

FOUNDATION OF FAITH!
GOD THE FATHER
PART 7

As we continue our study on God the Father in our series Foundation of Faith, we have been looking at the various attributes of God. And we are currently looking at His moral attributes and with these we also see that God wants us to manifest these qualities in our own life. We have looked at the holiness of God, the justice or righteousness of God, the love of God, the mercy of God, and the grace of God. This morning we will continue looking at these moral attributes of God so we understand more who He is and what He desires in our own lives.

Before we begin looking at the moral attributes of God, let me share this story with you. We are told,

During the Thirty Year's War in Europe (1618-1648), the King of Sweden, Gustavus Adolphus, was slain while his troops were winning the Battle of Lutzen, in what is now Germany. Sweden was thrown into mourning, and government officials met to determine how to replace the king. Some suggested a republic; others thought the crown should go to Adolphus' cousin, the king of Poland. The chancellor of Sweden arose and said, "Let there be no talk of a republic or of Polish kings, for we have in our midst the heir of the great Gustavus, his little daughter, who is 6 years of age."

Some protested that they had never seen her. The chancellor said, “Wait a minute, and I will show you.” He brought in Christina, daughter of the king, and placed her on the throne. One of the representatives who was especially suspicious of the move pressed forward and gazed intently into her face. Then turning to the assembly, he exclaimed, “Look at her nose, her eyes, her chin! I see in the countenance of this child the features of the great Gustavus. She is the child of our king!” From all quarters of the room rang the proclamation, “Christina, Queen of Sweden!”

- Source Unknown

Remember what Jesus said to Philip in John 14:9, “... ‘Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, “Show us the Father”?’” Yes, we are looking at God the Father but as you look at God the Father you see Jesus and as you look at Jesus you see God the Father. Not that they are the same person. But the character, their nature, their attributes are one. So don’t be confused and think we are speaking of Jesus here, we are not only speaking of Jesus as we look at the attributes of God, but we are looking at God the Father, one God manifested in three distinct persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and we will deal more with that issue of the Holy Trinity as we move on in our studies.

So let’s continue looking at these attributes of God the Father so we can know Him more and let His attributes flow through us!

2. MORAL ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

F. FAITHFULNESS

Another moral attribute of God is that He is faithful. In other words, God is trustworthy, what He has said is true and He will see that it will come to pass. We can trust in Him, we can trust in what He has told us. Now, if God was not faithful, if He was not trustworthy or trustful, we would be in trouble. We would never know if or when we could trust Him and imagine a relationship like that.

Imagine a spouse who is not faithful, you could not trust them at all, there really is no relationship there, it would not grow because the person could not be trusted and the same is true with God, if He was not faithful, we could never develop that close, intimate relationship with Him, our relationship with Him would never grow! It is as this story illustrates for us. We are told,

One of the most tragic events during the Reagan Presidency was the Sunday morning terrorist bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut, in which hundreds of Americans were killed or wounded as they slept. Many of us can still recall the terrible scenes as the dazed survivors worked to dig out their trapped brothers from beneath the rubble.

A few days after the tragedy, I recall coming across an extraordinary story. Marine Corps Commandant Paul X Kelly, visited some of the wounded survivors then in a Frankfurt, Germany, hospital. Among them was Corporal Jeffrey Lee Nashton, severely wounded in the incident. Nashton had so many tubes running in and out of his body that a witness said he looked more like a machine than a man; yet he survived.

As Kelly neared him, Nashton, struggling to move and racked with pain, motioned for a piece of paper and a pen. He wrote a brief note and passed it back to the Commandant. On the slip of paper were but two words - "Semper Fi" the Latin motto of the Marines meaning "forever faithful." With those two simple words Nashton spoke for the millions of Americans who have sacrificed body and limb and their lives for their country - those who have remained faithful.

- J. Dobson & Gary Bauer, *Children at Risk*, pp. 187-188

We look for faithfulness in man and we also look for faithfulness in God. We know that man fails, he is not always faithful, but God never fails, He is always faithful, He is always trustworthy! We are told in Lamentations 3:22-24, "**Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. 'The Lord is my portion,' says my soul, 'Therefore I hope in Him!'**"

You see, everything that God has promised us will come to pass, not maybe, it will! And it is His faithfulness that guarantees us that fact! God does not lie and thus, what we read of Him in the Scriptures is the truth and because of that, we can rest in what He has told us. We don't have to pick and chose or guess what is true and what is not true. His Word is truth and thus, what God says about Himself in His Word is truth and it will come to pass as I have said, and more importantly, as God has said!

