

1. We have seen we can break the attributes of God into two categories

- A. The communicable attributes and the incommunicable attributes
 - B. **Communicable:** Those characteristics of God that humans do share
 - 1). Such as love, mercy, justice and our subject in this study goodness
 - C. **Incommunicable:** Those characteristics of God that humans don't share
 - 1). Such things as Sovereignty, Omniscience, Omnipotence, Immutability
- Thought:** There's a danger when we study the communicable attributes we must be careful of
- A. We can be tempted to put our understanding of human characteristics on God
 - 1). I know somebody who is good – so when I think of the goodness of God – I think of that
 - 2). You can do this with good parents – they were loving – kind - caring
 - a). My dad was so good – he was just like God – NO!
 - B. Problem: When we compare God to any human is to reduce God
 - 1). The fall twisted and distorted man – it shattered the image of God in man
 - 2). We're looking at goodness tonight – let's take that
 - Ro 3:12 (ESV)** All have turned aside ...*no one does good, not even one.*
 - a). God is good – man is not – whenever man does anything good in heaven's eyes
It is only because that man has interacted with God in some way
 - b). Any goodness in me is because of Him – down to any good thought
 - 1a). Any goodness in me is a mere reflection of His goodness
And it is a tattered and tarnished reflection – the fall has done damage
 - c). My goodness is limited – it changes – it's all over the place
God's is immutable – unchanging – it is simply who He is
- Summary:** There is a vast difference between God's love, mercy, kindness, goodness and mans
- A. Therefore we must resist the temptation to use man as a comparison for God
- Transition:** Let's look at what the Bible says about God's goodness

I. GOD'S GOODNESS

God's Goodness is Abundant:

1. When we say that God is good

- A. We are not speaking so much of His moral qualities such as holiness and righteousness
We are referring more to such things as His kindness, benevolence and generosity
 - 1). We're talking about Him being tender hearted, sympathetic and generous in His goodness
 - Ps 103:8 (ESV)** The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
- B. This doesn't mean He is soft or weak
 - 1). Paul shows us both sides of God in Romans 11:22
 - Rom 11:22 (NKJV)** Therefore consider the *goodness* and *severity* of God...
- C. Balance is this: While God by nature loves to bestow blessings upon His people
And while God does take genuine delight when His people are happy
 - 1). By no means does this mean He can be thought of as a weak God
 - a). One who can be manipulated - one who will not deal with our disobedience
 - 2). For the same God who loves to bless - is not afraid to chastise
 - a). And Hebrews warns - that chastisement can be very painful

Heb 12:5–8 (ESV) And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. ⁽⁶⁾ For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.” ⁽⁷⁾ It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? ⁽⁸⁾ If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

- 1a). That discipline is painful but also comforting – it is proof we are His children
Evidence that we are in a relationship with him

Transition: That’s the balance – with that said – let’s continue our look at the pleasantness of God’s goodness

- A. I want to glory in the fact that by nature God is one who loves to show His goodness to His people

2. A good definition for goodness is found in Ex 34:6-7

- A. Remember when Moses said to the Lord “now show me your glory” Exodus 33:18
B. Listen to what the Lord said in the next verse

Ex 33:19 (ESV) And he said, “I will make all my *goodness* pass before you and will proclaim before you my name ‘The LORD.’

- 1). So when the Lord passed before Moses he was going to reveal his goodness
2). So what did the Lord reveal about His goodness when He passed before Moses?

Ex 34:6–7 (ESV) The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God *merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, ⁽⁷⁾ keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin...*

Question: So what does it mean when we say God is good?

- A. We are saying he is merciful and gracious. That he abounds in steadfast love and faithfulness
B. We are saying that he maintains that love – while forgiving us of wickedness, rebellion, and sin

J.I. Packer says of this verse: ‘All the particular perfections that are mentioned here, and all that go with them – God’s truthfulness and trustworthiness, His unflinching justice and wisdom, His tenderness, forbearance, and entire adequacy to all who penitently seek His help, His noble kindness in offering men the exalted destiny of fellowship with Him in holiness and love - these things together make up God’s goodness, in the overall sense of the sum total of his revealed excellences.”

Question: Doesn’t goodness seem like such an ordinary word for all of that?

