

THE GOODNESS OF GOD – PART TWO

Do some thinking while we wait to begin...

Read Psalm 103. Then discuss with a friend...

- Why do we forget that God loves us? Why, sometimes, don't we feel that God loves us?
- According to Psalm 103 why are we to bless the Lord?

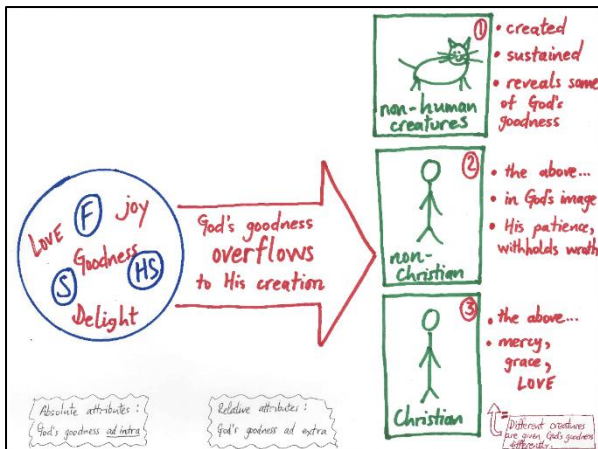
QUESTIONS FROM THE END OF LAST WEEK...

1. A non-believer says: "I'm suffering – I simply don't believe God is good." What do we say?
2. A non-believer says: "I'm perfectly happy with my life. Why should I consider Christ?" What do we say?
3. What about 2 Peter 3:9. If God desires all to be saved what about his sovereign plan only to choose some?

See John Piper "Are there two wills in God" (shorter) and "Does God desire all to be saved?" (longer):

<http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/are-there-two-wills-in-god>
<http://document.desiringgod.org/does-god-desire-all-to-be-saved-en.pdf?1446647103>

1. RECAP AND INTRODUCTION: GOD IS GOOD TO DIFFERENT CREATURES IN DIFFERENT WAYS:



- Last week: **common grace** = “Every favour of whatever kind or degree, falling short of salvation, which this undeserving & sin-cursed world enjoys at the hand of God.”

- This week: **special grace, saving grace, LOVE** = “God’s sovereign, unmerited, free & irresistible goodness in giving salvation to those who deserve his wrath.”

- Books to read / acknowledgements (from easier to harder):
 - J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*
 - D.A. Carson, *The difficult doctrine of the love of God*
 - Garry Williams, *His love endures forever*
 - Stephen Charnock, *The existence and attributes of God*

2. GOD IS THE SOLE CAUSE OF REDEMPTION

“The whole gospel is nothing but one entire mirror of Divine goodness: the whole of redemption is wrapped up in that one expression of the angels’ song (Luke 2:14), “Good-will towards men”.” (Charnock, p.258)

(a) We can’t save ourselves – nor do we want to

Ephesians 2:1-3

John 8:44, “You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”

(b) God is under no obligation to save us

3. WE ARE SAVED BY HIS GLORIOUS GRACE

(a) The grace of God

Ephesians 2:4-8

Acts 15:11, "No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are."

(b) He initiates a covenant of grace (Genesis 12, 15, 17 →)

Genesis 17:7, "And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you."

Hebrews 11:16, "... Therefore, he is not ashamed to be called their God."

"This of God's being our God, is the quintessence of the covenant, the soul of all the promises... he will be to them as great, as wise, as powerful, as good as he is in himself; and the assuring us, in this covenant, to be our God, imports also that he will do as much for us, as we could do for ourselves, were we furnished with the same goodness, power, and wisdom." (Charnock, p278)

(c) He loves us... because He loves us!

4. THE COST OF REDEMPTION DISPLAYS GOD'S GOODNESS

John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

Romans 5:8, "but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

2 Corinthians 8:9, "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich."

“In creation he formed an innocent creature of the dust of the ground; in redemption he restores a rebellious creature by the blood of his Son. It is much greater:

“For this, God must be made man, Eternity must suffer death, the Lord of angels must weep in a cradle, and the Creator of the world must hang like a slave; he must be in a manger in Bethlehem, and die upon a cross on Calvary; unspotted righteousness must be made sin, and unblemished blessedness be made a curse...

[Man’s] broken nature cannot be healed without the invaluable medicine of the blood of God. View Christ in the womb and in the manger, in his weary steps and hungry bowels, in his prostrations in the garden and in his clodded drops of bloody sweat; view his head pierced with a crown of thorns, and his face besmeared with the soldiers’ slabber; view him in his march to Calvary, and his elevation on the painful cross, with his head hanged down, and his side streaming blood; view him pelted with the scoffs of the governors, and the derisions of the rabble; and see, in all this, what cost Goodness was at for man’s redemption!”(Charnock, p261)

5. APPLICATIONS: WARNING, CONSOLATION AND PRAISE

6. LASTLY: IN THE LIGHT OF WHAT WE’VE LEARNED TODAY WRITE YOUR OWN MEDITATION ON THE LOVE OF GOD

Write down what you would like to say to yourself the next time you doubt that God loves you.

Write down what you might then say to God (i.e. pray). For example, you could complete each of these sentences...

Heavenly Father, you are...

Heavenly Father, you have...

Heavenly Father, I am...

Heavenly Father, please would you..