Remember what Jesus said in Matthew 5:17-18, **“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.”**

Here’s the thing. The jot and the tittle were the smallest punctuation marks in the Hebrew writing. Jesus is basically saying that, to put it in our language, “Not one dot of an “i” or not one cross of a “t” will pass away until all the Law is fulfilled.” Now, did Jesus fulfill the Law making His words faithful, making His words true? Absolutely, He fulfilled the Law perfectly. He is the fulfillment of the Law and the prophets! How did He do it? Listen carefully.

- Jesus fulfilled the doctrinal teachings of the Law and the Prophets in that He brought full revelation.
- Jesus fulfilled the predictive prophecy of the Law and the Prophets in that He is the Promised One, showing the reality behind the shadows.
- Jesus fulfilled the moral and legal demands of the Law and the Prophets in that He fully obeyed them and He reinterpreted them in their truth.
- Jesus fulfilled the penalty of the Law and the Prophets for us by His death on the cross, taking the penalty we deserved.

It is as Adam Clarke wrote, “Though all earth and hell should join together to hinder the accomplishment of the great designs of the Most High, yet it shall all be in vain - even the sense of a single letter shall not be lost. The *words* of God, which point out his designs, are as unchangeable as his *nature* itself.” You see, if God is faithful, if He is truthful, then what He says will come to pass, it will be fulfilled and it has and it is and it will be completed just as He has said!

Now the word “faithfulness” comes from a word meaning, “a stay or support.” The idea here is that a faithful person is one you can safely lean upon. Thus, if God is completely trustworthy, if He is completely faithful, and He is, then we can rely on Him! If you don’t have that assurance, if you don’t believe that, then you will not have the support to lean upon as God desires you to have and that support is Him! Thus, the enemy loves to get us to doubt the faithfulness of God.

Let me share some Scriptures with you to show you the faithfulness of God. In Psalm 119:89-90 we are told, “**Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven. Your faithfulness endures to all generations; You established the earth, and it abides.**” Think about the many things we put our trust in, and in the end the only one that truly stands the test of time is God and His Word. Look at the people who put their trust in sports teams, like the Chicago Cubs. Every year they believe they will win the World Series and guess what, the last time they won the World Series was 1908 and yet, they believe!

Two years ago we elected a President who many believed would turn this country around and he has but not in a good way. And as the elections are over now, how many commercials did you see that had these candidates slam their opponent and by the end you did not know who to believe, who was being truthful. And for me, you end up not trusting anyone!

And it is amazing who we will put our trust in, how often we are disappointed and yet, God says for us to trust in Him because He will never fail, He will never let us down! But instead of believing God, we put our trust in man, how foolish that is!

If we put our trust in anything else but God and His Word we will find out they are like the shifting sand. Only God and His Word are like a solid rock in which we can build our life upon. As Isaiah 40:8 says “**The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.**”

As you go through difficult times, if you begin to doubt God’s Word, distrust what He has to say, what He has promised, you will be devastated by the situations you find yourself in, you will be overwhelmed by the things that come into your life because you are looking for deliverance from man and not from God! All we have to cling to is God and His Word, without that, everything seems hopeless!

Let me give you two Scriptures to show you that God is watching over you, that He is faithful and we need to look to Him no matter what we are going through. We are told in II Thessalonians 3:3, “**But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one.**” And in I Corinthians 10:13 Paul tells us, “**No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.**”

What is the enemy trying to do in our lives? He is tempting us to sin, to move away from God and it can be tough, it can be very difficult. He wants you to fail, he wants to destroy your witness but notice who is faithful, it is the Lord! He will guard us, He will watch over us, He knows exactly what we are going through. Thus, He will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able to handle and in the temptation there is a way of escape, and that is through the Lord, looking to Him and not the situation or the circumstances! ***HE IS FAITHFUL***, may we not forget that!

