

The Pursuit Of God

Session Eleven / August 31, 2016

The Goodness of God

1 *The goodness of God is that which disposes Him to be kind, cordial, benevolent, and*
2 *full of good will toward mankind. He is tenderhearted and of quick sympathy, and His*
3 *unfailing attitude toward all moral beings is open, frank, and friendly. By His nature*
4 *He is inclined to bestow blessedness and He takes holy pleasure in the happiness of His*
5 *people. That God is good is taught or implied on every page of the Bible. It is a*
6 *foundation stone for all sound thought about God and is necessary to moral sanity.*

7 THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOLY / A. W. TOZER / CHRISTIAN PUBLICATIONS / PAGE 88

8
9 Before we start, let us make clear that our understanding of God's goodness does not
10 depend upon our current financial, social or physical condition - a fact made so clear by
11 the Christian lady interred in a Nazi concentration camp during WWII - Corrie Ten
12 Boom:

13
14 Often I have heard people say, "How good God is! We prayed that it would not rain
for our church picnic, and look at the lovely weather!" Yes, God is good when He
sends good weather. But God was also good when He allowed my sister Betsie to
starve to death in a German concentration camp. I remember one occasion when I was
very discouraged there. Everything around us was dark, and there was darkness in my
heart. I remember telling Betsie that I thought God had forgotten us. "No, Corrie,"
said Betsie, "He has not forgotten us. Remember His Word: *For as the heavens are*
high above the earth, so great is His steadfast love toward those who fear Him. Corrie
concluded, *There is an ocean of God's love available – there is plenty for everyone.*
May God grant you never to doubt that victorious love - whatever the circumstances.

15
16 Scriptures are packed with references to THE GOODNESS OF GOD:

17
18 Psalm 145:1-7

19 David's Psalm of praise.

20 **I will extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever. [2]**
21 **Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever. [3] Great is**
22 **the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable. [4] One**
23 **generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts. [5] I**
24 **will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works. [6]**

1 **And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts: and I will declare thy**
2 **greatness. [7] They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and**
3 **shall sing of thy righteousness.**

4
5 Let's turn to the New Testament to hear the witness of the Apostle Paul:

6
7 Romans 2:4

8 **Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering;**
9 **not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?**

10
11 The above references are from the King James Version. The NAS (New American
12 Standard) replaces the word "goodness" with "kindness." That's a word we understand
13 and appreciate. Some will argue the point, but the fact remains that God, Who knows all
14 things and is infinitely smarter than all of put together, treats humanity in general and the
15 individual in particular is KIND.

16
17 In all my journey I must depend upon the GOODNESS OF GOD, for I have no innate
18 goodness of my own. I must understand that His kindness, His benevolence, takes under
19 its wraps all the qualities of Himself unowned by any other. His goodness includes His
20 holiness, His righteousness, His truth, all sent to me by Jesus and the Holy Spirit through
21 His love, His benevolence, His mercy and grace.

22
23 Granted - some circumstances in life make us question the previous statement. Why -
24 there is suffering in this world! War! Hunger! Lack of justice! Poverty! To be sure.
25 And the question invariably arises, "If God is so good, why do these terrible things
26 exist?" The answer is they exist because mankind has fallen away from God and His
27 original purpose for each of us, with resulting disasters. Should God take to solve all
28 those issues, He would take of us our free will, our volition. We would become nothing
29 more than chess pieces on God checkered board. But in His love and His incredible
30 patience, He does not remove our volition but give us a lifetime to get our acts together
31 and come to His Savior for forgiveness, mercy and help.

32
33 Let's take a look at four or give of these aspects of God's goodness to see how blessed we
34 truly are as beneficiaries of such love.

35 36 THE LOVE OF GOD

37
38 Some of this may sound familiar to those who were here for session #5 when we
39 discussed the Attributes of God - those things what are most certainly true of Him. I
40 touch on several of those considerations, including His marvelous and infinite love.

1 The subject of God's love is without limits and should always be front and center in our
2 hearts and minds. Satan, the "accuser" is always ready to tempt us to doubt God's
3 benevolent thoughts of us, despite so many scriptures that promise them to us. As earlier
4 pointed out, my concept of "good" may be severely inadequate. I might say, "That was
5 a good song," or "that was a good meal." How pathetically deficient those adjectives are
6 when attempting to describe the God of us all.