- A. But it only sounds ordinary because we are defining it by man’s goodness not God’s
1). Therefore we have robbed its meaning of all of its glory

Transition: We see that God's goodness is a very generous characteristic

- A. I want to show you some ways it is made evident in this world to all men - so we can have eyes to see it

God’s Goodness Is Very Evident in The World

1. Every human being saved and unsaved is touched by the goodness of God

- A. In fact everyone of us is dependent upon His goodness to live
1). Because everything that is necessary to live comes from God's good hand
And it is all given to us because He is good

2. Scriptural proof

Ps 145:9 (ESV) The LORD is *good to all*, and his mercy is over all that he has made.

Ps 145:15–16 (ESV) *The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food* in due season. ⁽¹⁶⁾ You open your hand; *you satisfy the desire of every living thing.*

- A. Do you see what that is saying?
Every morsel of food and every drop of water proclaims the goodness of God

Thought: That is why when we say grace - not as some ritual - it should mean something

- A. We are proclaiming that we understand - it is God that has graciously provided this food

- 1). That we eat because God is good to us - that He has looked upon us and provided our food
- 2). Therefore before we partake of our meal - we take a moment to acknowledge that
- B. The unbeliever doesn't see God in it at all
 - 1). He praises the farmer for their hard work - technology for its part in getting the food to him
 - 2). But mostly he praises himself - "I worked hard - I earned the money and I bought this food"
- C. While we recognize the farmer and are thankful for the technology - see the need to work hard to earn a living
 - 1). Above and beyond all that - we see the hand of God graciously providing our daily bread
Psa 33:5 (NKJV) ... The earth is full of the goodness of the LORD.
 - a). Every time you take a bite of fruit - eat a slice of bread you've experienced it
 - b). Every breath you take is a testimony to His goodness in your life
Job 12:10 (NIV) In his hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind.
 - 1a). None of us deserve a next breath – we've all sinned - deserve its wages death & hell
 - 2a). Therefore every breath is a testimony of His goodness to you

Transition: God's goodness is seen in His provision of the necessities of life - let's see another way

3. God's goodness is seen in the pleasure and delight He's allowed us to have

- A. Not only has He provided our necessities - He allows us to have pleasure as we partake in them
- B. Take our food - God's goodness is seen in the taste and flavor He's put into it - why we love to eat!!!
 - 1). God could have given us some slab of gray goo with no taste that sustained us - eat up!
 - a). No! He gave us stuff that turns into pizza and ice cream
- C. Take our world - God's goodness is seen in the beauty of it – Yosemite. Grand Canyon
 - 1). He could have just made a habitation to live our lives out in - with no color, beauty at all
 - a). Our backyard is just exploding in colors – beautiful flowers – trees – His fingerprints
- D. Then of course the ultimate gift of goodness to man = Golden Retrievers

Point: Everywhere we look, blue sky, clouds, birds singing, flowers, tasty food, the Dodgers

- A. He's done this not only for His children - but for everybody to enjoy - *common grace*
 - 1). It's not just believers who enjoy that tunnel seen in Yosemite Park – it's everybody!
Unbeliever's have Golden Retrievers
- B. God loves to bestow blessing upon us - He loves to be generous in his goodness
 - 1). Everybody is a recipient of His goodness everyday
- C. While the world might not praise God for these blessings - His children who understand should

Transition: Let's carry on with that thought of God's children being thankful for God's goodness

- A. While all people should give thanks to God for His goodness - the Christian has more reason

Man Is Saved Because Of The Goodness of God

1. Bible tells us it is God's goodness that leads us to repentance (Rom 2:4)

- A. Not only do we partake in the common grace that everybody else does
 - 1). We have become recipients of God's saving grace - we are His children now!
- B. How good God has been to us - saving us, forgiving our sins, making us His children

Thought: And now that we are His children His goodness is magnified

- A. While He is good to all men in some things - He is good to us in all things

Ro 8:28 (ESV) And we know that for those who love *God all things work together for good*, for those who are called according to his purpose.