The enemy also likes us to doubt our salvation, maybe we are not saved or maybe we were and now we are not. That is wrong, you can't lose that which you did nothing to obtain. God did the work, He paid in full the debt we owed and thus, our salvation is secure in Him and not in us. It is based upon His faithfulness and not ours. If it were based upon our faithfulness, none of us would make it! In Titus 1:2 Paul tells us, “**in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began.**”

Now when Paul speaks of “**eternal life**” he is not just speaking of the existence of life, but abundant life and that abundant life is only found in Jesus. In fact, Jesus tells us in John 10:10, “**The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.**”

That eternal life is a present possession for us and it is also a future hope, not an uncertainty, but a hope in the promise of God’s Word, that what God has promised He is able to bring to pass. How can we be sure of that? Because God cannot lie as Numbers 23:19 tells us, “**God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?**” In I John 2:25 John tells us, “**And this is the promise that He has promised us — eternal life.**” Thus, God is faithful and what He has promised us He will bring to pass, we have that hope and that hope is not based in wishful thinking but the Lord Himself!

You see, before God created the Heavens and the Earth, before time began because time is a physical property, God promised that He would give His creation abundant life, everlasting life and He has! That life is found only in Christ! Jesus said in John 17:3, “**And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.**” I think He made that very clear to us, that abundant life is found only in Him!

Thus, we have that present possession of eternal life, abundant life in Christ and we are waiting for a future hope as we are gathered to the Lord. Paul put it this way in Philippians 3:20-21, **“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.”** Our hope is in Him and His promises to us, which will come to pass! How can we be so sure? Because God is faithful!

Also, in I Thessalonians 5:24 we are told, **“He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.”** Paul is speaking of our sanctification, that what God has started He will finish. In other words, we can rest assured that the work He has begun in us He will complete and thus, we are secure in our salvation because God is faithful and since He has called us, He will finish the work in us! In other words, God saved you, He sanctified you, and He will bring you to glory, you can take that to the bank!

Let me share these words from A. W. Tozer regarding the faithfulness of God. He wrote,

I think it might be demonstrated that almost every heresy that has afflicted the church through the years has arisen from believing about God things that are not true, or from overemphasizing certain true things so as to obscure other things equally true. To magnify any attribute to the exclusion of another is to head straight for one of the dismal swamps of theology, and yet we are all constantly tempted to do just that.

. . . We can hold a correct view of truth only by daring to believe everything God has said about Himself. It is a grave responsibility that a man takes upon himself when he seeks to edit out of God's self-revelation such features as he in his ignorance deems objectionable. Blindness in part must surely fall upon any of us presumptuous enough to attempt such a thing. And it is wholly uncalled for. We need not fear to let the truth stand as it is written. There is no conflict among the divine attributes. God's being is unitary. He cannot divide Himself and act at a given time from one of His attributes while the rest remain inactive. All that God is must accord with all that God does. Justice must be present in mercy, and love in judgment. And so with all the divine attributes.

The faithfulness of God is a datum [a fact or proposition used to draw a conclusion or make a decision] of sound theology but to the believer it becomes far more than that: it passes through the processes of the understanding and goes on to become nourishing food for the soul. For the Scriptures not only teach truth, they show also its uses for mankind. The inspired writers were men of like passion with us, dwelling in the midst of life. What they learned about God became to them a sword, a shield, a hammer; it became their life motivation, their good hope, and their confident expectation. . . .

Upon God's faithfulness rests our whole hope of future blessedness. Only as He is faithful will His covenants stand and His promises be honored. Only as we have complete assurance that He is faithful may we live in peace and look forward with assurance to the life to come.

Every heart can make its own application of this truth and draw from it such conclusions as the truth suggests and its own needs bring into focus. The tempted, the anxious, the fearful, the discouraged may all find new hope and good cheer in the knowledge that our Heavenly Father is faithful. He will ever be true to His pledged word. The hard-pressed sons of the covenant may be sure that He will never remove His loving-kindness from them nor suffer His faithfulness to fail.

- A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, pp. 79-81

It is not only important for us to understand and believe that God is faithful but then we must take that truth and apply it to our own lives, how we live out our faith! Here's the thing. People try to be faithful, trustworthy, reliable to their fellow man but that will never be accomplished the way that God desires until we are first faithful to Him. You see, when you look at the Fruit of the Spirit spoken of in Galatians chapter 5, one of the manifestations of Agape love, fruit, is faithfulness! Thus, to walk in the Spirit means you must surrender your life to His leading, you must submit your life to His control and thus, as you do the Fruit of the Spirit will flow through you because you are walking with Him and, as I have said, one of the Fruits of the Spirit or the manifestations of that Agape love is faithfulness!