7
8 Doubtless the most oft-quoted passage from Scripture are these verses:

9
10 John 3:16-18

11 **For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever**
12 **believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. [17] For God sent not**
13 **his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might**
14 **be saved.**

15 **[18] He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is**
16 **condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten**
17 **Son of God.**

18
19 Notice some of the key words in those verses: God ... Love ... The World ... The Son of
20 God Perish Living Forever (everlasting life). Can you think of any thing in your
21 life more important? This glorious section of John 3 tells us - promises us ! - in no
22 uncertain terms where we stand with God Almighty.

23
24 Note these life-changing messages from the John passage:

25
26 1. God so loved....

27
28 These are the words of Jesus Himself Who informs us that the all-powerful Creator and
29 Sustainer of the universe is PERSONAL – not the "force" spoken of in Hollywood films.
30 God deals with you and me in terms of right and wrong and good and bad. Never let it
31 slip your mind that GOD IS UNWAVERINGLY RIGHTEOUS. He can do only that
32 which is right.

33
34 As such, our first and foremost duty and reason to even live is to honor Him and give Him
35 praise and worship. Romans 1:21 **Because that, when they knew God, they glorified**
36 **him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and**
37 **their foolish heart was darkened.** Why? Well, what have you and I ever done to
38 deserve such divine consideration and benevolence? Nothing. God's salvation is a gift
39 to us from His love. You cannot earn it. It is a gift that cost God His only begotten
40 Son Who paid the price for this redemption on the brutal cross of Calvary.

1 2. The world....
2

3 Not just Ft. Myers or Lee County or even all of Florida – but the entire world. As Dr.
4 Oswald J. Smith pounded into my heart and mind as a fledgling pastor decades ago, **The**
5 **supreme task of the Church is the evangelization of the world.**
6

7 *“When God loved, He loved a world. When He gave His Son, He gave His Son for a*
8 *world. When Jesus died, He died for a world. God’s vision is a world vision. That is*
9 *the vision He wants us to have. So many of us are localized in our outlook. We see only*
10 *on our own community, our own village or town, and we never see beyond. There are*
11 *those who think only of their own church and have no interest in what others are doing.*
12

13 *“Then there are others who have a larger vision. They see an entire city or province*
14 *and they are ready to give their money and to work for its evangelization. But they, too,*
15 *are local in their outlook, for they never see beyond the boundaries of the city or province*
16 *in which they live. Then there are those who have a still larger vision. They see an*
17 *entire country and they are ready to work for its evangelization. But even they are local*
18 *in their outlook, for they never see beyond the boundaries of the country where they live.*
19 *There are those, however, who have a still larger vision. They see a continent and they*
20 *are ready to do all they can for the evangelization of that continent. Yet even they are*
21 *local in their outlook for they never see beyond the boundaries of their continent.*
22

23 *“Then there are those who see an entire world. They see Europe, Asia, Africa, North and*
24 *South America and the islands of the sea. They have God’s vision and that is the vision*
25 *He wants us to have - a world vision!*
26

27 THE CHALLENGE OF MISSIONS / OSWALD J. SMITH / STAR BOOKS - LONDON / PAGE 18

28 The world’s population - billions strong - is mostly spiritually lost and headed for Hell.
29 Yet the Word promises that they “who will’ may be saved. Romans 10:13-15 **For**
30 **whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. [14] How then shall**
31 **they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him**
32 **of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? [15]**
33 **And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are**
34 **the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good**
35 **things!**
36

37 A leading public figure in our town told me recently that his church is dying. When I
38 asked about the congregation’s involvement in a world view, of missions, his face went
39 blank. He had no idea what I was talking about. I am afraid that many churches, even
40 our own Assemblies of God churches across America, have lost that world view.

1 3. He Gave ...

2
3 The words of Jesus Himself are so poignant: John 10:17-18 **Therefore doth my**
4 **Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. [18] No man**
5 **taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I**
6 **have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.**
7

As many of you know, I spend time on Florida's Death Row - the "DR" as it's known. There are over four hundred guys there (Raiford, Florida, near Starke). It is the most depressing place I have ever been. Each time I leave, I sit in my car for a few minutes just to get my head, my thoughts, together again. You see, upon leaving I can walk past those seven electronic massive gates which are opened freely to me, but those 400 cannot. They only await their turn across the street in the death house. Suppose our governor called me one night to ask, "Dan, tomorrow we are going to give the death needle to a prisoner. But we note you have a son. Would you be willing to allow your son to take the place of the condemned man?" What do you think I would say? Never! Yet that is exactly what God did. Without Christ, humanity awaits death, the grace and Hell. So God sent His Son to die on the cross that we might be delivered from eternal death and Hell. Yes, yes, yes – GOD GAVE!

