

GOD'S GOODNESS

NOTE: This teaching on *God's Goodness* is to be used by National and Area Leaders during your yearly Leadership Development events. Feel free to make copies. Make the teaching personal and relevant for your leaders.

Psalm 34:8 *O taste and see that the Lord is good.*

It has been said that Christianity at any given time is strong or weak depending upon her concept of God. A good friend of Aglow has posed the question to us, "Could it be that the basic problem in a nation is simply a lack of God's goodness?"

A.W. Tozer said in *The Attributes of God, A Journey into the Father's Heart* that "history proves that no tribe or nation has ever risen above its religion. If the concept of the religion in a nation perceives God as weak, then the religion in the nation will be weak. If the concept is that God is good, then that same goodness will shine forth in the religion of the nation." Stop for a moment and think about how your nation perceives God.

We must understand the very basic concept brought forth by Psalm 34:8. We *must* taste and see that God is good. And once our eyes are opened to the goodness of God, we must turn and share that goodness with everyone we meet.

GOODNESS DEFINED

In every way, God, in His goodness, is kindhearted, gracious, good-natured, and always has our best interest at heart. It is impossible for Him to be or to act in any other way towards us. His heart toward us is full of kindness and it has no boundaries. He takes the things that the enemy means for our harm – sickness, attacks, loss of income, natural disasters, etc., and turns them for our good. (Romans 8:28)

Everything that God is toward us stems from His being good and His great passion for us. It is the source of everything. In fact, it is impossible for Him to not cause goodness to come to those who love Him.

POINT TO PONDER: With that in mind, what if you begin to look at the things coming against you from a different point of view? Rather than rushing through a crisis or a problem, what if you asked God to reveal something of Himself to you that you couldn't see before the problem came? What if rather than instantly healing you, God wants you to see that He is able

to keep you, no matter how sick you are? What if God didn't instantly meet your financial need, but took a few months before meeting it to allow you to see that He is your source rather than your job?

In every situation, ask God two questions. What does this mean to me? What must I do? Allow the Holy Spirit to begin to change your mindset about God. Take more worship breaks. God is not out to 'get you' or to 'do you in'. He is for you and not against you. Begin to see Him as a loving Father who moves Heaven to bring good things to you. Think on His goodness. See His kindness surrounding you. Watch Him as He orders your steps to keep you from harms path.

All that God does towards us is grounded in the solid truth that He is good and that He loves us.

As Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the United States during the Civil War and a man known for his kindness, sat in his office one day, a staff member observed him in tears. After inquiring of the serious nature of the day, President Lincoln had this to say, "Today many young men have been sentenced to be shot for retreating under fire or for doing some other wrong thing during a time of war. I don't blame those boys; they weren't cowards. Their legs did it. Today, I'm going over the list of names and I'm going to save every boy I can." (Paraphrased from A.W. Tozer's, *The Attributes of God – A Journey into the Father's Heart*, p. 53)

That is goodness and that is how God looks down upon humanity. He doesn't blame us. He doesn't hold our failures or faults against us. He looked over the list of names marked guilty by the enemy and sent His own Son to save everyone who would receive His free gift. Romans 2:4 says, "Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?"

It is His goodness that we are contending to see. His Majesty. Keep your eyes and your heart open to receive a new glimpse of who God really is. Tell your heart not to lose hope, but to press in for greater revelation. David said, "I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." (Psalm 27:13)

When Moses wanted to see God's glory, God responded by saying, "I will make all My Goodness pass before you." (Exodus 33:19) In Psalm 31:19 David said, "Oh, how great is Your goodness which You have laid up for those who fear You, which You have prepared for those who trust in You in the presence of the sons of men." God's goodness waits to be revealed to His people to move them to a higher place of trust.

All around us mankind groans as it seeks release from the schemes of the enemy. What if all we need to do to revolutionize our world is to begin to act toward one another in kindness,

gentleness, meekness, with self-control, full of love, preferring one another over ourselves?
What if the very basic of principals - of loving God and loving our neighbor was the standard of
how we lived our lives? Our world would be changed.

Psalm 34:8 *O taste and see that the Lord is good.*

EXERCISE: See Handout 1 God's Goodness - 15 minutes

Provide soft instrumental music in the background

GOD'S GOODNESS

HANDOUT 1

With Psalm 34:8 in mind, "O taste and see that the Lord is good," use your own words to tell God that you have come today to take time to taste and see that He is good.

Begin to meditate on each of the scriptures on goodness below. Let your mind become quiet, not easily distracted by your current life situations or pressures.

Read slowly through each scripture.

- **Exodus 33:19** "I will make all My goodness pass before you."
- **Deuteronomy 30:9** "The Lord, your God, will make you abound in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your land for good. For the Lord will again rejoice over you for good as He rejoiced over your fathers."
- **Psalm 25:8** "Good and upright is the Lord."
- **Psalm 27:13** "I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."
- **Psalm 31:19** "Oh, how great is Your goodness which You have laid up for those who fear You, which You have prepared for those who trust in You in the presence of the sons of men."
- **Psalm 33:5b** "the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord."
- **Psalm 52:1b** "the goodness of God endures continually."
- **Psalm 119:68** "You are good and do good. Teach me Your statutes."
- **Matthew 5:16** "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."

Pick out one or two scriptures that stood out to you as you read through them and circle them.

Read those you circled again, softly, out loud.

Begin to allow those scriptures you circled to unfold in a fuller expression. For example, if you chose Psalm 52:1b – the goodness of God endures continually – What does that mean to you? Listen in to hear what the Holy Spirit is saying. Use the back of the page or your journal to write your thoughts.

In the next few days, come back to see how these thoughts on God's goodness will unfold. Document any ways that you feel you are beginning to display His goodness to others in your life. Create a prayer of declaration of the revelation of God's goodness that you are experiencing.