

## Goodness

### Lesson 7

#### I. Goodness is a **characteristic of God**. (Psa.100:1-5; Exod. 33:19).

PSA 100:1 Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth. 2 Serve the Lord with gladness; Come before Him with joyful singing. 3 Know that the Lord Himself is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. 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 lovingkindness is everlasting, And His faithfulness to all generations.

EXO 33:19 And He said, "I Myself will make **all My goodness pass before you**, and will proclaim the name of the Lord before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion."

#### A. **What if God were not good?**

1. It is frightening even to ponder the idea of God not being good.
2. All life would be miserable, and absolutely unbearable.
3. We would not enjoy blessings, but we would be punished now and forever without any hope.
4. Imagine if God were like the devil and delighted in our pain and misery!

#### B. I am thankful **God is good**.

1. His nature is good. (Jas. 1:13).
2. His Divine creation is good - lit. "very good." (Gen. 1:31).
3. His blessings are good. (Matt. 5:43-45; Jas. 1:17; Matt. 7:7-11).
4. He makes all things work together for our good. (Rom. 8:28).

ROM 8:28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

#### 5. **His commandments are good**. (Deut. 10:12,13; Rom. 7:12).

DEU 10:12 "And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require from you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul,  
DEU 10:13 and to keep the Lord's commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good?  
ROM 7:12 So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

- a. God forbid certain meats (Lev. 11). These meats were not wholesome food.
- b. Drinking ruins health, breaks up homes, deprives families, causes crimes and wrecks.
- c. Fornication leads to disease, broken homes, broken hearts, unwanted pregnancies, abortions, suicide, etc.

## II. Goodness Is A Characteristic Of Christ.

A. Nature (1 Pet. 2:22; 1 Jn. 3:5).

B. Jesus is called:

1. “Good teacher” (Mk. 10:17, 18).
2. “Good man” (Jn. 7:12).
3. “Good shepherd” (Jn. 10:11, 14).

C. Did good deeds (Acts 10:38).

## III. Christians Are To Be Good. (Gal. 5:23; Eph. 5:9; Acts 11:24).

- The Greek for “goodness” is “agathosune.” [ah gah thoh **soo** nay]
- The Greek for “good” is “agathos.” [ah gah **thahs**]

A. We can never be good in the absolute.

1. All men sin. (Rom. 3:10,23).
2. Even Christians cannot live above sin. (1 Jn. 1:8,10).

B. Christians can be good and love good. (Rom. 12:9; 1 Thess. 5:15, 21; 3 Jn. 11).

ROM 12:9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.

1TH 5:15 See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all men.

1TH 5:21 But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good;

3 JO 1:11 Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God.

The words “not seen” mean does not know God and is not recognized by God. See 1 Jn. 4:12

C. Christians are to live habitually good lives.

1. We are not to rationalize our fleshly nature, and consider it a license to sin.
2. **Stop practicing sin.** (1 Jn. 3:6, 9).

1JO 3:6 No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him.

1JO 3:9 No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

- a. Christians do sin. (1 Jn. 1:8,10).
- b. Must confess sins (1 Jn. 1:9).
- c. The wicked do not confess sins and are “haters of good.” (2 Tim. 3:3).

2TI 3:3 unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good,

3. We must be genuine - not hypocritical.

4. **Good deeds** (Tit. 2:14; 1 Pet. 2:12).

TIT 2:14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, **zealous for good deeds.**

1PE 2:12 Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may on account of your **good deeds**, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.

a. **It is significant that being good is not just refraining from bad, sinful habits.**

b. It is doing what we know to do good. (Jas. 4:17).

JAM 4:17 Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin.

c. Dorcas is a marvelous example of good deeds. (Acts 9:36-40).

ACT 9:36 Now in Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha (which translated in Greek is called Dorcas); this **woman was abounding with deeds of kindness and charity**, which she continually did.

ACT 9:37 And it came about at that time that she fell sick and died; and when they had washed her body, they laid it in an upper room.

ACT 9:38 And since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, having heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him, entreating him, "Do not delay to come to us."

