

Central Pentecostal Ministries

From the Pulpit...

Goodness Calls

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Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty. Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain: Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind: Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire: Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever. Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains. At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away. They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them. Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth. He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills. They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst. By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches. He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth; And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart. The trees of the LORD are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted; Where the birds make their nests: as for the stork, the fir trees are her house. The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats; and the rocks for the conies. He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down. Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth. The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God. The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens. Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening.

*O LORD, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all:
the earth is full of thy riches.*

Psalm 104:1-24

The Psalmist begins with the words, "*Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great*". Then he begins to detail and be specific as to why he is praising and giving honor to Almighty God. To many, the verses above may be boring because they don't include money, big houses, or that which we think ought to energize praise. As a matter of fact, it is unique that we have come to rely on God to rebuke us in order to move us. He has to chasten us in order to awaken us. He has to convict us to get us to see. However, in the reality of the Heart of God, His intent is that **the goodness of God would be the call**. Not the rebuke, chastening, or discipline, but that the goodness of God would be the call to man to come to God. That is the mind of God in His dealings, not rebuke, hard chastening nor the heavy convicting. Oh, that men would run to God because of His goodness. Not because He hung over their heads judgment, no! God's way of dealing with men is always love and blessing first. That will always be God's first attempt. Have you ever asked yourself, 'How do God's blessings affect me?' You will have to answer that in your own heart. There are some people I wish God had not blessed so much because they can now no longer serve God in fullness. They now are increased with goods and have need of nothing. They do not recognize that the goodness they are experiencing is from God and eventually God will have to react in some way because of the abuse of His goodness, not His threatening, but His goodness. How do God's blessings affect us?

I once preached about the Promise Land, and Israel going to Canaan. Most of the description was wrapped up in, 'it's a land flowing with Milk and Honey'. To the one who understands what the Word was saying that is all God needs to say. For there to be milk, there had to be cows. For there to be cows, there has to be grass. Where there is grass, there has to be fertile soil, and I could continue. If there is honey, there must be a bee. If there are bees, there has to be flowers. This degree of precept regarding blessings is getting hard to find.

Somewhere the goodness of God that calls is the very thing we are rejecting or ignoring! It's almost as if we want God to burn our house down in order to bring us back to a dedication. Believe me; there are people who require that in order to stay in the Kingdom. However, there are some who look around and say, 'God's been good to me.' Why do you serve the Lord? Many would say, "I am afraid I will go to hell". That should be one reason, but that shouldn't be the only reason. God's the best thing I've ever found! He's my best friend! No one helps me like Him! No one has blessed me like Him! Nobody loves me like Him! No one has made promises to me like Him! There is nobody like Jesus! I serve Him because He is a good God! He first loved me!

Our text began with praise to God, then listed some of the many reasons why He is to be praised. What is listed connects clearly to the hub of man's very existence. From clouds to angels, to mountains and valleys, to water and beast of the field. From grass to cows, to trees full of sap and to birds in the nest. Then the sun and the moon with its seasons to a man's work. In our day these are rarely the elements that excite praise to God. God has to cut a better deal for some of us. God's says, 'the cow is food, the water is life.' The bird sitting outside your window is singing to you every morning, and God did that too! The sun and moon bring the seasons that make the cycle of life fruitful. Why are these things no longer exciting praise? Now we sit waiting for God to bring us a bigger trinket, THEN we will worship for a moment. "*God's been good because the Doctor said I don't have cancer.*" God was good before the Doctor said that. We are too distracted by the penny to thank God for the copper mine. So we can't go to church because we've got pennies!

The blessing can become a curse when it distracts us from God.

The blessings from God are a reflection of His goodness. Isn't it a little troubling as we analyze our own self? Why can't we let God's goodness motivate us instead of waiting until the house burns down before we run to the altar?



