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COMMUNITY **DISCUSSION**  
**gr:ups** **GUIDE**

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**SERMON PASSAGE:** Galatians 5:16, 22-23

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**REVIEW THE SERMON**

1. Read the prep verse (Romans 15:14) and the sermon's Bible passage to recall the content
2. Briefly review the sermon outline
  - a. Introduction
    - i. Walk by the Spirit
    - ii. Contemporary use of the word "good"
  - b. Definition of Biblical Goodness
    - i. The Greek word translated "goodness," *agathosune*, is defined as "uprightness of heart and life."
    - ii. Biblical examples
      1. Genesis 1, 50:20
      2. John 10:10-11
      3. Matthew 19:17
      4. Psalm 145:9, 107:1, 34:8
    - iii. To say that God is good is stating that He is without fault, that He is without error, and without a hint of falseness in His being. He is completely trustworthy and faithful in His words and His ways.
    - iv. God is the ultimate and perfect picture of integrity.
  - c. Dilemma of Man Concerning Biblical Goodness
    - i. Romans 3:10-12
    - ii. Matthew 5:48
    - iii. Our lack of goodness makes us guilty before a Holy and Righteous God and has set us on the pathway where we will experience the wrath/judgment of God in hell.

- iv. How we respond to humanity's lack of goodness will drive us to one of two things:
    - 1. To defiance, the slavery of self-effort, to despair (a form of pride)
    - 2. To deliverance and spiritual freedom that is found in Christ alone.
  
  - d. Dependence of Biblical Goodness
    - i. God's goodness in our salvation
      - 1. 2 Corinthians 5:21
      - 2. Galatians 2:20
    - ii. God's goodness in our sanctification
      - 1. How might we cultivate and grow in "goodness" that will assist in keeping our hearts healthy?
        - a. Commit or recommit to daily personal devotions in His word
        - b. Spend time meditating and praying on the goodness of God
        - c. Scripture memorization
        - d. Surround yourself with people who will love you faithfully/kindly through the gift of encouragement/admonishment/correction/rebuke.
  
  - e. Display of Biblical Goodness
    - i. Matthew 5:16
    - ii. Ephesians 2:10
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## **DIGGING DEEPER**

1. "Why do you ask me about what is good?"

Perhaps you've heard the Christian call-and-response affirmation "God is good — all the time; all the time — God is good," or recall the children's prayer "God is great, God is good. Let us thank Him for this food," or have heard the colloquial exclamation "Goodness gracious<sup>1</sup>." These phrases both focus on God's divine goodness. But do we really comprehend God's goodness? Are we blinded to His goodness, unable to look past our circumstances? Have we relegated God's divine goodness to our earthly vernacular for the word "good," as if we could even describe Him with a single earthly word?

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<sup>1</sup> This expression dates back to the 1700's, originally allude to the good and grace of God. It was a euphemism for the exclamation "Oh God." Now it is used as an exclamation of surprise, alarm, dismay, annoyance, or exasperation.

Examine God's goodness afresh by reflecting on the provided verses and answering the who, what, when, where, and how questions below.

- a. Read Psalm 31:19, Lamentations 3:25, and Nahum 1:7. Who is the beneficiary of God's goodness?

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- b. Read Psalm 86:5 and Psalm 34:8. What must we do to understand God's goodness?

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- c. Read Psalm 100:5. When will God's goodness cease?

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- d. Read Exodus 34:6, Psalm 16:2, Psalm 136:1, and Matthew 19:17. Where is goodness found?

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- e. Read Psalm 23:6. How long can we expect to experience God's goodness?

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Reflecting on the verses above should bring awareness that goodness is one of God's divine attributes. Understanding God's goodness is critical to understanding who God is. A.W. Tozer stated<sup>2</sup>:

That God is good is taught or implied on every page of the Bible and must be received as an article of faith as impregnable as the throne of God. It is a foundation stone for all sound thought about God and is necessary to moral sanity. To allow that God could be other than good is to deny the validity of all thought and end in the negation of every moral judgment. If God is not good, then there can be no distinction between kindness and cruelty, and heaven can be hell and hell, heaven...The goodness of God is the drive behind all the

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<sup>2</sup> AW Tozer, "The Goodness of God," *Knowledge of the Holy*.  
<https://www.amazon.com/Knowledge-Holy-W-Tozer/dp/1626309906>

blessings He daily bestows upon us. God created us because He felt good in His heart and He redeemed us for the same reason.

Tozer is merely elaborating on what Jesus stated in Matthew 19:17, namely that only God is good. As part of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit exhibits divine goodness. Believers have received the gift of the Holy Spirit residing in them. Hence, we see why goodness is listed as a fruit of the Spirit.

Reflecting on God’s divine goodness, how may you exhibit the fruit of the Spirit of goodness in your everyday life?

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## 2. Justification, Sanctification, Glorification

Pastor Eric described the dependence of God’s goodness in our salvation and in our sanctification. Let’s review or learn for the first time what these 5-syllable “church words” refer to.

Our salvation has three temporal components or phases (past, present, and future tenses):

- a. Justification
  - i. Separation from the penalty of sin.
  - ii. Tense: You have been saved.
  - iii. I am in Christ.
  - iv. When justified we are completely forgiven of all sin since Jesus paid the penalty (i.e., death, Romans 6:23) of our sin. It is a free gift given to all believers in Christ; we do not work for it. Our part is only to have faith; we do not have the ability to justify or save ourselves. At the same moment that we are justified, we are also adopted into God’s family and become children of God (i.e., we are in Christ).
  - v. 1 Corinthians 6:11; Titus 3:5; Colossians 1:13-14, 2:13-14; Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 5:1-2

b. Sanctification

- i. Separation from the power of sin.
- ii. Tense: You are being saved.
- iii. I am being conformed to the image of Christ.
- iv. Sanctification is a life-long progressive growth of a Christian by obedience to God through the power of the Spirit. It is a process of becoming more and more like Jesus. God's Word and Spirit guide our growth.
- v. Philippians 1:6, 2:12-13; 2 Corinthians 3:18, 4:16-17, 5:17; 2 Peter 3:17-18; Romans 8:29

c. Glorification

- i. Separation from the presence of sin.
- ii. Tense: You will be saved.
- iii. I will be with Christ.
- iv. Glorification is the instantaneous transformation of the believers by the power of God into a perfectly moral and physical being eternally living in God's presence in heaven. It happens when we are resurrected in our new bodies, and it will last forever. There will no sin present, only God's holiness.
- v. Matthew 10:22; James 1:18; Hebrews 10:39; Revelation 2:10; Philippians 3:20-21; 1 John 3:2.

God saves us by His grace (justification). God gives us His Spirit to help us become more like Him (sanctification). God will finish the good work that He has begun in everyone who believes (glorification).

To God be the glory! Praise Him for His goodness towards us!



## PRAYER

1. Praise God for His goodness!

2. Pray the prayer from AW Tozer:

O God, I have tasted Thy goodness, and it has both satisfied me and made me thirsty for more. I am painfully conscious of my need for further grace. I am ashamed of my lack of desire. O God, the Triune God, I want to want Thee; I long to be filled with longing; I thirst to be made more thirsty still. Show me Thy glory, I pray Thee, so that I may know Thee indeed. Begin in mercy a new work of love within me. Say to my soul, 'Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away.' Then

give me grace to rise and follow Thee up from this misty lowland where I have wandered so long.

3. Pray for members of Living Hope Bryan as they continue to endure consequences of the winter storm and the pandemic.
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