

February 26th Sermon *God's Goodness* Psalm 145:1-9

Good things have been happening in our church as we have begun the year with a renewed vitality and sense that God is in us and with on the journey. Weekly some of you have been pointing this out to me and we have been sharing it in our services. So, it is right to praise and give thanks to the LORD for those good things and to acknowledge God as the source of all goodness in our lives. We began the service this morning with the scripture **Psalm 145:9** "The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made" ...followed by the rallying cry of praise giving our God the Glory... God is Good...**All the time...All the time...God is Good.**

We live in what is now quite an instantaneous society and culture where people want and expect things, chop-chop, right away! So what I will provide you with next is one simple living proof that God is good, good to all, all the time.

Everyone, take a breath now, breathe in, breathe out, breathe in, breathe out. As you do, you will sense the draft of the air flowing in through your nose and/or mouth, the sensation of your lungs filling and expanding with air, followed by the beating of that big muscle in your upper chest being worked by your lungs. Your heart that is, pumping blood around your body from the brain in your head to the tips of your toes. If you relax and allow yourself to register the sensation of that oxygenated blood pumping around your body, you experience *life* and being filled with *life* as a living being created in God's image. Not matter who you are, irrespective of what age, sex, ethnicity, religion, education, level of income you are – God is good to you in every breath/moment of every day. "The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made" ... God is Good... **All the time... All the time... God is Good.**

The Goodness of God – What does it Mean?

The goodness of God is one of the attributes of God, as well as a **description of His very essence**. God, by nature, is inherently good, as Psalm 34:8 tells us: "Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him." This verse also tells us that God's goodness is our shelter while stating the impact that God's goodness has upon us. And that impact is... ***We are blessed through God's goodness.*** For the LORD is the foundation of all goodness and of everything good—Yahweh the one true self-existing and eternal God did not

obtain his inherent goodness from another source. Humans can have good traits or do good deeds, but goodness is not inherent in our character. **For God alone is Good** and all other goodness derives from him, even the keeping of the commandments. Jesus the Son of God illustrated this for us in **Matthew 19:16-17** in this encounter. *"Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, 'Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?' 'Why do you ask me about what is good?' Jesus replied. 'There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, keep the commandments'"* Jesus wanted this rich young man to think seriously, about what is good. Keeping the commandments was not about doing good for goods sake to establish favour or what we call earning, by our own strength, brownie points with God, but instead, keeping the commandments was to be an expression of one's true inner faith. Back to the Psalms (84:11)...*"For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favour and honour; no **good thing** does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless"*...those who keep his commandments as an expression of their true inner faith.

Therefore, our goodness comes from God. And God's goodness as the Psalmist declared, together with His love, last forever.... "Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever" Psalm 107:1. So, as a part of Gods inherent character, His very essence, we can join with the Psalmist again in declaring **All that God is and does is good.** From **Psalm 119:68** "You are good, and what you do is good; teach me your decrees" So, we have learnt that the meaning of the goodness of God is that the LORD is infinitely and unchangeably good in character and nature.

Now, let us move on to... **What the Goodness of God Does:** The Goodness of God has been evident since the beginning of creation for **Everything God made was good. Genesis 1:31** *"God saw all that he had made, and it was **very good.** And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day"* God's goodness is evident in all His creations and accomplishments, from the heavens above to the earth below, with everything in it. Including every human being ever created in his image to have a relationship with Him. And as such a one, to make the point clear, we cannot earn and do not merit His goodness. What God's goodness does for us is that it is available to us regardless of our station in life, even though we are not worthy of it. Jesus said in **Matthew 5:45** "...He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the

unrighteous." Again, as we have read in **Psalm 145:9** "The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made." And because he is good to one and all...

God's goodness is [therefore] personal.

The lyrics of the chorus that we sang today say "God is so good; He's so good to me." We can all sing this song because He is good to each of us personally, in ways that meet our individual needs. His goodness provides us with benefits such as:

i. It gives us the perfect model of goodness. By knowing God and learning about His goodness, we can come to recognise true goodness and strive to do good things. We should pray as the Psalmist did, "*You are good, and what you do is good; teach me your decrees*" **Psalm 119:68**. We can look to God as the perfect role model to teach us about goodness and how to do good things.

ii. It assures us that God's purpose for us is good.

Just as parents want good for their children, our Heavenly Father wants only good for us. James 1:17 says, "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows." We should remember, however, that good things may not always show up as happy experiences. Sometimes good can come disguised as adversity or hardship, but God can use difficulties for good, as we learn in **Romans 8:28** that Goodness can and does come from all circumstances.

