

Re-calibrate- Goodness

Sermon Notes

July 18, 2021

Galatians 5:22-23

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

When we revere someone like Mother Theresa, do we admire her for her goodness in moral character or do we admire her for her goodness towards others?

The term goodness is used pretty flippantly—“my goodness” or “goodness gracious”. However, when used intentionally to speak of one’s life it usually a collective term that first notices the generous actions of that individual to then ascribe to their character goodness.

Goodness is the evidence of the Spirit’s power and transforming work.

- “How you act.” “Who you are.”
- Bilateral meaning of “goodness”
 - αγαθωσυνη (Galatians 5:22)- goodness, virtuous, or generous...applied action towards others.
 - αρετη (2 Peter 1:3)- virtuous, gracious, generous...(2 Peter 1:5) virtuous, moral excellence.

Read 2 Peter 1:3-4

It is by the power of the Spirit that we are given the ability to live a godly life.

2 Peter 1:3

Because of God’s glory and goodness (generosity), we get to participate in his nature.

2 Peter 1:4

- Participating in his nature is a way of saying our nature and character are being transformed/changed.
- There is the nature of our flesh and the divine nature that comes from the Spirit.
- These two natures are not compatible. **Galatians 5:16-17**
- We then glorify him as we express goodness/generosity towards others.

By the Spirit's power our nature will mature more and more into his likeness.

2 Peter 1:5-7

- From faith (spiritual birth) we pursue moral excellence—goodness.
 - It begins as an inner working of changing character.
 - It becomes a behavior that others benefit from.

- That changed character will lead us towards...
 - Greater knowledge of God.
 - Greater self-control in living by Spirit not flesh.
 - Perseverance. Strength of Character.
 - Looking more like God (godliness)
 - Kindness towards others.
 - All motivated by love.

If these qualities are increasing in you, you will grow in your understanding of God and be a powerful tool in his hand. 2 Peter 1:8

If you see these qualities decreasing or stalling in you, you will struggle to see ahead and you will become blind towards your current state. 2 Peter 1:9

Discussion Guide:

1. Who would you say from your past exemplifies “goodness” in the purest sense of the word? How does that person’s actions give justification to that description? What do those actions say about their character?
2. Read **2 Peter 1:3-9** and **Galatians 5:16-26**. How are these two passages similar in their warnings and directives?
3. Read again **2 Peter 1:5-9**. Are the qualities listed by Peter growing in greater presence in you or are they stagnant and decreasing within you? If they are increasing, how are you seeing your understanding of God grow? How is he using you in greater ways? If they are decreasing in you, how would you describe your ability to see down the road? How would you evaluate your current ability to discern God’s work around you?
4. With “goodness” being a description of both your generosity towards others and the quality of your moral character, take some time to invite the Holy Spirit’s work upon your character and for generosity towards others to begin to flow freely from within you. Also ask God to bring greater understanding of his glory and goodness.