Remember what Jesus said in Matthew chapter 7 as he was describing those that He knew and those that He didn't know and the outward manifestations of someone who was not walking with the Lord was his disobedience to God's Word, his unfaithfulness. On the other end of the spectrum was the person who knew the Lord and the Lord knew him and he was faithful in that he was obedient to the Word of God! Notice the contrast here in Matthew 7:24-27, "**Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.**" You see, one of the attributes of God is that He is faithful and as His children He desires us to be faithful and He will reward us accordingly.

And please understand, I can't stress this enough, that these attributes of God that we are studying are for us to apply to our lives also. These are not some isolated truths that don't really mean anything in the real world. As God manifests these and they are natural to Him, we too should have these attributes flow from our lives. Again, listen to how A. W. Tozer explains this. He wrote,

. . . God's attributes are not isolated traits of His character but facets of His unitary being. They are not things-in-themselves; they are, rather, thoughts by which we think of God, aspects of a perfect whole, names given to whatever we know to be true of the Godhead.

To have a correct understanding of the attributes it is necessary that we see them all as one. We can think of them separately but they cannot be separated. . . .

In studying any attribute, the essential oneness of all the attributes soon becomes apparent. We see, for instance, that if God is self-existent He must be also self-sufficient, and if He has power He, being infinite, must have all power. If He possesses knowledge, His infinitude assures us that He possess all knowledge. Similarly, His immutability presupposes His faithfulness. If He is unchanging, it follows that He could not be unfaithful, since that would require Him to change. Any failure within the divine character would argue imperfection and, since God is perfect, it could not occur. Thus, the attributes explain each other and prove that they are but glimpses the mind enjoys of the absolutely perfect Godhead.

- A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, pp. 78-79

That is important for us to understand, that none of these attributes are more important than another nor are they operated independently from each other. There is a beautiful harmonious flowing of these attributes from God to us, and what a joy to know that and to apply that to our lives! And even if we are unfaithful, God remains faithful, He will never change and again, what comfort that should bring to our lives! **THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD!**

G. GOODNESS

The next attribute of God that we will look at is the goodness of God. Now what do we mean by goodness? That is an important question that we need to answer. When we speak of goodness in relation to God we are saying that the goodness of God is that which disposes Him to be kind, to be cordial, to be benevolent or compassionate towards man.

Let me share with you a few Scriptures to show you the goodness of God towards us. In Psalm 145:8-9 we are told, **“The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, Slow to anger and great in mercy. The Lord is good to all, And His tender mercies are over all His works.”** God is good to us, He doesn’t have to be, but He chooses to be and it is seen in His goodness towards mankind. When you look at this world it is easy to say that God has every right to destroy it, wipe us out because of our ungodliness, but He reaches out to us with His grace, with compassion, He pours on us His goodness with the desire that we would turn to Him!

In Psalm 31:19 we are told, **“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!”** I think many times we lose sight of the goodness of God for we only see the goodness of God when we see good things happen to us and when we don’t, when things go bad, when they don’t go the way we think they should go, then we don’t see the goodness of God flowing into our lives. That is a wrong concept. Let me explain with this story. Corrie Ten Boom wrote,

Deep in our hearts we believe in a good God. Yet how shallow is our understanding of His goodness, especially since we see many things that seem to deny it.

Corrie Ten Boom clarified the issue for us. She wrote:

“Often I have heard people say, ‘How good God is! We prayed that it would not rain for our church picnic, and look at the lovely weather!’ Yes, God is good when He sends good weather. But God was also good when He allowed my sister, Betsie, to starve to death before my eyes in a German concentration camp. I remember one occasion when I was very discouraged there. Everything around us was dark, and there was darkness in my heart. I remember telling Betsie that I thought God had forgotten us. ‘No, Corrie,’ said Betsie, ‘He has not forgotten us. Remember His Word: “For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His steadfast love toward those who fear Him.” ’” Corrie concludes, “There is an ocean of God’s love available - there is plenty for everyone. May God grant you never to doubt that victorious love - whatever the circumstances.”

