider:

Did you see God at work today in areas that you took for granted before?

Were you able to find ways to bless others today?

Take time to thank God for blessings in your life and intentionally write a thank you note to God or the people in your life that you have taken for granted. Let them know how much they mean to you.

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Devotional - Day 3

Day 3 - God's Goodness

Silence and Stillness before God (2 minutes) – prepare your heart and mind to hear from God

Scripture: Psalm 102:25-28 (NIV)

25 In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth,
and the heavens are the work of your hands.

26 They will perish, but you remain;
they will all wear out like a garment.

Like clothing you will change them
and they will be discarded.

27 But you remain the same,
and your years will never end.

28 The children of your servants will live in your presence;
their descendants will be established before you.”

Devotional

“He has never been kinder than He now is, nor will He ever be less kind.”

– A.W. Tozer

“Treat others the way you would like to be treated”, the golden rule.

This is a great way to live life and things would definitely go smoother if everyone followed this rule. The truth is, most of the time it works in reverse. How we treat others depends on how they treat us. If someone is nice to us, then we will be nice back. If they do something we don't like we tend to feel differently about that person. It's hard not to react to the way others treat us. We would love to be consistent and treat people the same no matter how they treat us, but it is not our nature.

I love my kids and they are definitely part of God's goodness in my life. Most of the time they are great kids and I am always proud of them, but sometimes they can be frustrating as well. No matter how much we try to teach them to be good to each other, sometimes it's like we never taught them anything. They can be mean, manipulative, and act like they don't care at all for each other. As I watch in disbelief, I think I am the worst

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parent ever and they do not listen at all. I certainly didn't teach them to be mean to each other. That is something that we don't have to learn, it is part of our sin nature. We naturally put ourselves first. It is something that we don't have to be taught. There is hope. As we grow closer to God and become more like Him, we start to take on His nature, and we start to treat others the way God would treat them.

God has never changed, nor will He ever change. He is as good to us now as He will ever be. There is nothing we can do to change that. We want to strive to be more like Him. Even though we fail at times, He stays consistent. "He is no respecter of persons but makes His sun to shine on the evil as well as on the good and sends His rain in the just and the unjust." – A.W. Tozer. God's unchanging nature is something that we can put our faith in. We can know without a doubt that He will always be good to His children.

Questions to consider

Do you find yourself reacting negatively to others that have not treated you well?

Who can you be good to today that you feel does not deserve it?

Prayer:

Lord, thank you for always being consistent. Please help me to be more like you each day, thinking of others before I think of myself. Give me your heart that I may learn to treat others the way you would want me to treat them regardless of how I am treated in return. Help me to be good to others without expecting anything in return. In Jesus' name, amen.

Conclude with silence (2minute)

Afternoon/Evening questions to consider

Did you find yourself thinking differently about how you treated people today? What is one change you can make that will help you treat people the way God would want you to treat them?

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Devotional - Day 4

Day 4 - God's Goodness

Silence and Stillness before God (2 minutes) – prepare your heart and mind to hear from God

Scripture: Jeremiah 29:12-13 (NIV)

Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

Devotional

“Prayer is not itself meritorious. It lays God under no obligation nor puts Him in debt to any. He hears prayer because He is good, and for no other reason.” – A.W. Tozer

Have you ever been talking to someone and they are looking at you, but you can tell that their mind is elsewhere? They have good intentions but there is something going on in their life or they have something else to do that they don't want to forget, and they just can't get it out of their mind. I'm sure you can think of a time when this has happened to you or you have done this to someone else. We would love to always be present in the moment but sometimes our thoughts just take over and it's hard to concentrate on what's right in front of us. It's not that what they are saying isn't important, but we can be easily distracted, or we have overextended ourselves and the stress will not let us focus.

Going through life, it is difficult to be 100% on all the time. We would love to always be at our best and be the best we can be to others. It is just simply not something we are capable of. There are times when we are doing really well and we can focus on the moment, but it is tough to maintain. Eventually we will fail. I know there have been times when I have walked away from a conversation and a couple minutes later wonder what in the world did I just talk to that person about. Well, maybe not that bad, but it's close. I'm sure if you ask my wife she would say that I have done that to her a time or two.

