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## Made in His Image: Goodness

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*“Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good”*

### **Key Text:**

**Gen. 1:** In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup>The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. <sup>3</sup>And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. <sup>4</sup>And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness.

**Gen. 50:** <sup>15</sup>When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, “It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him.” <sup>16</sup>So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, “Your father gave this command before he died: <sup>17</sup>‘Say to Joseph, ‘Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.’” And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father.” Joseph wept when they spoke to him. <sup>18</sup>His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, “Behold, we are your servants.” <sup>19</sup>But Joseph said to them, “Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? <sup>20</sup>As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. <sup>21</sup>So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones.” Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

**Ps. 34:** <sup>8</sup>Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him! <sup>9</sup>Oh, fear the Lord, you his saints, for those who fear him have no lack! <sup>10</sup>The young lions suffer want and hunger; but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing. <sup>11</sup>Come, O children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. <sup>12</sup>What man is there who desires life and loves many days, that he may see good? <sup>13</sup>Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit. <sup>14</sup>Turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

**Gal. 6:** <sup>6</sup>Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches. <sup>7</sup>Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. <sup>8</sup>For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. <sup>9</sup>And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. <sup>10</sup>So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

- 1) God declares in the beginning that the creation of light is good, eventually declaring that all his creation is *very* good. Why is God able to determine what is good (1 Jn. 1:5, James 1:17)? What does it mean that God is good?
- 2) The goodness of God as reflected in human beings is “not a mere passive quality, but a deliberate preference of right to wrong, the firm and persistent resistance of all moral evil, and the choosing and following of all moral good” (Easton’s Bible Dictionary). Why has God given us some reflection of his own sense of goodness?
- 3) Think about the life of Joseph. How is the goodness of God demonstrated in his life? Using Joseph's life as a test case, what is implied that the goodness of God is not? (Gen. 50:20)

- 4) Paul emphasizes our created calling in Eph. 2:10. Who are we created in? What are we created for? How is this even possible? (hint: look at the context of Eph. 2:10, also look at Titus 3:3-8)
  
- 5) What does Jesus want the world to see in us, based on his commission in Mt. 5:14-16?
  
- 6) What is “our walk” referring to in Scripture (cf. Gal. 5:16, Micah 6:6-8, Eph. 4:1)? Why does Paul warn us of the possibility of growing weary in doing good (Gal. 6:6-10)? In what area of your life are you most prone to grow weary of doing good?
  
- 7) Romans 8:28 might be one of the best-known texts in Scripture, however, it is commonly used out of context. In the context of enduring through suffering (v. 17, 23), Paul says:  
<sup>28</sup> And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

There are five truths that we understand from this verse: 1) God works, 2) For the good of his people, 3) in all things, 4) of those who love him, 5) who have been called according to his purpose. Time constrains us from going into depth on this verse but the overall point that we must take from this verse is that we must be careful to define what good is in God’s terms, not ours. He is reminding them of these truths in the face of suffering.

- a. All things happen to Christians. Becoming a Christian doesn’t provide you immunity from bad things. Terrible things happen to people who love God. We must get it out of our minds that not as many bad things will happen to me if I love God.
  
- b. Although bad things happen, they work for good. Bad things are really bad things. Losing a child is a bad thing. Having to fight cancer is a bad thing. Your house burning to the ground is a bad thing. They are working for good, but they are bad. The promise of God is not that you will have better circumstances—that if you love God you will have more good things happen on this side of eternity. The promise is that God will take the bad things and work them for good. God does not promise you better life circumstances, he promises you a better life—the life that is to come. Jesus did not suffer so that you would not suffer. He suffered so that when you suffer you become like him, GLORIFIED.
  
- 8) Can you think of examples in your life where you have seen the goodness of God? What are some practical ways we can show the goodness of God in our circles of influence?