8 4. His Son ...

9
10 "...for God so loved the world that He gave His only Son ..." (John 3:16) Muslims and
11 others stumble over the idea of God having a Son. No, God did not have a sexual union
12 with some female goddess - vis-a-vis Greek mythology - in order to have a Son. Look at
13 John 1:1 **In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the**
14 **Word was God.** The "Word" was Jesus Himself, there with God. Jesus always was -
15 He did not "come to be somehow." We don't comprehend that because our finite minds
16 cannot grasp the whole concept of eternal - never-ending - reality.

17
18 Then came the miracle of the "incarnation" (not reincarnation for that's a myth) which
19 means God became a man, God became clothed in human flesh. Nothing in all recorded
20 history even comes close to that marvelous truth! Jesus is, was, and always will be the
21 Son of God because HE HAS ALWAYS EXISTED, without beginning as recorded in
22 Hebrews 1:3 **Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his**
23 **person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself**
24 **purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; And yet – Jesus**
25 allowed Himself to come to this Earth as the Savior by way of a new-born child, the
26 mother being Mary and the Father being God Himself! Incredible truth and miracle!

1 5. Believe

2
3 “Whosoever believes! This is not some “positive thinking” deal, but a belief that
4 changes the way a person lives. It means to embrace what God says is true - and to trust
5 God to fulfill exactly what He has promised in His contract with humanity, that is, the
6 Bible itself.

7
8 Study this powerful verse: John 1:11-12 **He came unto his own (that is the**
9 **descendants of Abraham - the Jews), and his own received him not. [12] But as many**
10 **as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that**
11 **believe on his name:**

12
13 How brilliantly John states this phenomenal truth. We are “becomers.” No, we have not
14 yet “arrived.” In 1678, John Bunyan wrote *Pilgrim’s Progress*. He wrote it, we
15 believe, from a prison cell in the northeast where he was imprisoned for preaching the
16 Gospel in public. His anointed writing tells of our journey - yours and mine, really - as
17 we traverse from Earth to Heaven....constantly making progress despite the temporary
18 setbacks and the continual hassles from Satan. Yes, we are BECOMERS, sustained by
19 our fervent BELIEVING in Jesus as Savior and Lord.

20
21 6. Perish

22
23 Yes, Jesus came not to condemn us but to rescue us. However, those who refuse to
24 believe - or have never heard - are condemned already.

25
26 But...is that fair? If they have never heard? Ah, but God holds you and me responsible
27 for getting the Gospel to them. What makes me know that? The Word! Ezekiel
28 3:17-19 **Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel:**
29 **therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. [18] When I**
30 **say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor**
31 **speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked**
32 **man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. [19] Yet if**
33 **thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked**
34 **way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.**

35
36 So much for “taking it or leaving it” with regard to missions. A vital part of God’s
37 goodness then is His Love! And a major aspect of His Love is His desire for the world
38 to be saved. How? By empowering those who believe in Jesus obeying the Great
39 Commission and taking the whole Gospel to the whole world - a ministry at which this
40 congregation is very faithful.

1 THE EXTENT OF GOD'S GOODNESS

2
3 In an earlier session, we studied the IMMUTABILITY of God. The word means
4 unchanging - non-variable. That simply means that God has never been more good -
5 kinder - than He is right now. In the future, God will never be more good - kind - than
6 He is at this point in your life. Our affections and emotions may vary for any number of
7 reasons, but this is not true with God. When you pray, when you approach His throne in
8 intercession, remember that GOD IS NOT IN A BAD MOOD. The cause of His
9 goodness is in Himself - which is consistent to the nth degree. The recipients of His
10 goodness are all His beneficiaries who receive it without merit - we did not earn it.

