

Living in the Goodness of God

Recognizing How God's Goodness is Running After You

The Goodness of God

Part 1, He Leads Us to Repent

Humanity can know what “good” means because our reference and example for “goodness” is our Creator, Jehovah God. The Scriptures abound with testimonies of God’s goodness. It is one of his attributes or character traits. Here are two verses that declare God’s innate “goodness”.

Psalm 31:19 *How great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast stored up for those who fear Thee, which Thou hast wrought for those who take refuge in Thee, before the sons of men!*

Psalm 107:1 *Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; for His lovingkindness is everlasting.*

And, of course, there are many, many more.

One of the many ways that God is good is regarding how He has made salvation available to all humanity and then calls every human being to BE saved. In Romans 2 Paul is presenting a logical argument to his own people (the Jews), showing them that their self-righteous arrogance regarding law-keeping—and their subsequent judging of those who did not attempt to “keep” the Mosaic Law—was both hypocritical and dangerous! It was hypocritical because they were guilty of the same sins that they judged in others. It was dangerous because their standard of judgment would be returned upon them. Jesus warned in Matthew 7:2, *For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.* Paul continued to explain that remaining in self-righteous arrogance, and insisting that they could earn a right or “good” standing before God by keeping laws and ordinance, was trifling with and despising the grace and goodness of God! In their insistence that they were “good”, and the judging of those who did not meet their standards, they rebuffed the conviction of the Holy Spirit which was mercifully and patiently calling THEM to repentance! Romans 2:4 reads, *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the **goodness** of God leadeth thee to repentance?*

Repentance is both a forgotten and a misunderstood requirement of God for individual salvation.

Both John the Baptizer and Jesus the God-Man demanded **repentance** (for example, Matthew 3:2 and 4:17). Jesus’ Apostles preached repentance (Mark 6:12). And Jesus made it clear that without repentance

we will perish (meaning to come under the judgment and wrath of God) (Luke 13:3, 5). Jesus said, *The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel* (Mark 1:15). And so, what IS repentance?

The literal meaning of the word “**repent**” is “to think differently”. Regarding salvation, it means this: in our natural sinful state we are like Paul’s kindred; we are self-righteous, arrogant in our self-good. We THINK we are Heaven-bound because we have not committed some egregious sin such as murder or child abuse. We THINK that church membership, or keeping rites and rituals, or doing good works will qualify us for Heaven. We THINK, most surely my good will outweigh my bad and God will, with a great smile, welcome me into Glory and thank me for being there!

But God says, REPENT, i.e., “THINK AGAIN!”. God says we are all sinners (Romans 3:23), separated from Him (Isaiah 59:2), and even now abiding under His wrath. Jesus warned, *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him* (John 3:36).

So repent means to “think different”, i.e., to change our minds about our own self-goodness, about how men and women are born again. Paul’s kindred arrogantly believed they EARNED their salvation by their law-keeping and good works. But Jesus warned you had better think again; you had better change your mind; you had better agree with God!

We need to change our minds about how we can enter into God’s Eternal Kingdom and agree with Ephesians 2:8, 9, *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

Friends, it is the GOODNESS of God that calls us to repent and accept HIS grace-gift of forgiveness for salvation. Salvation has never been by works and will never, ever be by works. Paul wrote to Titus, *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us...* (Titus 3:5). Consider the goodness of our God Who is not willing that any should perish, but that ALL should come to repentance.

God bless and consider!