

The goodness of God to His fearing people

(Quality: Good, Quiet)

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[0 : 00] We turn this morning to a portion of the Word of God found in the 31st Psalm.

Psalm 31, verse 19. O 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 sons of men.

The 31st Psalm, the 19th verse. And as you can well see, we have a great, glorious subject.

The goodness of God. And we shall attempt in our consideration of this portion, not only to examine and consider the magnitude of the grace, the goodness of God, but we shall look at these three things that God speaks in this text, that he does in regard to his goodness for his people.

First of all, he says, he lays up that goodness for them that fear him.

[1 : 57] We shall want to think and examine and delve into a little of the meaning of this word, this term. God laying up his goodness for his people.

And secondly, he speaks of having wrought things, that which thou hast wrought for them that fear thee.

We shall again try to examine how God has wrought a way whereby his goodness may be made clear and dispensed in all its fullness to his people.

And then thirdly, we shall see how this goodness is manifested even before the sons of men.

But first of all, the goodness of God. I would suggest that it is one of the most neglected things among men in regard to God of all things.

[3 : 24] And why do I say that? Surely you must be wrong, some would say, because we can think of God's goodness, we can think of his love very complacently and acceptably, while we shrink from thoughts about his wrath, his anger, his displeasure.

So why do you say, therefore, that the goodness of God is one of the most neglected subjects or aspects concerning God among men?

Whereas we would almost think that it would be one of the most common considerations among men. Because God shows his goodness in all kinds of ways.

In every act and deed of providence, God reveals his goodness. But I come to the scriptures when I give the reasons for my saying, what I have said, that it is one of the most neglected facts concerning God that there is.

Now if you turn with me, and I think it's very good to turn to these scriptures, if you turn to the epistle to the Romans, the second chapter for a moment, we shall see there what I mean.

[5 : 06] And Paul, writing to the Romans, the second chapter, he says this. In the third verse, he says, Thinkest thou this, O man, that judges them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God, or, listen to this now, or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.

Now, this is why I say that God's goodness is one of the most neglected subjects concerning God among men that there is, because there's such a dearth, such an absence of repentance among the children of men.

And if it's God's goodness that leads to repentance, we should expect to see repentance in every direction, if God's goodness is the prominent, uppermost subject of the hearts of men.

Now, is it yours? Is it mine? Do we find this to be a truth, that the goodness of God, his longsuffering, his forbearance, leads us to repentance?

It will do, and there's no doubt about it. It will cause you to see, when you see what you deserve to receive by your ways and your deeds and what, how God has withheld from you the impending judgment that is due to you, you have to recognize how marvelous and how vast is the goodness of God.

[7 : 33] And it brings you to repentance. Then again, in the eleventh chapter of Romans, where God speaks there about casting away his people in the 22nd verse.

It says this, Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God. Paul puts these two things together, the goodness and the severity of God.

on them which fell severity but toward thee goodness. If thou continue in his goodness, otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

Now, those two scriptures are of immense significance and importance. we either are the subjects of God's goodness or we must be eventually the subjects of his severity.

Now, which is it? I hope as we consider the great subject this morning, we shall realize not only our want and need of God's goodness, we may realize that we are also participants of his goodness, that like dear David, we may be able to say with truth in our hearts, surely goodness and mercy hath followed me all the days of my life and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

[9 : 33] That, I hope, may be the outcome of our consideration of this great subject, the goodness of God.

Now, let us look what the scripture speaks about God's goodness. It tells us very clearly that God was good in and as a creator.

We read in the first chapter of Genesis 31st verse and God beheld everything, everything that he had made that includes every detail from the smallest creative thing to the greatest and God looked upon it all and this was God's own verdict about it.

He said it is good. So all that he created then was good and it was the outcome of his goodness as a creator.

That's a very wonderful and an important thing. don't let us ever tolerate such teaching that would rob God of that glory of his goodness in creation.

[11 : 12] If we harbor for a moment in our minds or thoughts such teachings as men produce as to evolution and such like things they rob the Lord God of the glory of his work of creation where his goodness is manifested in detail in the great and vast works that he performed as well as in the minute circumstances or details that he made.

Everything in the eyes of our maker was good. Therefore as a creator we see the goodness of God and we recognize this too that all true revival or recognition of God's goodness among men is a sign of revival.

It's a sign of revival. Now this is an important thing for you and me to consider. We often pray for a revival among us here and around us in the locality in which we live.

It would be an amazing wonder and a blessed thing indeed if God were to so work and pour out his spirit through his gospel that there should be a revival of real religion and turning of sinners to the Lord and a deliverance of souls from the awful bondage of sin and Satan.

religion. Well now the word of God tells us that one of the clearest signs of a coming or anticipated revival of real religion is a recognition of God's goodness.