ACT 9:39 And Peter arose and went with them. And when he had come, they brought him into the upper room; and all the widows stood beside him weeping, and showing all the tunics and garments that Dorcas used to make while she was with them.

ACT 9:40 But Peter sent them all out and knelt down and prayed, and turning to the body, he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

1) "full of good works" (KJV)

2) "Who was always doing good." (NIV)

d. **Barnabas** is a splendid example of goodness. (Acts 11:24; 4:36, 37).

ACT 11:24 for he was a **good man**, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And considerable numbers were brought to the Lord.

ACT 4:36 And Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means, Son of Encouragement),

ACT 4:37 and who owned a tract of land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

e. We must not "grow weary" of doing good (Gal. 6:9), but be "rich in good works." (1 Tim. 6:18).

D. Christians are not to practice goodness for praise. (Matt. 6:1,2-8).

MAT 6:1 "Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven.

1. It is practiced to please God.

2. It is practiced to bring glory to God.

3. It is practiced because it is good for us and others. (Matt. 7:12).

E. Problem (Matt. 19:16, 17; Mk. 10:17, 18; Lk. 18:18, 19).

MAT 19:16 And behold, one came to Him and said, "**Teacher**, what **good thing** (ti agathon) shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?"

MAT 19:17 And He said to him, "**Why are you asking Me about what is good?** There is only One who is good; but if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments."

There are some later manuscripts which have "Good Teacher." See Mark & Luke

MAR 10:17 And as He was setting out on a journey, a man ran up to Him and knelt before Him, and began asking Him, "**Good Teacher**, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

MAR 10:18 And Jesus said to him, "**Why do you call Me good?** No one is good except God alone.

LUK 18:18 And a certain ruler questioned Him, saying, "**Good Teacher**, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

LUK 18:19 And Jesus said to him, "**Why do you call Me good?** No one is good except God alone.

1. It appears that He called Jesus "Good Teacher" though Matthew only has "Teacher."
  - a. "Teacher" in Matthew is supported by the oldest manuscripts and is considered the be accurate reading of the text.
  - b. There are some later Greek manuscripts have "Good Teacher" in Matthew.
2. Matthew records Jesus objecting to the ruler asking Jesus about what is good.
  - a. Though not recorded by Matthew, the ruler uses the word in application to Jesus who he thought to be an outstanding man and teacher.
  - b. The ruler was asking One he regarded as a man how to obtain eternal life rather than asking God. (Of course Jesus is Deity, but the ruler does not seem to know this based on the answer of Jesus).
3. Mark and Luke record the question "Why do you call Me good?"
  - a. They emphasize the ruler's applying the adjective "good" to One he regarded as a great man.
  - b. All of these accounts are very brief, and it may be that Jesus was objecting to the ruler calling Him good and asking one he regarded as a man about eternal life.

#### Notes:

1. Humans can be called "good." (Lk. 6:45; Prov. 12:2; 14:14; Eccles. 9:2; Matt. 13:8, 23; 25:21; Acts 6:3; 11:23).
2. Jesus evidently objected to the way the young ruler used it.
3. He supposed Jesus was a good (outstanding) man, but he gave Jesus a title that belonged only to God.
  - a. Jesus would not have rebuked him if he had believed He was Deity - the Holy One of God.
  - b. Others were not rebuked for recognizing the Deity of Jesus. (Matt. 16:18; Jn. 6:69; 20:28).

#### IV. Developing Goodness

- A. **Speak to God daily** (1 Thess. 5:17).
- B. **Listen to God's word daily** and meditate on it. (Psa. 1:1-2).
- C. **Read and view materials that stir up the best in us**, not the base.
- D. **Turn from sin** and daily confess our faults to God. (1 Jn. 1:9).

