

THE GOODNESS OF GOD  
Nahum 1:7

Intro: My subject this morning is THE GOODNESS OF GOD; my text is the Bible.

Actually we will be looking at just a few of the many verses which deal with the goodness of God. References to God's goodness are found throughout the Scriptures. We would not have the time to read them all in the time that has been set aside for this service this morning. There is nothing about God that is more prominent in the Scriptures. Let me confirm that statement with you as we begin today.

I. GOD IS A GOOD GOD.

Last Sunday we considered together that God is a God of hope. Hope is actually a part of His goodness. And so is His love, His grace, His mercy, His kindness, His compassion--and we could go on with similar terms which reflect the goodness of the Lord.

This is what Nahum has to say about God. Cf. Nahum 1:7.  
The familiar 100th Psalm ends this way:

For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting;  
and his truth (faithfulness) endureth to all generations.

If there was one thing that the children of Israel were constantly declaring about God, it was this: God is good!

Cf. Psa. 106:1,

Praise ye the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord;  
for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Cf. Psa. 107:1,

O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good:  
for his mercy endureth for ever.

Cf. Psa. 118:1,

O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good:  
because his mercy endureth for ever.

Cf. Psa. 136:1,

O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good:  
for his mercy endureth for ever.

And note the refrain that runs through the entire 136th Psalm.

David was continually exalting the goodness of God. This was the song that was sung when the forces of Jehoshaphat went out against their enemies, when God gave them that great victory recorded in 2 Chron. 20.

The second thing that we need to note about God is that . . .

II. GOD DOES GOOD THINGS.

This is what we have in Psa. 23:6: "Surely goodness . . ."

This is what we would expect from a good God. Listen to these words of David found in Psa. 31:19:

Oh how great is thy goodness,  
which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee;  
which thou has wrought for them that trust in thee  
before the sons of men!

From creation on to the eternal state we have manifestation after manifestation of the goodness of God. Cf. Gen. 1, and Rom. 8:28. Since God is God, He is sovereign--sovereign in all things, sovereign over all men, sovereign in all events. And His goodness is to be seen in all things, even in the judgments which He brings upon the earth.

We learn this primarily from the Word of God, but it is evident in daily life. Even unregenerate men will talk about "the good Lord," even though they are quick to blaspheme the Name of the Lord when anything goes wrong.

Now, if we were to single out one thing which God has done which is the greatest evidence of His goodness, what would it be? The answer to that question is very clear in Scripture.

Let us call it . . .

### III. GOD'S GREATEST GOODNESS.

Cf. Titus 3:4-7:

But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,  
Not by works of righteousness which we have done,  
but according to his mercy he saved us,  
by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;  
Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;  
That being justified by his grace,  
we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Cf. Rom. 5:8.

There could be no greater proof of the goodness of God than in the sending of His Son to die guilty, helpless, hopeless sinners! The death of Jesus Christ is the focal point of all of Scripture, and so we can say that the focal point of Scripture is the amazing goodness of our God.

Most of us, possibly all of us, who are here today, have received the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour. What are the practical aspects of this truth of which we need to be aware? Let me mention four.

#### IV. THE PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF THIS TRUTH.

##### A. We need to know it.

I am not speaking merely of an acquaintance with this doctrine, nor of just being familiar with some of the verses of Scripture that I have referred to (and others I could have mentioned). BUT I AM REFERRING TO A DEEP CONVICTION OF THE TRUTH OF GOD'S GOODNESS, AND AN AWARENESS EACH DAY THAT OUR GOD IS A GOOD GOD.

One of our ladies who recently fell and broke her hip in two places, said to me when I visited her in the hospital, "Do all things really work together for good?" When I said, "Yes, they do," she responded, "I know they do!"

I like the translation of Rom. 8:28 which goes like this: "And we know that God works all things together for good . . ." That probably is the true text. It is not that things automatically work together . . . , but that God is at work, doing good.

