

The Goodness of God

Introduction

Many things could be said and many verses could be brought to bear to show God's goodness. We could spend many hours over many messages covering all of the aspects of God's goodness. Today, though, we want to spend just a little time to remind ourselves of this aspect of God's nature and consider what that knowledge should mean to our lives.

Definitions

Goodness Webster's Dictionary, 1913

Goodness, n. The quality of being good in any of its various senses; excellence; virtue; kindness; benevolence; as, the goodness of timber, of a soil, of food; goodness of character, of disposition, of conduct, etc.

Good, a.

1. Possessing desirable qualities; adapted to answer the end designed; promoting success, welfare, or happiness; serviceable; useful; fit; excellent; admirable; commendable; not bad, corrupt, evil, noxious, offensive, or troublesome, etc.
2. Possessing moral excellence or virtue; virtuous; pious; religious; -- said of persons or actions.
3. Kind; benevolent; humane; merciful; gracious; polite; propitious; friendly; well-disposed; -- often followed by to or toward, also formerly by unto.

Good, n.

1. That which possesses desirable qualities, promotes success, welfare, or happiness, is serviceable, fit, excellent, kind, benevolent, etc.; -- opposed to evil.
There be many that say, Who will show us any good? Ps. iv. 6.
2. Advancement of interest or happiness; welfare; prosperity; advantage; benefit; -- opposed to harm, etc.
The good of the whole community can be promoted only by advancing the good of each of the members composing it. Jay.

As the definition relates to God

When referring to God, goodness describes the perfection of God in Himself from which flows virtue, moral excellence, and all benevolence. His perfect in all of His character traits comes from His goodness. It is also from God's goodness that flows kindness, sympathy, mercy, pity, grace and love, not only in Himself and His actions, but also in any of His creatures. He is the source and font of all of these, and He is the perfect example and fulfillment of them all.

Let us now turn to the Scriptures to consider God's goodness.

The Goodness of God

Goodness is part of God Himself, His intrinsic nature

God is often called good in the Psalms

Psalms 86:5 **For thou, Lord, art good**, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.

Psalms 100:5 **For the LORD is good**; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

Psalms 106:1 Praise ye **the LORD**. O give thanks unto the LORD; **for he is good**: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Psalms 107:1 O give thanks unto **the LORD**, for **he is good**: for his mercy endureth for ever.

God's name is Good

Psalms 54:6 I will freely sacrifice unto thee: I will praise **thy name**, O LORD; **for it is good**.

God is good and does good

Psalms 119:68 **Thou art good, and doest good**; teach me thy statutes.

When God made a special revelation of Himself to Moses He revealed His goodness

Exodus 33:19 And he said, **I will make all my goodness pass before thee**, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy."

Exodus 34:6 And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, **merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth**,

All of the beneficent characteristics of God, such as His mercy, love, grace, all proceed from His goodness.

Every good thing comes from God

James 1:17 **Every good gift** and every perfect gift is from above, and **cometh down from the Father of lights**, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Any good in the universe, whether characteristic, activity, or creature, has its origin in God.

Only God is good in the fullest, truest sense of the word

Luke 18:19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? **none is good, save one, that is, God.**

Man's goodness is derived from God and does not extend towards Him

Psalms 16:2 O my soul, thou hast said unto the LORD, Thou art my Lord: **my goodness extendeth not to thee**;

God's goodness is in perfect harmony with all His other attributes

Psalms 145:5-7 5 I will speak of the glorious honour of thy **majesty**, and of **thy wondrous works**. 6 And men shall speak of the **might of thy terrible acts**: and I will declare thy **greatness**. 7 They shall abundantly utter the memory of **thy great goodness**, and shall sing of **thy righteousness**.

The Goodness of God

It extends to all His acts in different degrees

God's goodness was evident in the creation of the world

Genesis 1:4 And God saw the light, that **it was good**: and God divided the light from the darkness.

Genesis 1:10 And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that **it was good**.

Genesis 1:12 And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that **it was good**.

Genesis 1:21 And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that **it was good**.

Genesis 1:25 And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that **it was good**.