[13 : 32] I quote now from the prophecy of Jeremiah where in the 33rd chapter we read this God is speaking there to his servant the prophet and the prophet is declaring his word to the people and he's speaking about the desolations that have taken place in the nation all on account of a lack of real religion and a departure from the truth of God and his holy word but he said the time is coming he could foresee a different future he could anticipate a great change among men and when that change was taking place or before it did take place there would be he says the voice of joy and the voice of gladness the voice of them that shall say the Lord is good his mercies endure forever do you see he recognized this that as soon as the people began to recognize that the goodness of the Lord was a wonderful reality then there would be a revival the very beginning of an awakening among the people a stirring up of the dead and dry bones among them and a bringing out to light and into the liberty of the gospel those that were bound hand and foot by sin and Satan yes the

Lord is good well then let us examine this the goodness of God as an administrator Psalm 25 that we read just now the 8th verse and some people have told me I don't know whether you young people know that this is the truth or whether it is a fact or not but they've told me that the 8th verse in that Psalm is the middle verse in the whole of the Bible I've never counted it to see never counted the verses before or the verses after to see whether it is a truth but I heard a man say very clearly and definitely once that that was the middle verse in the whole of the Bible what does it say the Lord is good and the Lord is good and he therefore shall he teach sinners in the way well now if that is the middle verse it matters very little whether it is or not but it's a truth a very blessed truth the Lord is good therefore shall he teach sinners in the way and if you are taught in the way it is altogether the goodness of the

Lord and you will have to acknowledge it and you will have great cause to praise and be thankful to the Lord for his wonderful goodness why should he choose you why should he turn away from a great many worthy people in the world who seem to have great claims to be noticed and recognized by God he turns away from them ignores them completely and comes right down to you and touches your poor heart and humbles you in the dust and teaches you step by step the way into the truth the way into life the way into the peace of God and why does he do it because the Lord is good there's the wonderful goodness of the Lord so then as administrator of his mercies and his wonders and his good he is a good

God and also he is in all his providential dealings with his people he is good Paul says in the Romans great truth that it must be true it must be consistent with the God of whom he is speaking he says all things work together for the good of them that fear God and who are the called according to his name all things work together for good God well now only a mighty God could do that could so arrange and work that all things seemingly opposite to us contrary to our best interests at times seeming as if they're working for our undoing rather than for our aiding yet in all these things we can see the hand of God bringing about order harmony and finally what is really our best interest and for our greatest good now isn't that a marvellous demonstration of the goodness of

God and when you come to think of it my friends what are we individuals in a world of a great multitude of people hardly noticed by our fellow men people go past us they live within reach of us and never know anything about us they don't even know our names and hardly can recognise us when we pass them in the street and yet that God knows every detail about our lives he's got it all in his plan wonderful plan every detail is subject to his control and all of it is manifesting the goodness of the Lord as a God of providence not only as a creator is God good not only as a teacher of men is God good but as a provider of every providence there is a marvellous display of the goodness of God now a

[21 : 07] Christian you know they are looked down upon sometimes by others outside who know nothing of real religion and they think they're strange sort of people they will fasten themselves onto that way that sort of religion that company of people they're very small and insignificant we can leave them all together out of it take no notice of them but they little know what a wonderful world lies opening always before the child of God in this one field alone the wonders of providence the marvels of God's dealings with his people in a providential way and manner you may read some books sometimes of men of God in the past who have had great travail and difficulty in their life because of poverty mainly and of other reasons and yet they've had to record the many great and glorious ways in which God has appeared and helped them and delivered them and brought them relief in their times of stress and need

William Huntington who wrote that great book The Bank of Faith which really is a record of providential dealings of God with him in the times of his terrible poverty and distress when he went out one morning it says in that book with his poor children crying for want of food and his with a broken heart because he hadn't a penny in his pocket to provide it he goes in desperation along the road and there he passes a pond and he sees on the pond floating fish recently dead and he's able to take them gather them up together and return to his home and give his children a real breakfast harvest and he praised the

Lord his God for his goodness I give you that as just a single incident in the lives of some of God's great saints where the Lord in his providence has been showing to them his great goodness then as the provider for his people in all their times of trouble prophecy of Nahum we read this great word the Lord is good a strong hold in the day of trouble and he knows them the trust in him the Lord is good a strong hold in the day of trouble so trouble doesn't hinder God it doesn't put God at a difficult position it's the very opportunity

God uses to bring his people real knowledge of his goodness and in behind all his goodness there's this there's his love you cannot separate the goodness of God from the love of God and if you want to know the love of God more fully try to look into and examine the goodness of God the goodness of God to your soul to your path and your life have you ever been in trouble and has the Lord been a strong hold in that day of trouble and you said to yourself and to the Lord Lord this must mean that thou knowest that I am one of thy people the Lord knoweth them that are his you see it's connected all together in that truth the Lord is good a strong hold in the day of trouble and he knoweth them that belong unto him you see he has purposely united those two things together and therefore if you are the subject of God's goodness it is because you are one of his own people now it make you very greatly concerned to know that you are the subject of God's great goodness then I come to the greatest display of

