

God is... Good

God is ... #7 – Pastor Gary Combs – July 7th, 2024 – Psalm 107:1-3

INTRO: Good morning church! I hope you've had a wonderful July 4th weekend! We are in week 7 of our 8-week sermon series entitled "God is.... In this series we've been exploring the attributes and character traits of God. This is a worthy pursuit as John says...

Series theme verse: John 17:3 (ESV) And this is eternal life, that they **know you**, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

So knowing God, not just knowing about Him, but really knowing Him, is the key to life!

In this series so far, we've considered God's love, might, mercy, fatherhood, His unchanging nature, and His faithfulness. Today, we want to consider God's goodness in a message entitled, "**God is... Good.**"

Need: "But is He?" You ask. Sometimes you may have doubted God's goodness. For if any of us has had a trauma, a bad diagnosis, lost a job, or suffered a failed relationship... then we've asked the age-old question: "If God is good, then why are these bad things happening to me?" Most of us affirm God's goodness until something bad happens to us.

For some, this question of God's goodness becomes one of their reasons for doubting God's existence. They begin to make "if/then" statements about God like: "If God is good, then why is there suffering?" Or "If God is good, why does He allow evil to exist?" But God didn't create evil. Rather, evil is the absence of good. Consider this question. What is darkness? Isn't it the absence of light? In the beginning God said, "Let there be light." He created all things good, but because of man's rebellion, sin infected God's good creation. Man turned from God's light, His goodness. But for most of us here today, the question of God's goodness doesn't cause us to doubt His existence. No. We believe God exists. We believe God is good. But we sometimes doubt that God wants good for us, that He has been good, is being good, and will be good to us. And this makes us afraid to trust His will for us.

The truth is, this is less about what we think about God's goodness and more about what we think about God period. So what's your idea about God? As the late philosopher and theologian, Dallas Willard, said, "There is no avoiding the fact that we live at the mercy of our ideas... This is never more true than with our ideas about God."

Trans: Perhaps it is our understanding of God and our understanding of what is truly good that is lacking. For who are we to approve of what is good or not? As C.S Lewis said, "There is but one good; that is God. Everything else is good when it looks to Him and bad when it turns from Him" (C.S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce*).

BODY: In Psalm 107, the Psalmist encouraged his hearers to give thanks to the LORD for His goodness. We can give thanks to the LORD for His great goodness towards us. Why can we give thanks to the LORD for His goodness? The text gives **three reasons** that we can give thanks to Him for His goodness.

TEXT: Psalm 107:1-3 (ESV) ¹ Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever! ² Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he has redeemed from trouble ³ and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

WE CAN GIVE THANKS FOR GOD'S GOODNESS...

1. Because we are loved by Him.

EXP: (1) The Psalmist calls us as worshipers of God to give thanks "for He is good." The first reason we are to give thanks for our good God is because of His steadfast love!

"Give thanks" (1) (תִּדְבַר, *yāḏā* - Hebrew imperative) - to give thanks, praise.

"LORD" (1) (יְהוָה, *Yəhōvā*) - Yahweh, the covenantal name of God

"Good" (1) (טוֹב, *tōb*) - good. By goodness we do not mean that God is relatively good. If we say, "That taco was good," we mean, "Of all the tacos, that was one of the better ones." We don't mean "good" on a scale of "good-better-best." No, as we apply goodness to God, we mean He is in a category all His own. As Jesus said,

Mark 10:19 (ESV) ...No one is good except God alone

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“God is the standard of all that is good. The fact that God is good means that He has no evil in Him, His intentions and motivations are always good, He always does what is right, and the outcome of His plan is always good” ([What does it mean that God is good? | GotQuestions.org](#)). God’s goodness speaks both of His character and of His deeds. “For he is good; and does good, and is the author of all good” (John Gill). And as the Psalmist declared of God...

Psalm 25:8 (ESV) Good and upright is the Lord... Psalm 119:68 (ESV) You are good and do good...

“Steadfast love” (1) (חֶסֶד, *hesed*) - favor, (loving-) kindness, covenantal love, Like NT’s *agape*. One of the chief ways that we experience God’s goodness is through His steadfast love for us. God’s goodness, like His other attributes, cannot be considered in isolation. God’s love and goodness cannot be separated.