Most times we only have one person that we must pay attention to, or at

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most a handful in the room. When there is more than one person in a part of a conversation we can get away with not being 100% there. God on the other hand, is able to listen to us all the time. It doesn't matter what is going on in the world, how many people are trying to talk to Him, or how big or small our problem is. When we pray, He is listening like it is the only thing going on. It is part of His goodness to us. It is hard to imagine the creator of the universe, the one who is in control of everything, would just stop what He is doing and focus 100% on you. Not because He has to but because He loves you. He wants you to know He cares and you are important to Him. We can have no doubt that when we pray He is looking us straight in the eyes and we have His full attention.

As you go throughout the day try to focus more on what people are saying to you and when you pray picture God sitting right there listening to you.

Questions to consider

When you pray do you have confidence that God is listening? Why or Why not?

Why are we so easily distracted?

Are you able to be present with your family?

Are you able to pay attention most times when you are having conversations with others?

Prayer

Lord, thank you for always listening to me when I pray and the confidence that I can have in knowing that you are always there for me. Help me to focus and listen to others the way you listen to me. Help me to control my schedule so that I am not easily distracted. Help me to slow down and know what is most important. In Jesus' name, amen.

Conclude with silence (2minute)

Afternoon/Evening questions to consider

Were you able to be most present with people today?

Did you think of God differently in your prayer time today?

How did picturing God right there in the room with you change the way you prayed?

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Devotional - Day 5

Day 5 - God's Goodness

Silence and Stillness before God (2 minutes) – prepare your heart and mind to hear from God

Scripture: Romans 7:15-20 (NIV)

I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

Devotional:

“But sin has made us timid and self-conscious, as well it might. Years of rebellion against God have bred in us a fear that cannot be overcome in a day. The captured rebel does not enter willingly the presence of the king he has so long fought unsuccessfully to overthrow.” – A.W. Tozer

Did you ever wake up and say, “God please do not share any of your goodness with me today, I want this day to be as difficult as possible and at the end of the day I don’t want anything to make sense”. Of course, you would never say that; we want just the opposite. We want God’s best. We want to know why everything happens, and at the end of the day we would love the overall picture to look like a completed puzzle.

We may never actually verbalize that we don’t want God’s goodness but often times our actions do. Sin separates us from God. When we continue in sin, we are turning our back on God’s goodness. The less time we spend with God the easier it is. Without taking time to make sure we are on the right path, we will just go throughout our day never knowing how far we have strayed. We gradually wander off of the path and at some point, we look around and wonder how we got so far off track. Then it is too late to make a course correction; instead we need to make major

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changes and it's not easy to get back to where we want to be. Whether we do this intentionally or unintentionally we are turning our backs on God's goodness. On the path is where we want to be, or we at least know that is where we should be but living in this world we can get distracted by sin. Doing things on our own we can end up with less than God's best.

Thankfully God's goodness is more powerful than the traps of this world. He can pull out of any situation that we can get ourselves into. The ultimate goodness that God showed was when He sent His son to die on the cross for our sin. **John 3:16-17** (NIV):

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

If His goodness ended there that would be more than we ever needed or deserved, but it didn't end there. God's goodness continues, and He will always be there for His Children. Choose today to turn from your sin and run toward the God who loves you. He is waiting with open arms!

Questions to consider:

Have you accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior?

How much time do you spend in God's Word?

Do you find it hard to stay on track?

What do you do to make sure you are on the right path?

Prayer:

Lord, I know I don't deserve your goodness but thank you for being good to me anyway. Thank you for paying the ultimate price for my sin dying on the cross. Help me to stay on the right path and grow closer to you daily by spending time in your word getting to know you more. Show me where I need to change and give me the courage and boldness to make the changes. In Jesus' name, amen.

Conclude with silence (2minute)

Afternoon/Evening questions to consider:

Has spending time in God's word helped you stay closer to God?

What is one thing that you could change to make sure you don't miss God's goodness in your life?