11
12 Tozer gives us an quick insight here that we might never have thought of on our own:

13
14 *There is no merit in human conduct, not even in the purest and the best. Always God's*
15 *goodness is the ground of our expectation. Repentance, though necessary, is not*
16 *meritorious but a condition for receiving the gracious gift of pardon which God gives*
17 *because of His goodness. Prayer is not in itself meritorious. It lays God under no*
18 *obligation nor puts Him in debt to any. He hears prayer because He is good, and for no*
19 *other reason. Nor is faith meritorious; it is simply confidence in the goodness of God*
20 *and the lack of it is a reflection upon God's character.*

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22
23 Why is it so hard for us, as a sad rule, to believe in God's goodness? Sin! Sin has
24 destroyed our confidence. That's not hard to latch onto. Again, Tozer: *Years of*
25 *rebellion against God have bred in us a fear that cannot be overcome in a day. The*
26 *captured rebel does not enter willingly the presence of the king he has so long fought*
27 *unsuccessfully to overthrow. But if he is truly penitent he may come, trusting only in the*
28 *loving kindness of his Lord.*

29 (Ibid page 89)

30
31 So you may inquire, "If I finally come to God, how will He react to me? Is He angry?
32 Disinterested in my case?" Remember that Jesus said He and His Father were exactly
33 alike. Jesus would not turn away. As Jesus responded to the needs of those around
34 Him, so God reacts accordingly. Depends upon how you approach Him, though, doesn't
35 it? If you are a Pharisee, a hypocrite, a critic, cold in your spirit, you may not find Him
36 so outgoing. Again, Tozer: *To the frightened He is friendly, to the poor in spirit He is*
37 *forgiving, to the ignorant, considerate, to the weak, gentle, to the stranger, hospitable.*

38 (P. 90)

39
40 *Because of Jesus, we may come boldly to the throne of grace. Praise the Lord!*

1 Next week we continue our PURSUIT OF GOD and study one of the most perplexing, yet
2 satisfying, truths in all the Word – The Trinity.

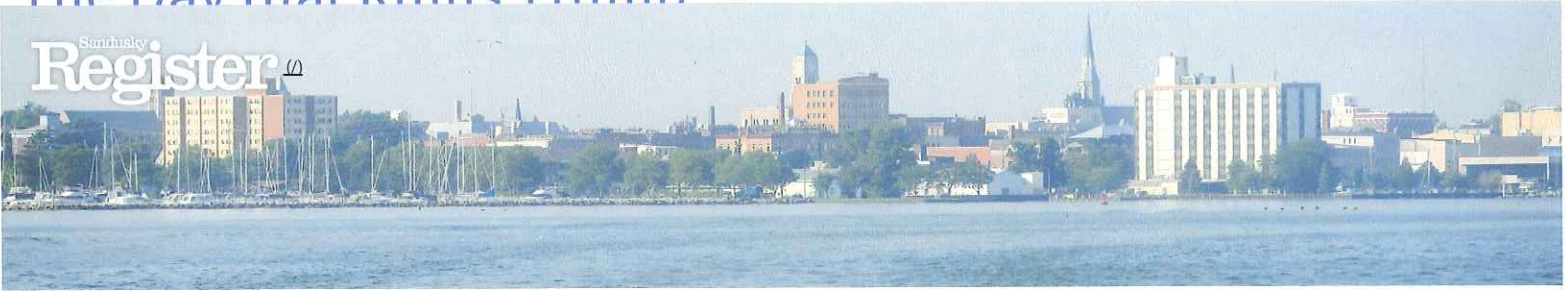
3
4 We have but one God, yet we believe from Scripture that He can be revealed to us as

- 5 • Our Heavenly Father, God
- 6 • Jesus, our Savior, God's Son
- 7 • The Holy Spirit, our Empowerer

8
9
10 How is this Biblical? How can such a thing be rationally explained? We will see - next
11 week.

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Provided artist rendering/VINTAGE DEVELOPMENT GROUP

2 / 16 An artist rendering reimagines what the new Sandusky City Hall could look like. An \$18.5 million publicly financed plan calls for renovating the Calvary Temple church and Kingsbury buildings on Columbus Avenue and Washington Row near Small City Taphouse into a new administrative complex for city officials.



[CITY OF SANDUSKY \(/TAGS/CITY-OF-SANDUSKY\)](#)

New Sandusky City Hall vision takes shape

[/authors?ANDY_OURIEL \(/AUTHORS?USER=ANDY%20OURIEL\)](#) • UPDATED AUG 17, 2016 AT 5:38 PM

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PHOTOS: [Inside the proposed city hall \(http://www.sanduskyregister.com/gallery/Inside-the-proposed-Sandusky-city-hall?ci=stream&lp=3&p=\)](http://www.sanduskyregister.com/gallery/Inside-the-proposed-Sandusky-city-hall?ci=stream&lp=3&p=)