I'm amazed at God's beckoning and the extent He goes to in order to redeem man. In Matthew 11:18 it says, "John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil." The very next verse (Matt 11:19) we read where the Son of Man (Jesus) came eating and drinking, and they said he was gluttonous, a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners! You see the ways God tries to beckon men? He sent a man that didn't eat or drink, and we rejected Him, then Jesus himself came eating and drinking, and we rejected Him! All the time it was the love of God trying to woo you and me into His Kingdom! Why can't we do it because He is good, why do we have to wait?



In Romans 2:4 it says, "*the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance*". That is the intent of His goodness. But no, we have to wait until an overwhelming conviction has to come. We wait until we've lost almost everything, gone through three divorces, lost two children, our job, and home before we acknowledge God's dealership! Why does it have to be this way? We dictate the way God has to deal with us. His desire is always to love, bless, and that we see His goodness, turning then to repentance, praise and a relationship with Him. "The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance," or else it is supposed to! Psalms 103:1-2 says, "*Bless the Lord.*" Why? So we don't forget "*His benefits.*" That's why!

There is a cloud hanging over our country, and I believe God is going to eventually HAVE to deal with America, and it isn't just because of homosexuality. I believe that the darkness hanging over America will ultimately erupt, demanding a response from God because God has been so good to America and she has squandered His goodness. Instead of getting closer to God, she has gone further away. Instead of putting the Ten Commandments up, lawsuits are filed demanding the removal. So instead of accepting the goodness of God, the beautiful homes, transportation, 5-star restaurants, gas, cars, airplanes, medical care second to none; goodness after goodness after goodness has been squandered. God's always responded to this great oversight; He did so to Sodom!

Goodness ignored = judgment demanded!

There is always soberness in my Spirit when I read Deuteronomy 32:15 where it says, "*But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked*". There is an order to this verse. Jeshurun first "waxed fat" then he "kicked", and at that point no longer needed anything. He could say what he wanted, do what he wanted, and act the way he wanted to act. It was only then that he began to kick, but it doesn't stop there. The scripture says, "*then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation.*" Here is a man, made fat by God's blessings, yet no longer loving God. Now, what do you think happened when Jeshurun stood before God, assuming he didn't get all of that forgiven? He stands before God, and God says, 'I did nothing but give you goodness. I gave you more, more and more and you got fatter, fatter and fatter. You chased the penny without acknowledging the owner of the copper mines. You began to kick against that which is Holy.' Now there is something about this, friends, that we must get a hold of. **God's goodness was ignored therefore His judgment was demanded.**

To speak of the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah is often to speak of the sexual sins (and yes, they were), but really the hub of all of that and the reality of those sins is found in Ezekiel 16:49. It states the sin of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah was PRIDE! The second thing mentioned in this verse is, "*fullness of bread*" then in verse 50 says, "*they were haughty*".

Does His goodness bring us to repentance anymore?

Does His goodness bring us to praise anymore?

Does it have to be a chastening or a type of severe dealing to arouse us to our creator?

To face God who loved and gave, leaves men with no excuse. Every child of God who has ever heard God has heard Him say, "I will surely do thee good." When we rebel, we rebel against goodness. Do you understand why judgment has to be so harsh? Do you understand why hell has to be hot? Because men are rebelling against goodness, the love of God, His Kindness, His provisions, the purity of love! Why must judgment come? Because men have rejected supreme affection from the Creator of Heaven and earth!

Ezra 8:18 says, "and by the good hand of our God upon us." He set workers to head up the necessities of the temple, but do you hear the verbiage of Ezra? If we went back to the beginning, Genesis 1:22, we would read where "God blessed them" (Adam and Eve). Therefore, when they partook of the forbidden fruit, they were rebelling against God's goodness. God is not a hard task Master. We also read in scripture, "Consider the lilies", but can we? Can the goodness and blessings of God once again move us?

Let us close with Luke 14:16-21. I am not sure that this is not where we are. I do feel a degree of prophecy with this message. Let us read:

Then said he unto him, *A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.*

The place that was originally designed for those who had been greatly blessed was given to the poor, maimed, halt and the blind. The ones who have squandered the goodness of God and played with the Holy things of God were not partakers in the end! There **will** be a dinner, and the seats **will** be full! Will we be in attendance?

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