

GOD IS GOOD: LUKE 18.19

The Communicable Attributes of God, Part 3 of 3

Theme: Let God's goodness lead you to repent of your sins and follow close after the Lord Jesus Christ!

We have been studying certain attributes (characteristics) of God that He has shared in some way with us.

- We call these share characteristics His *communicable attributes* (He has communicated them to us).
- We saw first that God is love, and because He has communicated this attribute to us, we ought to love:
 1. We ought to love God by *being* disciples (through salvation and sanctification, the call to repent and turn to Christ to trust Him as Savior and follow Him as Lord).
 2. We ought to love our neighbor by *making* disciples. We do that by loving our lost neighbor and meeting his greatest need through evangelism. We do that also by loving our saved neighbor and meeting his greatest need through edification.
 3. Love, therefore, is the fulfilling of the Law because God is love, and therefore by loving God and others we are manifesting His character.
- Secondly, we saw that God is holy and just.
 1. He is holy: He is completely separated from all that is bad and is completely dedicated to good.
 2. He is just: He is completely and totally fair (this attribute is most exhibited in His Law).

Today I'd like to finish up this short mini-series on the communicable attributes of God by looking at what the Bible says about His *goodness*. God is good!

- (Rom 2.4) And His goodness ought to lead us *all* to repentance from sin, and to a life of following close after Jesus Christ.

I. God is Good – The Goodness of God: Luke 18.19

A. God's goodness speaks of His moral perfection.

1. (Luke 18.18-19) When the rich young ruler came to Jesus to speak about earning eternal life, Christ immediately points him to the standard: The goodness of God.
2. (Luke 18.20) The context shows us the definition of goodness: Moral Perfection (Jesus uses God's moral Law to measure the goodness of the man—He measures the good of the man by the goodness of God; He measure man's moral standing by God's moral standard, the Law).
3. The point is this: God is good; God is morally perfect.

B. God's goodness can be seen in *all* that God *is* and *all* that God *does*.

1. The goodness *within* God (His character) is similar to His *holiness*.
 - a) God is totally and completely separated from all that is bad, and totally and completely dedicated to all that is good.
 - b) There is *no* bad at all in God. He is good, all good.
2. The goodness that *proceeds from* God (His conduct) is similar to His *justice*.
 - a) God is good (morally perfect), therefore He will always and actively seek the good of others.
 - b) (Rom 12.2) That's why God's will for every man is good (always and in every way).

C. God is good (in character and conduct), and that leads us to the next point of study...

II. We Are Not Good

A. No one is good: No one is morally perfect.

1. You are bad (what is within you is bad). Your character is morally corrupt: Gen 6.5; Jer 17.9.
2. You do bad things (what proceeds from you is bad). Your conduct is not morally perfect: Mat 15.19; Rom 3.10-18.

B. (Rom 3.23) No one "measures up" to God's standard of goodness.

1. We all "fall short" when it comes to being good. No one is good, only God.
2. God's goodness, then, should lead us to repentance...

III. God's Goodness Ought to Lead Us to Repentance: Romans 2.4

A. God's goodness ought to strike fear in our hearts.

1. Most people today have this idea that because God is "good," He will simply overlook sins and just let everyone into heaven ("Well, God is a good God and He'll just forgive me and let me in").
 - a) But, is that really being "good"? Is that morally right (to just overlook wrong and wickedness)
 - b) Would a good judge simply let the guilty go free? No. A bad/corrupt judge would do that.
2. (Exod 33.18-34.7) God's goodness means death for all those who are not good.
 - a) Moses asks to see the glory of God (Exod 33.18) and (Exod 33.19) God granted him that by displaying (God would be glorified in) two things: His goodness, and His grace (and mercy).
 - b) (Exod 33.20-23) But Moses could not look upon God's full glory (His goodness) because that would mean death for him. Why...?
 - c) (Exod 34.5-7) Because even though God is good in the sense of kindness (grace and mercy), He is also good in the sense of morally perfect.
 - (1) (v5-7a) God proclaimed His grace and mercy toward sinful man first (I like that!).
 - (2) (v7b) And then He proclaimed His goodness—that He will by no means clear the guilty! Sin is wrong; sin has consequences. And God is good, so good that He will not reward the law-breaker, but rather He will see that the law-breaker is punished as He deserves.
3. God's goodness ought to strike fear in our hearts and motivate us to turn from our wickedness:
 - a) (Ps 24.3-4) Who can stand before the Lord? Answer: The one is is good, the one who is morally perfect in character (pure heart) and conduct (clean hands). Is that you...?
 - b) (Rom 2.4-11) That's why God's goodness ought to motivate us to repent (turn from sin!).
 - (1) (v5-6) Because God is good, He is a morally perfect Judge...
 - (2) (v7, 10) If you have done good (always), you do not deserve punishment (and to punish you would be wrong/bad; and God is good).
 - (3) (v8-9) However, if you have done wrong, you deserve punishment.
 - (4) (v11, 4b) The goodness of God ought to strike fear in our hearts, and that fear (of facing a good God) is the first step toward salvation because it is the first step toward repentance.
4. The fear of God is good, healthy, and necessary.
 - a) The Bible says that our God is a consuming fire (Heb 12.29) and that is why it also says that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Heb 10.31).
 - b) (Exod 19.16-20; 20.18-20) Seeing God in His goodness—in His moral perfection (as expressed in His Law: Exod 20.1-17)—should create fear in the heart of the sinner.
 - (1) That fear is healthy, good, and right, because that fear will motivate him to stop sinning (it will lead him to repentance!).