- Source Unknown

How true that is in our own lives. “I just got that promotion and a big raise! God is so GOOD!” Or, “We just got approved for that new house! God is so GOOD!” Or for those of you in school, “I just passed my geometry test! God is so GOOD!” And we can place in that anything that comes out positive and then we can say with passion in our hearts, “God is so GOOD!”

But what about when, “I just got fired!” Is God showing His goodness through that? I believe He is, somehow, somehow He is working out all things for good for those that love the Lord, for those that are called according to His purpose. Now, what if you deserve to be fired? What if you did something wrong and that is why you were fired, how can that be good?

Think about it for a minute. Maybe God is showing you what is in your heart, things you need to change and thus, if you listen, if you obey, it will be for good because you will have learned a valuable lesson. And I know that we have used Romans 8:28 often in our studies, but it is part of God’s Word and I think it is important for us to understand. Paul said, “**And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.**” And The Amplified Bible puts this verse like this, “**We are assured and know that [God being a partner in their labor] all things work together and are [fitting into a plan] for good to and for those who love God and are called according to [His] design and purpose.**”

Now what is Paul saying here? How many things work together for good? Is it most things, or many things or a good percentage of things? No, Paul is telling us that “**all things**” work together for good and if we believe that, if we truly understand that, then we would be able to say that the Lord is good no matter what we are going through!

And please note that it does not say that, “And we see . . .” Why is that? Because we don’t always see what God is doing. It is not always clear and thus, Paul does not say that. Also, Paul does not say, “And we feel . . .” Why is that? Because there are times, maybe a lot of times that we don’t always feel good about what we are going through in this life. I know, some just want to feel good, we all probably want to just feel good and have that emotional experience that everything is okay, but Paul does not say that. He says, “**And we know . . .**” You see, this is not based in our human understandings or subjective feelings it is totally based in knowledge. What kind of knowledge? In the knowledge of God Himself! If we know that God is good, then what flows from Him must be good! Remember what James 1:17 tells us, “**Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.**” That must be the place where we start, that every good gift is from God and as His children, He does not give us bad gifts!

You see, I may not understand the good that will come out of the situation, but I believe it by faith, I know it intuitively! That phrase here in Romans 8:28 that says all things “**work together**” is SUNERGE in the Greek and it is a word from which we get our English word “synergism.” It is a word that means “the working together of various elements to produce an effect greater than, and often completely different from, the sum of each element acting separately.” A great example of this is table salt, which is composed of two poisonous chemicals, sodium and chlorine but together they produce a chemical that is extremely beneficial, sodium chloride or table salt!

That is what God is doing. And please do not quote this verse to unbelievers, it is not for them, it is only for Christians and you are giving them a false hope if you do quote this verse to them! This verse, this promise is to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. It doesn't mean that God dose not pour out His rain on the just and the unjust, but this verse is not for them. All things are not working out for good in their lives, they are headed for Hell apart from Christ. So to tell them, not to worry, God is working in them for good is a lie to them and you are making them very comfortable in going to Hell!

Now that does not mean that we understand fully what God is doing. Think about it. Look at the situations that people are facing: a marriage that ends in divorce, a child who dies, a family member who has a terminal disease, the loss of a job. And the list can go on-and-on. We may not know what God is doing or even why He is doing these things.

That is where faith comes in and we need to, we must fall back on the truths we know about God or we will be in trouble! What are the things we need to fall back on as we face these things, these difficult situations in our lives? Let's look at three truths about God that can calm our spirits and give to us a correct perspective of the situation because as Paul said, "**And we know that all things work together for good . . .**" And when Paul tells us "**all**" he means "**all.**" Thus, let's see what we can **KNOW** about God to help us as we face these difficult situations in our lives.

First of all God is sovereign or He is in control. Nothing happens in my life without His knowledge or His control. Secondly, God loves me! That is important for us to know. If I did not know this truth, that God loves me, then as I go through difficult times I would think that God must hate me to allow all this to happen in my life. But He does love me, He loves you, we are His children that have been adopted into the family of God through Jesus Christ. And thirdly, God has infinite wisdom, and again, this is important for us to know. I think we all believe this, that God has infinite wisdom and thus, He is much wiser than you and me put together! As much as we might believe this in principle, many times we don't put it into practice! Think about it. As I go through a situation I might think to myself, "I would not have done it that way! Man, if God would have only done it like this or allowed this to take place, how much better, how much easier things would be!"