God's goodness that ever was and ever will be nothing can supersede or go beyond this great and glorious truth it says in the fifth chapter of Romans God commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for the ungodly now if that is not goodness where can goodness ever be found God commendeth it he commendeth his love that whereas we were yet sinners Christ died for the ungodly for the amazing the wonder the glory of this precious truth

[27 : 30] Christ Jesus is the manifold manifestation of the goodness of God we never know what the goodness of God is or will be without Christ he will bring us into a deep real knowledge of it we shall see in him that there is no good without him no good in creature none whatever in any creature poet says I think no good in creatures can be found but all is found in thee and so it is my friends with Jesus Christ we learn the goodness of

God we see how that goodness is so immutable and so eternal God is originally and essentially and independently and infinitely and also immutably good in every way in every work and in every word he is good now let us look at the text itself just for a moment before I conclude this morning now there's something about this psalm that I think we must consider together because it seems to me that David comes from as it were a very deep dark uncertain place to to this point when he gives this exclamation that comes out of his heart oh how great is thy goodness let us trace that way now this

I do because it may be helpful to some of you here this morning you may say well I cannot reach up to such high things as David reached and attained unto well let us look at David where he was before he comes to this great exclamation let us look in the psalm now the second verse we find the man is there bowing down he cries to the Lord to bow down his ear to him to deliver him speedily he's in real trouble and he wants a rock and he also wants a house of defense to save him he's all together in real straits and he's calling upon

God to provide him with all the defense that he needs in this time of real trouble then look at the fourth verse pull me out of the net he's already in the net he's not like he was in another psalm when he says I can see the nets these people have spread for me in my pathway they've spread here's a net there and a net over there and they hope I'm going to fall into one of them or to both but he says I can see them but here he is in a net already you you see he's fallen he's become ensnared he's become entrapped in something or other that is like a net around him and he says pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me for thou art my strength then again in the ninth verse he says

I am in trouble tells the Lord we hardly need require this declaration I'm sure the Lord did not need it but it's inspired to come out of his life out of his heart he says I am in trouble Lord I've got something about me that is quite different from anyone else I'm in trouble whoever other troubles there may be in the world I know one thing that I am in trouble and there again he goes on in the tenth verse my strength faileth because of mine iniquity my strength faileth because of mine iniquity this is the trouble that poor David is in his iniquity is coming up to him before his face he can see it stark real standing there in front of him his iniquity how can he come to God whilst that is tearing him as it were in the face this is my awful position he tells the Lord and then look at the twelfth and that seems almost like the climax of it all he says

[33 : 43] I am forgotten oh David what a thing for thee to say I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind one that has gone already out of this world and been left and no one has remembered him he is altogether forgotten by God by men and then he comes to this point and this is the turning point this is the great deliverance that he finds and experiences oh how great is thy goodness you see he looks he compares now all those troubles that he's been in he looks at them all and what are they compared with the goodness of God oh he says how great is thy goodness because I'm not left completely to perish mine enemies cannot have complete mastery over me my sins and iniquities though they are great and solemn and they stare me in my face they are by God's rich goodness put away forever by his grace oh he says how great is thy goodness and what a sudden change it is too now sometimes you may find in your life a very sudden change comes over you and you can hardly explain it or understand it but it's very exceedingly great and good when you suddenly feel after all your troubles the Lord is on your side he's put out something to encourage you to hope against hope that he will have mercy upon your soul and you see this that while you deserve to be cut off and trampled underfoot and consigned to everlasting punishment because of your sins you see that instead of your sins you found

God's mercy instead of the frown of hell in your poor soul you've had the smile of heaven and instead of the word of condemnation you've had the blessed word that has told you clearly there is now no more condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus and what is your response oh how great is thy goodness you see the exclamation is a very special important and precious thing indeed and I feel we have to walk in the very same path David was walking in and we have it's a great thing it's a sign of revival for our own personal life and religion if we can come to this to hear the voice of joy and the voice of gladness the voice of them that praise the Lord and that say the Lord is good the Lord is good if that voice is in you and me it's a forerunner of mighty blessings of mercy and salvation may God make it a real and wonderful reality to us amen let us conclude by singing hymn 247 to tune 925

O Lord I would delight in thee and on my hand to thee in every trouble please my best my only friend hymn number 247 why they help them boys and on my hand in life be body or my love my heart is a valuable obligation to defend Truth and Truth by It was justified and without questions of doubt God it was FRAMY DIES And is why freedom the sacrifice box of heaven weud and we.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. to know of thy great goodness, to experience it in our souls, in our daily lives, and in thy service, to the glory of thy great and holy name.

[41 : 31] May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us now and forever.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Let's go, amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.