Genesis 1:31 And **God saw every thing that he had made**, and, behold, **it was very good**. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

God shows His goodness in His provision for the animal kingdom

Psalms 104:27-28 ²⁷ These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. ²⁸ That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, **they are filled with good**.

All of His dealings with men display His goodness

Psalms 145:6-9 ⁶ And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts: and I will declare thy greatness. ⁷ They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness. ⁸ The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy. ⁹ **The LORD is good to all**: and **his tender mercies are over all his works**.

Consider some examples of God's goodness

1. Medicines and remedies in nature to relieve pain & suffering.
2. The nature of man's senses (touch, taste, sight, hearing) & the joy experienced in their use.
3. The beneficent emotions (love, sympathy, mercy, forgiveness) that bring joy in their exercise.
4. The conscience that rewards with pleasure doing right.

God sends rain & sunshine to all men

Matthew 5:44-45 ⁴⁴ But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; ⁴⁵ That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for **he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust**.

God instructs His people to reflect His beneficence to others

Luke 6:35 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: **for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil**.

God can and does override man's evil in instances to bring good

Genesis 50:20 But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.

Yet God is under no obligation to show equal goodness to all

Matthew 20:15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?

Best seen in its expression towards His children

God showed great goodness to Israel in the Old Testament

Exodus 3:7-8 7 And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which *are* in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; 8 **And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey;** unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

Exodus 18:9 And Jethro rejoiced **for all the goodness which the LORD had done to Israel**, whom he had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians.

Consider how God used the wealth and lives of Egyptians for the sake of His people Israel (Ex 3:22, 12:36; Is 43:3).

Even in His chastisements God shows His goodness towards His own people

Isaiah 63:7-14 7 I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and **the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses.** 8 For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour. 9 In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: **in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.** 10 **But they rebelled**, and vexed his holy Spirit: **therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them.** 11 **Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people**, saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is he that put his holy Spirit within him? 12 That led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name? 13 That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble? 14 As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD caused him to rest: **so didst thou lead thy people**, to make thyself a glorious name.

His goodness is demonstrated towards those who seek Him

Psalms 34:10 The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but **they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing.**

His goodness is demonstrated towards those who wait for Him

Lamentations 3:25 **The LORD is good unto them that wait for him**, to the soul that seeketh him.

His goodness is demonstrated towards those who trust in Him

Nahum 1:7 **The LORD is good**, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and **he knoweth them that trust in him.**

God shows great goodness in providing eternal life for His children

Ephesians 1:5 Having predestinated us unto the **adoption of children** by Jesus Christ to himself, **according to the good pleasure of his will**,

Ephesians 1:9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, **according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:**

God has reserved special enjoyment of His goodness for His elect

Psalms 135:2-4 2 Ye that stand in the house of the LORD, in the courts of the house of our God, 3 Praise the LORD; for **the LORD is good**: sing praises unto his name; **for it is pleasant.** 4 For **the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure.**”

The Goodness of God

What should be its effect upon us?

We are encouraged to experience and enjoy God's goodness

Psalms 34:8 **O taste and see** that **the LORD is good**: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.

His goodness brings satisfaction to His people

Jeremiah 31:10-14 10 Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. 11 For the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. 12 Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to **the goodness of the LORD**, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and **their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all**. 13 Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow. 14 And **I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness**, saith the LORD.

Knowing His goodness should be a source of praise & thanksgiving

Psalms 106:1 **Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good**: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Psalms 100:4-5 4 **Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.** 5 **For the LORD is good**; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

Purpose of God's goodness in our lives – to lead us to fear Him and repent

Hosea 3:1-5 1 Then said the LORD unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine. 2 So I bought her to me for fifteen pieces of silver, and for an homer of barley, and an half homer of barley: 3 And I said unto her, Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for another man: so will I also be for thee. 4 For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: 5 Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and **shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days**.

Romans 2:1-4 1 Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. 2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. 3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? 4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; **not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?**

God's dealings in cutting off Israel and bringing the Gentiles into the church are a powerful incentive for our obedience

Romans 11:22 Behold therefore **the goodness** and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but **toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness**: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.