- 1). Everything that comes into my life – no matter what it is – falls under this promise
God assures me that it will work out for my good – it will be a positive in my life

- a). And because he is sovereign – in control of all things – that promise will work
He will control all things to make sure they do work for my good

Transition: How thankful His children should be - God has been so generous in His goodness to us

APPLICATION

1. We should live lives that proclaim this goodness of God to an unbelieving world

- A. We should be constant reminders to the lost of how good our God is to man

2. Some thoughts on how to do that

- A. Be thankful to God! Obey the command to give thanks in everything

Eph 5:19–20 (ESV) addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, ⁽²⁰⁾ *giving thanks always and for everything to God* the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

- 1). One way we do that is by saying grace before our meal

- a). So the world can see that we believe He is good - He does take care of us - provide

- B. Another way is to joyfully and thankfully accept His ways in our life

- 1). If we go around grumbling and complaining what sort of testimony is that of God's goodness
2). But when things go wrong on a human level – things that would make the unbeliever complain
And we still are thankful and have joy – that brings glory to God
That declares to a watching world that he is enough – we are satisfied in him – we trust Him

3. Another way is to give credit where credit is due

- A. If God has blessed you and an unbeliever says something like "Aren't you lucky?"

- 1). Do you sort of shrug "Yeah" and slink off - knowing you should have said more
Or do you say "Not lucky - this blessing comes from God - Isn't He good?"

- B. Interesting we tell all our Christian friends - check out this blessing from God

- 1). But we act like it didn't come from God when were in the world - inconsistent
2). How come its from God to some - but not to others?
a). I wonder what God who has given us that gift thinks about that

Transition: That's the goodness of God and our response to it

II. THE WRATH OF GOD

Intro: The value of doing a study like this is it forces you to study things you may naturally shy away from
But we need a full understanding of who God is if we want a Biblical view of Him

1. Wrath defined

AW Pink: The wrath of God is His eternal detestation of all unrighteousness. It is the displeasure and indignation of divine equity against evil. *It is the holiness of God stirred into activity against sin.*

- A. In other words - it is God's holiness reacting against the sin that comes into His creation
1). Therefore wrath against sin is simply the result of God being holy
In the same way that an indifference towards sin is the result of being godless

Embarrassed by Wrath

1. We live in a day where God's wrath is hardly mentioned in the church

- A. Even though the Bible speaks more about it than it does about God's love
1). So while we might be embarrassed by the subject of wrath God obviously isn't
And He thinks it is an important enough subject to spend a lot of time talking about

- B. J.I. Packer in "Knowing God" writes about this hesitancy to speak about God's wrath
- "The modern habit throughout the church is to play this subject down. Those who still believe in the wrath of God (not all do) say little about it; perhaps they do not think much about it. To an age which has unashamedly sold itself to the gods of greed, pride, sex, and self-will, the church mumbles on about God's kindness, but says virtually nothing about His judgment... The fact is that the subject of divine wrath has become taboo in our modern society, and Christians by and large have accepted the taboo and **conditioned themselves** never to raise the matter."

2. A couple of reasons why we might be embarrassed by this subject

- A. **First:** Because we feel God's wrath is an overreaction to man's sin
- 1). We think that only because we lack holiness to the degree that God is holy
 - a). Therefore we're very tolerant towards sin - many times thinking its not that big of deal
 - 2). But God is absolutely holy - and absolute holiness finds sin absolutely unbearable
 - a). Wrath is a perfect - righteous reaction against sin that flows out of that holiness
 - 3). The more we grow in practical holiness - the more we will hate sin the way God does
- B. **Second:** Because we associate God's wrath with man's anger
- 1). We don't like angry people because they seem out of control – "What's their problem!"
 - 2). But God's anger is never out of control - it is always a right reaction against sin
 - a). It is always perfectly measured - the perfect amount of wrath for the offense
 - b). And it is always exerted in a perfectly just way – never with error

3. Because the thought of wrath bothers us - we have come up with a different God

- A. One who is weak, sentimental and isn't really bothered about sin - so He doesn't judge people
- 1). He lets everybody in - including atheists and agnostics

From Catholic Online – Headlines **"Pope says atheists can do good and go to heaven too!"**

Pope Francis: "The Lord created us in His image and likeness, and we are the image of the Lord, and He does good and all of us have this commandment at heart, do good and do not do evil. All of us. 'But, Father, this is not Catholic! He cannot do good.' Yes, he can..." "The Lord has redeemed all of us, all of us, with the Blood of Christ, all of us, not just Catholics. Everyone! 'Father, the atheists?' Even the atheists. Everyone!" We must meet one another doing good. 'But I don't believe, Father, I am an atheist!' But do good: we will meet one another there."