- (2) Remember Romans 3.18: Men continue in their sin because they like it and because they do not fear God ("There is no fear of God before their eyes").
- c) (Prov 16.6) Without the fear of God, men will not depart from their evil—without the fear of God, sinners will not repent.
- d) (Prov 14.27) That is why the fear of the Lord is good, healthy, and right. It will motivate us to flee from the wrath of God (the consequences of our "badness" before a good God).
- e) (Prov 8.13) The fear of the Lord will also continually lead us in His ways (sanctification).
- f) Therefore, the fear of God is a proper and wise motivation for salvation *and* sanctification.
- (1) Why is that? Because God is good and He will actively seek out all that is bad and deal with it according to His goodness—His moral perfection.
- (2) Why do you think bad men in our society continue to do bad things? They have no fear of consequences. Fear is a deterrent to bad behavior.
- People's belief about God, eternity, and judgment is what shapes a culture/society.
- (3) Or why do you "good" men do bad things (e.g., pastors that commit adultery)? They have no fear of God—no fear of consequences.
- They have the same warped idea of God's goodness that we see in most lost people today, that God will just overlook the wrong.
- (4) The modern church, through the preaching and propagation of a false gospel (of God's love without God's justice—mercy without condemnation, grace without law, faith without repentance) has filled church buildings and pulpits with "believers" who have no fear of God.
- (a) The majority of believers today have no fear of God because they do not understand His *goodness*. God is good, and we are not.
- (b) God's goodness ought to strike *fear* in our hearts and lead us to *repentance* for salvation and holy living!

B. God's goodness ought to create a desire in us to be with God (to follow Him closely and always!).

1. (Jer 32.40) Firstly, the fear of God will keep us *close* to God because He (God, in Jesus Christ) is our only refuge from His wrath (from His right and good response to our badness).
2. (Eph 2.4-7) But, secondly, God's *goodness* is also manifest in his *kindness* extended toward all of us who are in Jesus Christ.
 - a) God is *good* and therefore He desires and actively seeks after *our good*.
 - b) Remember Romans 12.2: God's will for us and our lives is *good* in *every* aspect.
 - c) (Rom 8.28) Even when we make mistakes, God will use that for our *good*.
 - d) This aspect of God's goodness (His gracious and merciful kindness) should also lead us to repentance for salvation and holy living!
 - (1) Think about it:
 - (a) Look at how *good* and *kind* God is! He will provide for you, protect you, love you, care for you, never leave you, never forsake you... even when you mess up!
 - (b) And then look at what *sin* has done for you. Sin has ruined your life, your health, your mind, your heart, your reputation... and your eternity.
 - (2) Let God's *goodness* (His love, kindness, protection, provision) motivate you to turn from sin and walk closely with Him! Why would you embrace sin in all its filth and destruction when you can have God in all His grace, mercy, kindness... in all that is *good*?

Conclusion: To know God is to know His attributes...

God is good: He is morally perfect.

- That ought to strike a holy and healthy fear in our hearts because we are not good (we have not followed God's moral Law always—we are corrupt in character and in conduct).
- So, let that fear of facing a good God in judgment motivate your to *repent*. Flee from the right wrath of God, and flee to the only refuge there is: the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

God is good: He is kind, friendly, merciful, full of grace, and beneficent (He actively seeks our benefit).

- This aspect of God's goodness ought to also motive us to repent—to turn from sin that only ruins our lives, and to turn to God in Jesus Christ Who will never leave us not forsake us.
- God will *always* choose the *best* for you and He will *always* provide the *best* for you. He is good, so He cannot do otherwise!

God is good: Fear Him, yes (because you are not good). But, follow Him closely because He is the only One who will actively and always seek your greatest good—your benefit, your blessing, your richness in Him!

- Do that (fear God and follow God—repent of your sin and walk closely after the Lord), and you will find yourself glorifying God and enjoying Him both now and forever.