E. **Seek the company of those who love the Lord.** (1 Cor. 15:33).

F. **Follow in the footsteps of Jesus.** (1 Pet. 2:21).

## V. Results Of Goodness

A. God is glorified. (Matt. 5:13-16; Rom. 2:21).

B. World is a better place for us and others.

C. Reward in heaven. (2 Cor. 5:10; Matt. 25:21).

1. Heaven is not earned. (Eph. 2:5, 8, 9).

2. Heaven and salvation are a gift from God to those who trust in Jesus and seek to please Him.

## GOOD, GOODNESS

**used of God** (*see also* GOD, attributes of, good) ♦ to Israel: Ex 18:9; Nu 10:32; De 26:11; 30:9; Jdg 8:35; 1 Ki 8:66; Ne 9:25, 35; Ps 73:1; 106:1; 119:68; Is 63:7; Je 24:6; 33:11; Zec 8:15 ♦ in Himself: Ex 33:19; 1 Ch 16:34; 2 Ch 7:3; Na 1:7 ♦ accepted from God: Job 2:10 ♦ experienced in life: Ps 23:6; 34:8 ♦ greatness of: Ps 31:19 ♦ in provision for the poor: Ps 68:10 ♦ people satisfied with: Ps 104:28; Pr 12:14; Je 31:14 ♦ abundance of: Ps 145:7 ♦ Israel's response to: Hos 3:5 ♦ toward all people: Ac 14:17 (cf. Mt 5:45)

**used of Jesus** ♦ as good Teacher: Mk 10:17–18 ♦ as a good man: Jn 7:12 ♦ as the good shepherd: Jn 10:11, 14

**used of things** ♦ the original divine creation: Ge 1:31 ♦ in man's sight: Ge 16:6; Le 10:20; Jos 9:25; 2 Sa 19:37–38 ♦ in God's sight: Le 10:19; 2 Sa 10:12; 2 Ki 20:3; Ec 2:26; Mal 2:17 ♦ a proposal: Ge 41:37 ♦ the promised land: Ex 3:8; De 1:25; 6:18; Jos 23:16; 1 Ch 28:8 ♦ God's word(s): Jos 23:14–15; Ne 9:13; Je 29:10; Heb 6:5 (cf. Jos 21:45) ♦ a way of life: 1 Sa 12:23; 1 Ki 8:36; Je 6:16 ♦ feeling toward someone: 1 Sa 20:12 ♦ news: 1 Sa 31:9; 2 Sa 4:10; 18:25; 2 Ki 7:9; Pr 15:30; 25:25; Is 40:9; 41:27; 52:7; Na 1:15; Lu 1:19; 2:10; Ac 8:12; 13:32; Ro 10:15; 1 Th 3:6; Heb 4:2, 6 ♦ certain men: 2 Sa 18:27; 1 Ki 14:13; Pr 2:20; Mt 12:35; Lu 23:50; Ac 11:24; Ro 5:7; 1 Pe 2:18 ♦ man's words: 1 Ki 12:7; Pr 12:25; Eph 4:29 ♦ God's hand upon someone: Ezr 8:18; Ne 2:8 ♦ the Spirit: Ne 9:20; Ps 143:10 ♦ God as only ultimate good: Ps 16:2; Mt 19:17 ♦ understanding: Ps 111:10 ♦ a name: Ec 7:1 ♦ God's pleasure: Is 46:10; 53:10; Php 2:13; Col 1:19 ♦ fruit(s): Mt 3:10; 7:17–19; Jam 3:17 ♦ work(s) or deed(s): Mt 5:16; 26:10; 2 Co 9:8; Eph 2:10; Php 1:6; Col 1:10; 2 Th 2:17; 1 Ti 6:18; 2 Ti 2:21; 3:17; Tit 1:16; 2:7, 14; 3:1, 8, 14; Heb 10:24; 1 Pe 2:12 ♦ gifts: Mt 7:11 ♦ seed: Mt 13:27, 37–38 ♦ a slave: Mt 25:21 ♦ one's heart: Lu 8:15 ♦ a part (i.e., Mary's response to Christ): Lu 10:42 ♦ wine: Jn 2:10 ♦ one's reputation: Ac 6:3 ♦ conscience: Ac 23:1; 1 Ti 1:5 ♦ the Law: Ro 7:12, 16; 1 Pe 3:16, 21 ♦ God's will: Ro 12:2 ♦ behavior: Ro 13:3; Jam 3:13; 1 Pe 3:16 ♦ courage: 2 Co 5:6, 8 ♦ will: Eph 6:7; Php 1:15 ♦ discipline: Col 2:5 ♦ the fight (i.e., spiritual warfare): 1 Ti 6:12; 2 Ti 4:7 ♦ confession: 1 Ti 6:12–13 ♦ stewards: 1 Pe 4:10 ♦ health: Lu 7:10; Ac 4:10; 3 Jo 2 ♦ things in general: Ge 24:10; De 6:11; 2 Ki 8:9; Ne 9:25; Job 22:18; Lu 1:53; Ga 6:6; Heb 9:11; 10:1