The Article continues: We are judged by a just God who will welcome us based on what we have done with what we knew. Those who do not know God will be judged on the good they have done and the values lived by,

- B. OTW we have turned God into the kind of judge we wouldn't accept in our earthly courts
- 1). If we feel a judge has let somebody off who is obviously guilty - we are offended
 - a). Why? It goes against that sense of justice that God has placed in man
 - b). We fume! "He broke the law - he needs to pay for that!"
 - 2). But for some reason - it doesn't bother us to think of God judging unjustly like that
 - a). Allowing sinners who have thousands of offenses against the divine law to go free
 - 3). If God did that He would not be just - He would not be holy and He would be a liar
 - a). He said there are wages earned when you sin - the wages of sin is death

Transition: Even though the thought of wrath might bother us – but we cannot ignore this subject

4. To ignore this subject is foolish

- A. To pretend that divine wrath isn't real will not make it go away
- 1). AND it may take away the urgency of warnings such as "Flee from the wrath to come"
 - 2). It was the wrath of God – the threat of hell that drove me to seek forgiveness
 - a). So if we ignore wrath – we take away the incentive many are saved by
 - b). The Bible warns us of wrath because wrath is real – and it causes men to flee to God

Transition: Let's see why this warning is so important – why we must not bury it

The Wrath of God and the Future: Hell

1. Scripture is plain that the wrath of God results in eternal destruction

- A. That all those who reject Christ will suffer a punishment that is without end
 - 1). A time that will be nothing but wrath – where the mercy and love of God will never enter
 - 2). The time of mercy is now – the offer of forgiveness is now – that ends at the grave
CHS: On every chain in hell is written - "Forever". If I could tell you that one day the fires of hell will burn out and that the lost might be saved, then there would be rejoicing in hell at the very thought - but it cannot be so; (for they are) forever damned, forever cast out into outer darkness"
- B. Thank God for His goodness that has kept us from that!
 - 1). But that is the reason we warn others isn't it – the reason we **MUST** evangelize
 - 2). I think as we've stopped thinking about this – the urgency to evangelize has waned

Transition: For the Christ rejecter – God's wrath is waiting – but it is also experienced in the present

The Wrath of God and The Present

1. Romans 1:18-32 Paul deals with God's wrath as it is experienced in the present

Rom 1:18 (NIV) The wrath of God *is being revealed* from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness,

- A. OTW it is a present reality for all who are godless and wicked
- B. 1:24 - The godless are given over to the lusts in their hearts
 1:26 – God gives them over to dishonorable passions
 1:28 – God gives them up to a debased mind
 - 1). The first two are God's giving a society over to sexual impurity
 - a). They don't want Him – eventually He says fine – in a judicial act
 He removes His gracious restraining hand
 To let them become who they are without Him
 - 2). When you see the explosion heterosexual impurity
 When you see the celebration of homosexual impurity
 - a). You know you are now a nation under judgment – God has started to step away
 - 3). If the nation keeps rejecting God - don't even want Him occupying their mind at all
 - a). God gives them over to a debased mind – now the society is in free-fall
Ro 1:29–32 (ESV) They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, ⁽³⁰⁾ slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, ⁽³¹⁾ foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. ⁽³²⁾ Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.
 - 1a). Sound like us? Like the headlines of our papers
- C. The people become the instruments of their own judgment
Donald Macleod: "Paul is not teaching that one day God will punish Roman civilization for its vice and decadence. On the contrary, the vice and decadence are themselves God's punishment... Their punishment *was* their greed, envy, strife, deceit, violence and faithlessness."
 - 1). God simply pulls His gracious restraining hand away – and the people devour one another
 - a). That nation comes apart at the seams

2. Judgment here = quality of life being ripped from mankind

- A. They live in fear – lock doors – alarm systems – self-defense classes

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- B. I've heard "If we don't turn soon God will certainly judge - listen judgment is here"
- 1). The only remedy to halt this is not Donald Trump
It is the nation turning to God in repentance – which starts with God's people
2 Chr 7:14 (NIV) if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.
- a). When God's people get serious about God - seeking Him
Humble themselves and repent of their sins - then judgment may be called off