The problem with that picture is that I am nearsighted or I can't see what is down the road clearly, I can't see in the distance you might say! But God can and He does. He knows the end from the beginning and thus, everything that God does is based on the infinite wisdom that He has! I can only work from the limited picture that I have but as I have said, God sees the big picture you might say!

Thus, in knowing this and applying this to my life, I can rest in Him no matter what I am going through because God is good and He pours out His goodness upon my life! What a comfort that is.

Again, listen to what A. W. Tozer wrote regarding the goodness of God. He wrote,

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 unflinching attitude toward 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.

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.

- A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, p. 82

Now, is Tozer going a little overboard when he says that the goodness of God must be impregnable or we can't let anyone destroy that foundation? Absolutely not! Why is that? Because if God is not good, then we are in trouble and we can't trust Him at all. We would never know if something is good or bad in our life if we didn't trust what God is doing and that He is good! Listen carefully to this true story of a dear saint of God who saw God's goodness flow into his life even when the outward circumstances would indicate otherwise. He knew the inward reality and thus, we are told,

One of God's faithful missionaries, Allen Gardiner, experienced many physical difficulties and hardships throughout his service to the Savior. Despite his troubles, he said, "While God gives me strength, failure will not daunt me."

In 1851, at the age of 57, he died of disease and starvation while serving on Picton Island at the southern tip of South America. When his body was found, his diary lay nearby. It bore the record of hunger, thirst, wounds, and loneliness. The last entry in his little book showed the struggle of his shaking hand as he tried to write legibly. It read, "I am overwhelmed with a sense of the goodness of God."

- Source Unknown

There is a person who truly understood the goodness of God and even in his agonizing death, he believed it by faith and I guarantee you this, he was not disappointed! May we have that same kind of understanding that God is good and not let that foundation be broken or destroyed.

Now, when it comes to our own faith, we too are to have God's goodness not only flow into our lives but through our lives and touch the lives of others. Once again this is one of the Fruit's of the Spirit or what flows from that Agape love spoken of in Galatians chapter 5. It is what should be manifested in our lives but again, this will not happen unless we are walking in the Spirit, we are surrendered to the Spirit's leading in our lives! When Paul speaks of goodness flowing from our lives in Galatians chapter 5 he is speaking of moral and spiritual excellence. You see, you can be morally upright in the things you do but if you do not manifest the grace of goodness, and that comes from above as we surrender to His Spirit, then you are not walking in the Spirit as I have said.

David had a deep understanding of God's goodness, as he repeatedly reveals in his Psalms. "**Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.**" (Psalm 23:6). He confessed that he would, in fact, "**have despaired unless [he] had believed that [he] would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.**" (Psalm 27:13). Folk's, as with every grace the Spirit provides, believers are commanded to exemplify goodness. Later in the letter to the Galatians, after Paul spoke of the Fruit of the Spirit, Paul exhorts, "**While we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.**" (Galatians 6:10). And he wrote in II Thessalonians 1:11, "**To this end also we pray for you always, that our God may count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the word of faith with power.**" May the goodness of God be manifested in our lives that others may be partakers of it! **THE GOODNESS OF GOD!**

We are going to close here this morning as we concluded our study on the attributes of God. We have seen His holiness, His justice or righteousness, His love, His mercy, His grace, His faithfulness and His goodness! And I think you have a good picture of God the Father, what He is about, what His nature is. And so, the attributes of God give to us a description of the God of the Bible. That means that all other ideas about God are, according to what the Bible says, false gods. They are gods that are made up from the imagination of man's heart! Thus, by learning the attributes of God, you will know Him more and you will praise God for who He really is and for how each of His attributers impacts your life in a positive way!

We will look at next time how we are to respond to God in light of all that He is. Again, this is not just theological information but this also deals with application, how we are to live out our faith! May we not forget that! May we, like David desire to be like our Lord and dwell with Him as David said, “**As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness. . . . One thing I have desired of the Lord, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the Lord, And to inquire in His temple.**” Psalm 17:15, 27:4. May we have that kind of passion and love for the Lord that it is manifested in our lives!