KNOWING GOD

LESSON 12

Title: The Goodness of God

Text: Exodus 34:4-8, Psalm 107:1, 8, 15, 21, 31

1. **Review:**
   1. The word translated faithful means trustworthy or trustful, dependable, believable, sure, true.
   2. God’s faithfulness means that each of His attributes is consistent with every other attribute.
   3. God is never frustrated or torn between His attributes. With God, He is always faithful to love even in judgment and be merciful even in justice. Because God is faithful, we cannot emphasize one attribute to the exclusion of another.
2. **Introduction:** Today’s lesson concerns God’s goodness. “Oh give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good.” (Psalm 107:1) It is so comforting to know that the God we are accountable to is good!
3. **Definition of Goodness.**
   1. Synonyms provide a helpful definition. All of the following have to do with God’s goodness:

Virtue Purity Tenderness

Moral Kind Beneficent

Upright Considerate Benevolent

Honorable Thoughtful Charitable

Integrity Compassion Openhanded

Generous

* 1. All of this and more are God!
  2. God is good by nature.
     1. We speak of people who are “good natured” people.
        1. However, they are only good to a degree.
        2. Our goodness is only after we defeat the flesh through Christ. Romans 3:12 and Psalm 53:3 declare, “There is none that doeth good, no not one.”
     2. But God is good natured; in fact, it is never hard for God to be good because that is His very character and nature.
     3. “He takes holy pleasure in the happiness of His people.” (Tozer)
  3. God’s goodness is behind all He does from creation to redemption.
     1. Genesis 1:31: “God saw everything that He had made and behold, it was very good.”
     2. His goodness is always the same. He has never been more good than He presently is and He will never be more good than He is now.
     3. All men are recipients of God’s goodness.
        1. James 1:17: “Every good and perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of lights…”
        2. Theologians sometimes divide God’s goodness into two parts:
           1. Common grace – The blessings all men enjoy regardless of their spiritual condition.
           2. Special grace – The goodness only the saved can know.
        3. To quote J.I. Packer: “…God is good to all in some ways and to some in all ways.”
        4. Every sunrise, shower, breeze, drink of water, bite of food, night of rest, degree of good health; and on and on are known to us because God is good.

1. **Exodus 34:6: God’s goodness is spontaneous**.
   1. Spontaneous – arising without external constraint or stimulus; produced without human labor; developing without apparent external influence, force or care; NATURAL!
   2. God bestows blessings on us because is He is good, not because we are worthy.
      1. Latin theologians call God’s goodness “Ultra-Bonus.” Note: A bonus is an act of generosity, but an ultra-bonus is generosity overflowing. That is God’s goodness.
      2. Exodus 34:6: “The Lord God… ABUNDANT in Goodness.”
      3. J. I. Packer in his book, *Knowing God*, says this about God’s goodness being spontaneous: Goodness “is the quality of generosity. Generosity means a disposition to give to others in a way which has no mercenary motive and is not limited by what the recipients deserve, but consistently goes beyond it.” Think about that statement. God does not bestow goodness upon us hoping to receive in return. He bestows goodness upon us simply because He is good––generous.
   3. Some specific examples of non-meritorious goodness.
      1. Remember that we stated that God’s goodness is the basis for all He does from creation to redemption. We do nothing, absolutely nothing, to merit His goodness.
      2. Repentance merits us nothing. God’s goodness provides us pardon for our sin and we simply must repent to receive His goodness.
      3. Prayer merits us nothing. By that I mean we can’t get up from praying and act as though God is obligated to us because we prayed. His goodness provides us with the opportunity to pray to Him and He hears because He is good, not because we are good.
      4. Faith merits us nothing. Faith is simply exercising confidence in God’s goodness and the lack of faith is sin because we doubt God’s character.
      5. Are repentance, prayer and faith important? Of course! But they do not make God obligated to us.
2. **Conclusion**: Jesus is goodness personified. “If ye have seen me, ye have seen the Father.” Just read His life in the Gospels and also read of His death. He acted in goodness. In Matthew 19:16-17 Jesus received the title “Good Master.” He did not rebuke the man for calling Him good, He was simply saying to him, “Do you understand what you are calling me?” Jesus is Good because He is God!