“Endures forever” (1) (עֹלָם, *’olam*) - forever, everlasting. “The word endureth has been properly supplied by the translators, but yet it somewhat restricts the sense” (Spurgeon). Lit., “His steadfast love forever.”

ARG: Giving thanks is the only appropriate response to God’s goodness expressed by His love.

Psalm 100:4-5 (ESV) ⁴ Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! ⁵ For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever...

We see God’s goodness chiefly in three areas:

In creation:

Psalm 33:5 (NLT) He loves whatever is just and good; the unfailing love of the Lord fills the earth.

In providence:

Acts 14:17 (ESV) Yet he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.”

Matthew 5:45 (ESV) For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

In redemption: *But more on this in the next point.*

ILL: Did you have a good mother, a good father? I did. If you were to ask me why I think of them as good, I suppose the chief reason would be because they loved me. Sure, sometimes they were angry or frustrated with me. Sometimes they had to discipline me. But I always knew they loved me. It was both their goodness and love that moved them to care for me, provide for me, and even to discipline me.

APP: What is your response to God’s goodness expressed by His love? Give thanks! Giving thanks and praise for God’s loving goodness is our only appropriate response.

2. Because we are redeemed by His Son.

EXP: (2) Circle the word “Redeemed” (2x). God’s goodness is seen in His plan to redeem us from sin. The gospel is “good news.” In His goodness, God sent His Son to become the perfect and blameless sacrifice so we could be forgiven of our sins. This psalm is prophetic in this sense.

“Redeemed” (2) (גָּאָל, *gā'al*) - to redeem, act as kinsman-redeemer, to redeem (by payment)

“Say so” (2) (אָמַר, *’amar*) - to speak, say, answer. If you’re redeemed, say so! Testify of your redemption!

“Trouble” (2) (יַד־צָר, *yād sar*) - from the hand of the enemy, redeemed from the world, the flesh, the devil, or countless other snares.

ARG: God’s goodness is revealed in Christ, who gave Himself for our redemption.

Titus 2:13-14 (ESV) ¹³ ... our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

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God's goodness is displayed through His readiness to forgive.

Psalm 86:5 (NLT) O Lord, you are so good, so ready to forgive, so full of unfailing love for all who ask for your help.

God's goodness ought to lead us to repentance.

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?

ILL:

APP: Thanks is the right response to God's goodness and so is "saying so!" Tell others about God's goodness towards you! Say so! Tell the world how Christ has redeemed you and set you free!

3. Because we are gathered into His family.

EXP: (3) God loves us. He has redeemed us. And God has "gathered" us to Himself even though we were far away. The psalmist primarily spoke of gathering the dispersed Jews, but it also points to God's adoption of the redeemed into His family and eschatologically to His ultimate plan to gather people from every nation, tongue and tribe together in the New Heaven and New Earth.

"Gathered" (3) (קָבַץ, *qābaṣ*) - to gather, collect, assemble

"Lands" (3) (אֶרֶץ, *'ereṣ*) - land, earth, whole earth (as opposed to a part)

"East/west/north/south" (3) - East ("sunrise"). West ("sunset"). North ("hidden, dark") South (lit., "sea").

ARG: **Jesus lamented that the people of Jerusalem would not let Him gather them.**

Matthew 23:37 (ESV) "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!"

The psalms point to a future day when God will gather peoples from the ends of the earth.

Psalm 22:27 (ESV) All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you.

ILL: When I was 13, I was challenged to surrender my whole life to God. I was afraid. I doubted God's goodness towards me after the death of my father. The person challenging me gave me this Scripture:

Matthew 7:9-11 (ESV) ⁹ Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? ¹¹ If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

APP: God's goodness is revealed in His plan to gather us and adopt us into His family. Let us therefore decide to be good like our Father is good. To grow up in doing good, becoming like Him. As Peter wrote:

1 Peter 2:1-3 (NIV) ¹ Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. ² Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, ³ now that you have tasted that the Lord is **good**.

CONCLUSION: Have you tasted and seen that the Lord is good? We can give thanks to God for His goodness which is revealed in the way He (1) loves us, (2) redeems us, and (3) gathers us as His own family. God is good! Let the redeemed of the Lord say so!

Let's pray.