

Echoes Of Original Goodness

Lessons from the Self-giving God.

Created For Goodness: Our Design

Our world was made Good by an Original Goodness.

This Goodness was so vast and powerful It separated light from dark, gathered the waters and made dry land appear, causing plants to grow as a food source for the birds that would follow. Then on the dry land that Goodness caused animals to grow; that life would abound on it. So that now the water, the land, and the animals all had purpose in function - to live as designed, to grow, to be fruitful. It was all part of the design of an Original Goodness.

But that wasn't sufficient to make known the Original Goodness. God had more of Himself to give. So he created a reflection of Himself that was more direct.. This creation was specifically designed to reflect Him. It was brighter and more clear. To us humans he gave a more robust purpose: to more fully be like Him through the propagation and governance of His creation.

Gen 1:28 "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground." 29 Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. 30 And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food." And it was so. 31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good."

And when God's craftsmanship was complete and he looked upon that man and that woman, I imagine He saw their unbelievable amount of potential and power to do good and was overjoyed at what He had made.

Their design is our design, their purpose and ours is to echo Original Goodness. They were designed to be like Him. We were designed to be like Him. We were designed to echo the power and potential of our Creator to do good.

This morning, while we reflect on our design and Original Goodness, I want us to excavate deeper into our understanding and motivations for doing good. I hope that we can pick up some lessons from the Master and apply those in our own lives and the lives of others.

Seeing Jesus Motivates Us: Mark 1:40-42

*40 And a leper came to him, **imploring** him, and **kneeling** said to him, "If you **will**, you can make me clean."*

- OT leprosy laws: life of anguish and exile (Leviticus 13).
- Physically and ritually unclean: unacceptable to be a part of the community.
- Separated from family, separated from wife, children, all that they know and love.
- Understandable fear that the bad which existed in the life of the leper would spread to those around them. Boundaries established to protect the larger group.
- A situation which reflects very little goodness, only that of self-preservation.

*41 Moved with **pity**, he stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, "**I will; be clean.**"*

- Pity: pull out your guts level of emotion - inward parts = seat of emotions - moves one to action.
- Pity = compassion = significant virtue reflects God's own character - Original Goodness exemplified as merciful and compassionate because he cares enough to act.

42 And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean.

- The result of compassion in action. -> good can come.
- Picture of restoration = physical -> greater spiritual and physical = complete restoration.
- While we are not the Master himself, we do echo after his pattern. We are designed in light of Him. And we may not be able to heal lepers but we do serve the one who can.
- So we try our best to do good because it's what he would have done.
- When we're willing to do what seems unusual to help others, we live more like Him.

Why Take Risks To Echo Original Goodness?

Despite any risks we may face, the reason for doing good is quite simple. **The more you experience God's goodness growing in the people and places where it lacks, the more you experience who God is. The more you experience who He is, the more you want to be a part of what He is doing. Therefore, In the face of Original Goodness, no risk is too great.**

Reflection Questions

- What and where are the risks you're willing to take to model God's Original Goodness?
- To whom do those risks reveal God's Original Goodness?
- What is it going to cost you to take that risk?
- What's stopping you from taking it?

What Jesus Wants: Original Goodness Personified!

Remember, we're designed to echo Original Goodness and when we get to share in God's joy!

Takeaways: Lessons from the Self-giving God.

1. If you're **willing** to do good, God can take that good and magnify it well beyond our initial expectation.
2. We can be an **extension** of God's goodness. We echo the Original Goodness and are an echo of his power and creativity. Not a question of ability but one of desire.
3. In doing good, we can face many challenges; real good requires **real risk**.
4. Temporal good points to a future, permanent restoration.
5. Doing good brings us to a **shared understanding** of who God is and the **joy** He brings. It is in shared joy that we meet one another, understand each other, and find deep **fellowship with our Creator**.