

The Lord is Good

The word “good” is used very loosely nowadays. How are you? Good and you? What do you mean by good? Is good the opposite of bad, or is there more to being good than that?

Psalm 23: 6 Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

1) The assurance of God’s goodness and mercy

- Surely goodness and mercy will follow me.
- What is goodness? It’s the virtue of being morally good or upright.
- Jesus said that only God is good.
 - Mark 10: 17 – 18 As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone.
 - I believe that Jesus wasn’t denying His own goodness nor His divinity. He was pointing to the fact that only God is good, and if the man considered Jesus merely another rabbi who all accepted compliments Jesus set the record straight. Goodness doesn’t come from position or self-righteousness but from God Himself.
- Jesus tested the man’s sense of goodness. The man thought that he was good as he had kept all the commandments since his youth, except, of course, that of do not covet.
 - Would we pass Jesus’ test of goodness?
 - Would we stand under scrutiny?
- Jesus then went on to tell him where goodness is found – in Him. Only God is good. Come follow me!
 - When we follow the Good Shepherd wherever He leads then we have the assurance that His goodness and mercy will follow us.
 - His goodness in reflecting His character as we participate in His life.
 - His mercy to keep us in His goodness – which in itself is part of His goodness. He keeps us from going astray.
- God is good and merciful at all times regardless of whether we follow Him or not.
 - Matthew 5: 44 – 45 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.
 - Matthew 5: 48 You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.
- This word perfect means to be complete in every way.
 - In character, thought and action.
 - God is complete in His goodness and so His goodness isn’t dependant on people’s actions to be good towards them. He is good by nature and not by response.
 - When we follow Him we are assured of His complete goodness in our lives.
 - And, more than that, we are assured of His goodness completing our lives for us to allow His goodness to be revealed through us.
 - Everyone experiences the goodness of God but we are only assured of it when we follow Him.
- Zechariah speaks about the goodness of God after a promise of the salvation of His people
 - Zechariah 9: 17 For how great is his goodness, and how great his beauty! Grain shall make the young men flourish, and new wine the young women.

2) Experiencing God's goodness

- His goodness and mercy will follow us all the days of our lives.
- There is no end to His goodness. As goodness is His eternal character He is and always will be eternally good.
- In order to experience His goodness all the days of our lives we need to follow Him all the days of our lives.
- This Psalm is about His goodness to us.
 - It is know Him as our Shepherd who
 - Provides all our needs
 - Fills us with His peace
 - Gives us His righteousness when we didn't have our own and couldn't attain it on our own.
 - Who is always with us in the dark valleys of our lives and frees us from all fear.
 - Who nourishes, satisfies and assures us in the midst of our enemies.
- Jesus so wanted the rich young man to experience His goodness, but He would never compromise His integrity for that to happen.
- Too often we lower God's standards to embrace everyone. Jesus never does that!
 - He allowed the young man to go away sad.
 - If we're feasting on the goodness of the world we'll never experience the goodness of God.
 - The problem is that the goodness of this world is fleeting – it's here today and gone tomorrow, unlike the eternal goodness of God.
 - Mark 10: 24 – 25 But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God."
- Peter exclaimed that they had left everything to follow Jesus.
 - Mark 10: 29 – 30 Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life.
 - He promises good things to those who follow Him.
 - But beware! He doesn't promise the things the way the world promises them.

3) Abiding in God's goodness

- I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever
- There's a constant abiding – living – in the presence of God where all His goodness is found.
- The house of the Lord represents the presence of the Lord. The place where the Lord is met.
- It was first the tabernacle in the wilderness then the Temple in Jerusalem.
- Now we can permanently abide in the presence of the Lord. It isn't a physical place in Jerusalem or on any other mountain.
- The Lord is always present with us, but do believe and desire to be in His presence?
- Do we take time to absorb His goodness which is found there?
- The more we spend time in His presence the more we'll experience His goodness and become like Him.
- How much do you really want Jesus?
- How much of Jesus do you really want?
- What are you prepared to sacrifice to gain all that He has for you?