**used in contrast** ♦ to evil: Ge 2:17; De 1:39; 2 Sa 14:17; 1 Ki 3:9; 22:18; Job 30:26; Ps 34:14; 35:12; 38:20; 52:3; 109:5; Pr 14:19; 15:3; 17:13; 31:12; Ec 12:14; Is 5:20; 7:15; 41:23; Je 13:23; 18:20; Am 5:14–15; 9:4; Mi 3:2; Zep 1:12; Mt 5:45; 12:35; 22:10; Ro 3:8; 12:21; 14:16; 2 Co 6:8; Heb 5:14; 1 Pe 3:11; 3 Jo 11 (cf. La 3:38) ♦ to bad: Ge 24:50; 44:4; 50:20; Le 5:4; 27:10; Nu 13:19; 2 Sa 13:22; 19:35; Ro 9:11; 1 Co 15:33; 2 Co 5:10

**things not good:** Ge 2:18; Ex 18:17; 1 Sa 2:24; 26:16; 2 Sa 17:7; Ne 5:9; Ps 36:4; Pr 18:5; 19:2; 20:23; 24:23; 28:21; Is 65:2; Ro 14:21; 1 Co 5:6; 7:1 (cf. Eze 18:18; 36:31; Mk 7:27)

**conditions for experiencing good (especially from the Lord):** De 6:24; 10:13; Job 22:21; Ps 73:28; 84:11 (cf. Je 5:25); 125:4; Pr 11:17; 13:2; 16:20; 18:22; 19:8; 28:10; Je 32:39–40; La 3:27; Mi 2:7; Ro 8:28; Heb 12:10

**response to what is good**

**right response** ♦ rejoice in: 2 Ch 6:41 ♦ cling to: Ro 12:9; 1 Th 5:21 ♦ be wise in: Ro 16:19 ♦ seek for: 1 Th 5:15 ♦ love for: Tit 1:8 ♦ zealous for: 1 Pe 3:13

**wrong response** ♦ rejection of: Hos 8:3 ♦ haters of: 2 Ti 3:3

**goodness in general** ♦ shown to others: 2 Sa 2:6 ♦ of God's house: Ps 65:4 ♦ believers full of: Ro 15:14 ♦ as spiritual fruit: Ga 5:22; Eph 5:9 ♦ desire for: 2 Th 1:11 ♦ from voluntary choice: Phm 14

**doing good** ♦ in relation to God: 2 Ch 31:20; Ps 37:3; 3 Jo 11 ♦ to other humans: Ge 26:29; Nu 10:29; 1 Sa 24:18; Es 10:1–3; Pr 3:27; Lu 6:33, 35, 38; Ro 13:4; 15:2; 1 Co 12:7; Ga 6:10; Heb 13:16 ♦ reward for: 1 Sa 24:19; Ne 5:19; Pr 14:22; 19:17; Ro 2:7, 10; 13:3; Ga 6:9; Eph 6:7–8 ♦ lacking in man (i.e., in terms of God's standard): Ps 14:1, 3; Ec 7:20; Ro 3:12; 7:18–19 ♦ in giving thanks and praise to God: Ps 92:1; 147:1 ♦ learning of: Is 1:17 ♦ lack of knowledge of: Je 4:22 ♦ on the Sabbath: Mt 12:12 ♦ for the poor: Mk 14:7 ♦ by Jesus: Ac 10:38 ♦ not growing weary of: 2 Th 3:13 ♦ encouragement to: 1 Ti 6:18

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