

THE GOODNESS OF GOD

INTRODUCTION

During the breakthrough conference, there was an underlying theme of God's goodness and desire to bless us. I have been wanting to explore this further so that we can get a clear picture of how much God loves us and how good He is, and wants to be to us.

One of the greatest Biblical statements of God's love for us is well known: **John 3:16** (AMP) "For God so [greatly] loved and dearly prized the world, that He [even] gave His [One and] only begotten Son, so that whoever believes and trusts in Him [as Saviour] shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Verse 17 goes on to paint a picture of God's goodness that people often miss:

John 3:17 (AMP) For God did not send the Son into the world to judge and condemn the world [that is, to initiate the final judgment of the world], but that the world might be saved through Him.

But God's goodness and love for us doesn't stop at the cross, there is much more to it than what I could preach in a year. Today I want to visit just a five of the aspects of God's love and goodness towards us.

MESSAGE

GOD IS OUR GOOD SHEPHERD

He wants to bless us with abundant life:

God's plan since before the beginning of time was that man should have an abundant life! In Genesis we see that after God created everything, He declared it good and then He appointed Adam to reign over it, but Adam sinned and lost that authority.

But God had a plan, and out of His goodness, He sent Jesus the Good Shepherd to bring restoration:

John 10:10 (NKJV) The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

- Jesus came to give us **abundant life**. The word 'abundantly' comes from the Greek '*perissos*' which means: **superabundance, excessive, overflowing, more than enough or profuse**. That's how much goodness God wants to show us.
- **Psalm 23:5** puts it this way: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; **My cup runs over**.

The enemy just wants to destroy and hurt us, but God's goodness overwhelms the enemy and instead of disaster, God allows our cup to run over with good things right there in the enemy's presence. What a great God we serve!

He looks after us when we get into trouble!

Ezekiel 34:12 (NKJV) As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day.

- Lightning and thunder would sometimes scatter a shepherd's flock. Once scattered, the sheep were exposed to the elements and became vulnerable to attack from wild beasts. The shepherd would look for them and rescue them.

Ezekiel 34:14 (NKJV) I will feed them in good pasture, and their fold shall be on the high mountains of Israel. There they shall lie down in a good fold and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel.

God's people are the sheep spoken about here. When the storms of life scatter us and expose us to the evil attack of the enemy, our Good Shepherd is always seeking us out. He will rescue us and feed us in good pastures where we are safe and secure, having peace in Him.

Are you going through a storm right now? – cry out to the Good Shepherd, He will find you and help you.

Are you feeling like wild beasts (demonic forces) just want to tear you to pieces? – Run to the Good Shepherd, He will bring you peace, protection and provision.

GOD IN HIS GOODNESS WANTS TO MAKE THINGS PERFECT FOR US!

Psalms 138:8 The LORD will perfect that which concerns me; Your mercy, O LORD, endures forever; Do not forsake the works of Your hands.

- Perfect comes from the word '**gamar**' – to end, **finish, accomplish, to perform, to fulfill.**
- God works out His plans and purposes in the life of a believer. This is a continual display of God's goodness, and it will only be completed when our race is completely run.
- Our God is a progressive God, we grow from faith to faith, and from Glory to glory in Him.
- When it seems like things are going wrong, when it seems like we are not progressing in our walk with the Lord, we can call out to Him and He will be our help!
- David put it this way: **Psalms 57:2** I will cry out to God Most High, To God who performs all things for me.

- In **Hebrews 13:21**, we find the God of peace making us complete in every good work and working in us what is pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ.

God is so determined to perfect things for us that He puts everything in place for us to be able to succeed:

1 Corinthians 3:21-23 (TLB) So don't be proud of following the wise men of this world. For you God has already given you everything need. 22 He has given you Paul and Apollos and Peter as your helpers. He has given you the whole world to use, and life and even death are your servants. He has given you all of the present and all of the future. All are yours, 23 and you belong to Christ, and Christ is God's.

The Corinthians had got themselves hung up about who was the better preacher. It was an attitude steeped with pride. But they missed it totally... It didn't matter which preacher was better, what mattered was that God had given them preachers, and not only that but He put everything else in place for their benefit too! Above that, they belonged to Christ.

Romans 8:28 (AMP) And we know [with great confidence] that God [who is deeply concerned about us] causes all things to work together [as a plan] for good for those who love God, to those who are called according to His plan and purpose.

God's goodness has put all things in place for our benefit. What is it that we need today. God has all we need to change our situation for the good!

- ***Give your mess to Him, His goodness will sort it out.***
- ***Give your dreams to Him, He will give you the desires of your heart.***
- ***Declare by faith – "I have everything I need to succeed and God will perfect all things in my life".***

GOD'S GOODNESS MANIFESTS IN GRACE

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Even in the midst of suffering, God's goodness is manifest. Don't think that God does not love you when you go through trials and suffering, He is right there with you.

GOD'S GOODNESS MEANS HE IS ON OUR SIDE

Psalms 118:6 The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?

- God's goodness means we are not in this battle alone, He is with us.
- God's goodness means we don't need to fear man.
- **2 Timothy 1:7** For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.
- God gives us His power and His love and a sound mind, the mind of Christ, in place of fear.

Are you feeling all alone in the battle you are facing today? You are not, God is on your side! Rest in His goodness – no-one can harm you, you need not fear!

GOD'S GOODNESS IS OUR SOURCE OF JOY

Someone once asked me, "where will I find my source of satisfaction and joy?" This person I have a relationship with is making me happy. The problem is that even relationships can't give lasting joy – only God can give that!

Psalm 16:11 You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

- The world seeks its joy and pleasure from carnal things...money, cars, houses, parties, drunkenness, sex...
- But all these pleasures only cater for the fleshly things and are fleeting...they don't have durability...and the desire for pleasure is never truly filled.
- David had found the key...he sought the LORD for direction "You will show me the path of life".
- In doing this he found himself in the LORD's presence and there he received fullness of joy as well as the promise of pleasure forever!
 - This is a complete joy that never runs short.
 - This is a lasting joy...it is eternal in nature.

Where have you been seeking your joy and pleasure? Do you know that it's right here for you to take hold of and it won't cost you a cent! Why not ask God to become the source of your joy today?

CONCLUSION

George Mueller (1805-1898) built many orphanages at Ashley Down in England. Without a personal salary, he relied solely on God to supply the money and food needed to support the hundreds of homeless children he called for in the name of Christ. He was a man of radiant faith, and he kept a motto on his desk for many years that brought comfort, strength, and confidence to his heart. It read, "It matters to Him about you." Mueller believed that those words captured the meaning of 1 Peter 5:7, and he rested his claim for divine help on that truth. He testified at the end of his life that the Lord had never failed to supply all his needs.

- God is our Good Shepherd.
- God in His goodness wants to make things perfect for us.
- God's goodness is manifest in grace.
- God's goodness means He is on our side.
- God's goodness means He is the source of our joy.

So often we take the Lord for granted and instead of having a kingdom view of the goodness of God, we see things according to the world around us. Today we have been reminded of God's love and goodness toward us. I want to share one more scripture on God's goodness and ask that we respond to it today:

Romans 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.

God's goodness will lead us to repentance – let us repent of taking God for granted. Let us praise and thank Him today for His goodness and let us embrace it so that He can bring lasting enrichment and blessing into our lives.