

Adoring the God of Glory

November 19th, Class 10 – Adult Equipping Center
God's Goodness and Love – Teaching Notes

Recap

God's Goodness¹

Definition: "...God is the final standard of good, and all that God is and does is worthy of approval."
(Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, p. 197)²

The Circularity Problem and Answer³

God is good (Ps. 119:68, 34:8, 103:1-2, 106:1, 107:1)

How is God good?⁴

1. Creation: Good creation (Gen. 1, Ps. 104)
2. History: His goodness to people Ps. 105-107
3. Generous Gifts (Jm. 1:17, Mt. 7:11, Ps. 84:11)
4. Camouflaged Gifts: Difficulty/Discipline (Rom. 8:28, Heb. 12:10)
5. God's promises and will (Rom. 12:2, Josh 24:21)
6. Non-Discriminatory: Enemies (Mt. 5:43-45, Acts 14:17)
7. Jesus Himself (Lk. 2:10, Titus 3:4-7)

¹ "...God's mercy is his goodness toward those in distress, his grace is his goodness toward those who deserve only punishment, and his patience is his goodness toward those who continue to sin over a period of time." (Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, p. 198)

² "The goodness of God is that which disposes him to be kind, cordial, benevolent, and full of good will toward men. He is tenderhearted and of quick sympathy, and his unfailing attitude towards all moral beings is open, frank, and friendly. By His nature He is inclined to bestow blessedness and He takes holy pleasure in the happiness of His people." (A.W. Tozer, *Knowledge of the Holy*, p. 82)

³ For a fuller treatment see John Frame, *The Doctrine of God*, p. 405-409

⁴ God's goodness, "...is lightly esteemed because it is exercised toward us in the common course of events. It is not felt because we daily experience it." (A.W. Pink, *Attributes of God*, p. 60). See also his description of God's creativity in creation as an accent to his goodness to us, p 58.

God's Love

Defining Love Exercise

- 1.
- 2.

Definition: "...God eternally gives Himself to others." (Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, p. 199)

- Love = self-giving for the benefit of others

D.A. Carson's 5 Categories of God's Love⁵

1. Love within the Trinity (Jn. 3:35, 5:20, 14:31, 17:24, 1 Jn. 4:8)
2. God's providential love over all that He has made. (Mt. 5:43-48; Psalms 103-107)
3. God's saving stance towards his fallen world (Jn. 3:16, 4:42; 1 Jn. 4:14)⁶
4. God's particular, effective, selecting love toward his elect (Deut. 7:7-8, 10:14-15; Is. 54:10; Eph. 1:4-6, 5:25-27, Rom. 8:38-39)
5. God's love directed towards His own people in a provisional or conditional way on obedience (Jude 20-21, Jn. 15:9-11; Ex. 20:6, Ps. 103:8-11).

Generic statements about God's love:

- God's love is unconditional
- God loves everyone the same way

⁵ D.A. Carson, *The Difficult Doctrine of the Love of God*, Crossway, 2000.

⁶ "God's love in sending the Lord Jesus is to be admired not because it is extended to so big a thing as the world, but so bad a thing; not to so many people, as to such wicked people." (D.A. Carson, *The Difficult Doctrine of the Love of God*, p. 17)

Implications

1. ...
 2. Recognizing God's goodness and love. (See questions 1 and 2)
 3. Imitating God's goodness (See question 3, Gal. 6:9-10)
 4. Taking in the love of God (See questions, 4, 5, 6; Rom. 5:5, Eph. 3:14-19)
 5. Loving as God loved.⁷ (Jn. 13:34-35)
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Reacting and Reflecting on the God of Glory

1. How does your life point to God's goodness? List specific ways. What aspects of your life are you struggling to define as "good"?
2. What things in your past have you struggled to categorize as good? Are there things that you thought of as "bad" but now you view as "worthy of approval"? Ask God to help you see that He is always and only good towards you.
3. What might it mean to reflect God's goodness on a typical day in your life? Think through the rhythms you have and have God might help you infuse His goodness more in the way you live.
4. What delights or confuses you about the complexity of God's love?
5. Which category of love do you struggle most to believe or to experience? Why?
6. How does the love of God in Jesus Christ help you remedy your current fears or insecurities? Spend time dwelling on Eph. 3:14-19, phrase by phrase.

⁷ "How can we not love those whom God and Christ love? You cannot love Christ and hate his bride. You must love what he loves. You must love believers, even those who can be very unlovable. God's love led to action. God's love led to sacrifice. Our love must be no different." (Mark Jones, *God Is*, p. 133).