Week #5: God's Goodness

GOAL: We have often heard, “God is good, all the time,” and this is true, but have we really understood what this means? “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 A. Grudem, Systematic Theology). Many times we have said that God is good, but we may have struggled to truly believe it. At the beginning of creation, Satan’s deception and temptation to Eve included getting her to doubt God’s goodness to her. When he was able to make her think God was holding out on her something good, he was then able to draw her into sin. Satan’s tactics have not changed over all the years since. When we doubt God’s goodness, we will struggle to obey Him. That’s why it is so important that we not only say the words, “God is good,” but that we believe them with all our heart.

Knowing that God is good comes through spending time with Him, getting to know Him more intimately, and experiencing and recognizing His goodness in our lives. Let this week’s study take you further on your journey of knowing God’s goodness in your life.

LOVING GOD:

- * Memory Verse: **Psalm 31:19** “How great is Your goodness, which You have stored up for those who fear You, which You bestow in the sight of men on those who take refuge in You.”
- * 2 minutes of silence
- * Devotional: choose one of the 5 devotionals for this week on the Goodness of God to read aloud to the group.
- * Question to Consider: this will come from the devotional as well
- * 2 minutes of silence

BUILDING COMMUNITY:

- * Growing Connected Questions
 - Share one or two things you are grateful for this week.
 - What stood out to you from this past week’s message?

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MAKING DISCIPLES:

* Bible Study Scriptures:

Read the following Scriptures out loud in the group: **Genesis 3:1-5; Exodus 33:18-20; 34:5-7; Psalm 31:19-20; 103:1-14**

* Questions:

- Read **Genesis 3:1-5**. How did the serpent deceive Eve? What was he trying to get Eve to question about God? How did the doubts about God's goodness affect how Eve behaved?
- What is the relationship between believing God is good and our level of obedience to Him?
- In **Exodus 33:18-20**, when Moses asks to see God's glory, God responds by saying, "I will cause all My goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim My name, the LORD, in your presence." How does God's goodness show His glory?
- How would you explain God's goodness to someone? How is that different from how the world defines goodness?
- Read **Exodus 34:5-7**. How does God describe His own goodness in these verses? Share at least one time with the group that you witnessed God's goodness to you in the form of His compassion, grace, slowness to anger, love, faithfulness, forgiveness of wickedness and rebellion, or even discipline. At the time, did you see that experience as God's goodness to you?
- What do we learn about God from **Psalm 31:19-20**? Which part of these verses resonates with you most? Why?
- Read **Psalm 103:1-14**. List all the things God does for us. What attributes of God can you identify in this passage? How do these verses show God's goodness? What are you most thankful for about God in this passage?

* Application questions:

- How does my understanding of God's goodness affect my relationship with Him?
- How does the way you live your life reflect your faith in God's goodness to you?
- What is God saying to me? What am I going to do about it?

* Daily Devotionals:

- Read the daily devotions for Week #5 "The Goodness of God."

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- *Going Deeper (The following are added optional resources for you to help you grow in your understanding of this week's attribute(s) of God):
- 1 - If you want to take the challenge, get a copy of A. W. Tozer's *The Knowledge of the Holy*, and read chapter 16.
 - 2 - Remembering that every good and perfect gift is from God (James 1:17), see how many good gifts from God you can list on a piece of paper in five minutes. When you have finished, ask yourself how often you have an attitude of thankfulness to God for most of these gifts. Why do you think we tend to forget that these blessings come from God? What can we do to remember more frequently? End each entry with "of His goodness."
 - 3 - Listen to these songs and have a time of worship, reflecting on the goodness of God:
Good Good Father - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qlsQrycKksY>
King of My Heart - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EpqSbKYxd9Y>
 - 4 - An article on God's goodness even in the darkest and most difficult moments:
<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/goodness-and-me--2>
 - 5 – Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-7_E_fZGVrI
 - 6 – Other related Scriptures: Psalm 100:5; Luke 18:19; James 1:17; Genesis 1:3; Galatians 6:9-10

Prayer Requests