This is what Nahum was saying: "The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble." There is nothing, no truth, that will give us greater peace when things go wrong, than this!

Read it over and over again in Scripture, meditate on it, and ask the Spirit of God to teach it to you, writing it upon your heart. "The Lord is good." Seek to know it so that when you think about God this is what will come into your mind first of all.

Recently the words of a hymn have been going through my mind. Unfortunately they are not in our hymnal, but they are in some others. They were written by Joseph Hart (1712-1768). Listen to the words.

How good is the God we adore,  
Our faithful unchangeable Friend!  
Whose love is as great as His power,  
And knows neither measure nor end.  
  
'Tis Jesus the First and the Last,  
Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;  
We'll praise Him for all that is past,  
We'll trust Him for all that's to come.

The second thing that this truth will do for us is this:

##### B. It will make us worship the Lord.

How different our lives would be if God were not a good

God! Therefore, when you really know this truth, it will cause you to worship Him.

Perhaps one reason we worship so little is because we are not very deeply convinced of His goodness.

David was worshipping God when he wrote those words in Psa. 31:19,

Oh how great is thy goodness,  
which thou has laid up for them that fear thee;  
which thou has wrought for them that trust in thee  
before the sons of men.

You can do no better in worship than to use the very words of Scripture, but make sure that you have made them your own!

A third thing:

C. It will make us praise the Lord.

There is a close relationship between worship and praise, but there is a difference. It is this: when we worship the Lord, we are primarily concerned with what, or Who, the Lord is; when we praise Him, we are acknowledging to His glory, what He had done.

There is a refrain which runs through Psa. 107, and it goes like this:

Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness,  
and for his wonderful works to the children of men!  
David was praising the Lord for God's goodness, but it grieved him that everyone was not praising the Lord. Once you know this truth about God it will grieve you, too, when you hear men praising themselves, or others, for mercies which have obviously come from God--or when men talk about being lucky!

David expressed it perfectly when he wrote in Psa. 40:5,  
Many, O lord my God, are thy wonderful works  
which thou has done,  
and thy thoughts which are to us-ward:  
they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee:  
if I would declare and speak of them,  
they are more than can be numbered.

The final thing that I want to mention is this:

D. We need to believe in the goodness of the Lord.

Often it is impossible for us to see the goodness of the Lord in the things that He does in our lives. In fact, some things look very, very bad. But this is where

faith enters in. "We walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7). That is, we trust the Lord and His Word rather than to interpret things on the basis of the way they appear to us.

What does our text say? "The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; AND HE KNOWETH THEM THAT TRUST IN HIM."

Cf. Psa. 27:13,

I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. See also the verse that I have already given you a couple of times: Psa. 31:19:

Oh how great is thy goodness,  
which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee;  
which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee  
before the sons of men.

You see, it is one thing to know this truth, but quite another thing to be counting on the fact that it is true when things take what seems to be a bad turn in our lives.

When Job had lost everything but his life and his wife, his wife said to him, "Curse God, and die" (Job 2:9). But what did he say to her? "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh." Job knew that God had not changed. He was still a good God, and a good God does good things. And so later, in Job 13:15, it is recorded that he said, "Though he slay men, yet will I trust in him."

Concl: Let me say two things about the goodness of our good God as I close. I have already said one; now I want to say the other.

The one I have said is this: There is no truth that is more prominent in Scripture than the truth that God is good, and that He will always be good. He never changes. What He does is good, always good. Cf. Rom. 8:28.

The second thing is this: There is no truth about God that you will be more tested about than this truth. This is what Satan used to deceive Eve in the Garden of Eden. This is what he will use against us, and our hearts are often inclined to side with the Evil One. But know it, worship God for it, praise Him for all of the evidences of His goodness that you can see everywhere around you, and then trust Him, believe this truth all over again with every fresh trial. This will lead to greater and greater proofs that our God is a good God, and that He only does good things!