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

Deep in our heart's we want to believe in a good God. Yet, when pressed on the matter I am personally challenged and perhaps you are too, on just how shallow my understanding of God's goodness is, especially since, in reality and on a daily basis, I see, hear and experience many things that would seem to appear to deny the very goodness of God itself.

Corrie Ten Boom has helped me clarify this issue somewhat, as I hope will do the same for you, when she wrote:

"Often I have heard people say, 'How good God is! We prayed that it would not rain for our church picnic, and look at the lovely weather!' Yes, God is good when He sends good weather. But God was also good when He allowed my sister, Betsie, to starve to death before my eyes in a German concentration camp.

I remember one occasion when I was very discouraged there. Everything around us was dark, and there was darkness in my heart. I remember telling Betsie that I thought God had forgotten us. ‘No, Corrie,’ said Betsie, ‘He has not forgotten us. Remember His Word: “For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His steadfast love toward those who fear Him.” ’ Corrie then concludes, “There is an ocean of God’s love available—there is plenty for everyone. May God grant you never to doubt that victorious love—whatever the circumstances.”God’s goodness assures us that His purpose for us is good!

This week I read of one of God’s faithful missionaries, Allen Gardiner, a former British Navel officer who experienced many physical difficulties and hardships throughout his service around the globe to the Saviour. Despite his troubles, he said, “While God gives me strength, failure will not daunt me.” On August 29, 1851, at the age of 57, he died of disease and starvation, the last of six men, while serving on Picton Island at the southern tip of South America. When his body was found, his diary lay nearby. It bore the record of hunger, thirst, wounds, a bitter cold winter that prevented needed supplies to reach them from the Falkland Islands, loneliness and the loss of all things, except one longboat brought with them. It also recounted how the gospel had not been shared with one single Yagan Indian in the eight months since landing there- which had been their sole purpose of going. The last entry in his little book showed the struggle of his shaking hand as he tried to write legibly. The last words he wrote were, “I am overwhelmed with a sense of the goodness of God.” ...

I am personally challenged to grow in my understanding of God’s goodness. Are you too in your circumstances and outlook on life? Even when life is seemingly out of control and at its worst, God’s Goodness ... **[It] offers us security and encouragement.**

Corrie, Betsie, and Allen Gardiner. You along with all my brothers and sisters in Christ who have given up their lives. Even to the extent of losing or leaving behind your families, along with the comfort of the riches and pleasures of this world in order to follow Christ. Wherever that journey has taken you, to prison, to the ends of the earth, to spread the gospel under such deprived and difficult conditions. Along with hundreds of millions of believer’s in many nations, among various people groups, tribes and communities, who are suffering privation and persecution, torture, imprisonment

and death, living in danger almost daily for their faith in Christ... God offers each and every one of us encouragement and security because God's truth states that 'we can depend on the unchanging goodness of God'. God's Word to us says in **Psalm 52:1 (KJV)** "The goodness of God endureth continually".

Meaning God will always be good! His character does not change. He will continue to be the creator of all good things and we can be confident He will provide good things for us according to His perfect plan. May this security and encouragement serve to...

iii. [It] draw[s] us to God.

The purpose of God's goodness is to draw us to Him. This was manifested in the highest degree when God sacrificed His Son, Jesus, for our salvation. Because of His goodness, we have been given opportunities to hear His word and to claim eternal life by accepting Jesus Christ as our Saviour and LORD...

For it is God's goodness that leads to repentance!

The apostle Paul could testify from his own salvation experience to this when writing in Romans 2:4 (NKJV) "Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?"

The apostle Peter, leader of the disciples, had this to say of how God's goodness leads and draws us to him in **2 Peter 1:3**

"His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness".

Goodness of God - Conclusion

The Goodness of God is the core of our Christian faith. It is because of God's desire for our good that He provided salvation through His son. Everything God does is for our good. We can see proof of the goodness of God all around us in the life-sustaining provisions He supplies—from crops and animals that provide our food, to the very air we breathe. We can have goodness in us, and even desire to do good, but true goodness comes from the One who is perfectly good and wants good things for all people. So that what remains when we apply the teaching of God's Goodness to our own lives and the life of this church is this challenge: Our goal should be to show the goodness of God to others every day.

In this way God's goodness is shown, and therefore made known and available to everyone for... **[Psalm 145:9]**

"The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made"
...God is Good... **All the time...** All the time... **God is Good!**