



Hebrews 1:1 Pt 3_The Goodness, Mercy, and Love of God

Studying the Attributes of God as a Foundation to Hebrews

October 22, 2023

Hebrews 1:1-3

For the last two weeks, we've joyfully and expectantly looked at the first Word of Hebrews 1:1, *Theos*, or God, and endeavoured to review and reset our understanding of **The Doctrine of God**. Indeed, our desire has been to simply "Behold our God." The prophet Isaiah declared:

Isaiah 40:9 (KJV) *O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, **Behold your God!***

Last week, we looked at the *Sovereignty, Providence, and Decrees of God*. How comforting these truths are to the redeemed of the LORD:

Isaiah 46:9-10 (KJV) *Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, **10** Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:*

Amen! These quotes are worth a repeat:

"There is no attribute more comforting to His children than that of God's Sovereignty. Under the most adverse circumstances, in the most severe trials, they believe that Sovereignty has ordained their afflictions, that Sovereignty overrules them, and that Sovereignty will sanctify them all. There is nothing for which the children ought more earnestly to contend than the doctrine of their Master over all creation—the Kingship of God over all the works of His own hands—the Throne of God and His right to sit upon that Throne." - Charles Spurgeon

"God's providence is his almighty and ever present power, whereby, as with his hand, he still upholds heaven and earth and all creatures, and so governs them that leaf and blade, rain and drought, fruitful and barren years, food and drink, health and sickness, riches and poverty, indeed, all things, come to us not by chance but by his fatherly hand. - Heidelberg Catechism

The Goodness of God

Let us look at God's great goodness! Many of us have heard the call and response refrain: "God is good...All the time! And all the time...God is good!" More than just a rote expression in enthusiastic churches, this simple statement is packed with Biblical truth concerning the character of Elohim! The Goodness of God in Scriptures describes His innate kindness and benevolence, His care and welfare for His people, and implies His beauty or the beauty of His commands and actions.

Easton's Bible Dictionary says God's Goodness is *"A perfection of his character which he exercises towards his creatures according to their various circumstances and relations. Viewed generally, it is benevolence; as exercised with respect to the miseries of his creatures it is mercy, pity, compassion, and in the case of impenitent sinners, long-suffering patience; as*

exercised in communicating favour on the unworthy it is grace. Goodness and justice are the several aspects of one unchangeable, infinitely wise, and sovereign moral perfection. God is not sometimes merciful and sometimes just, but he is eternally infinitely just and merciful. God is infinitely and unchangeably good, and his goodness is incomprehensible by the finite mind God's goodness appears in two things, giving and forgiving."

In other words, God expresses His goodness through benevolent action towards His children. It is the fountain of His mercy and grace, and a manifestation of His lovingkindness (a very close synonym for His Goodness).

AW Pink (1886-1952) Declares concerning God's unconquerable goodness:

The Goodness Of God endureth continually" (Ps. 52:1). The goodness of God respects the perfection of His nature: "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). There is such an absolute perfection in God's nature and being that nothing is wanting to it or defective in it; nothing can be added to it to make it better.

He is originally good, good of Himself, which nothing else is; for all creatures are good only by participation and communication from God. He is essentially good; not only good, but goodness itself: the creature's good is a superadded quality, in God it is His essence. He is infinitely good; the creature's good is but a drop, but in God there is an infinite ocean or gathering together of good. He is eternally and immutably good, for He cannot be less good than He is; as there can be no addition made to Him, so no subtraction from Him.¹

God doesn't just control all things, providentially act, and decree His will throughout His creation...He does so in an inherently good fashion! All God does is good. All He allows is accords with a divinely good plan. All He gives us is good, as is His sometimes taking away from us. Jesus said, to the rich, young ruler, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God. (Mark 10:18) A statement FOR His deity not against, Christ affirms that God alone is ultimately good!

A Few Verses concerning the Goodness of our God!

Psalms 23:1-6 (KJV) A Psalm of David. *The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. 3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. 5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.*

Psalms 27:11-14 (KJV) *Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies. 12 Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty. 13 I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. 14 Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.*

¹ https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/sdg/attributes_online.html#chapter12

Psalms 107:8 (KJV) *Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!*

Zechariah 9:17 (KJV) *For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids.*

Romans 2:4 (KJV) *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*

Romans 11:21-22 (KJV) *For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. **22** Behold therefore the goodness and 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.*

Hallelujah! Again from Pink:

All that emanates from God—His decrees, His creation, His laws, His providences—cannot be otherwise than good: as it is written. "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good" (Gen. 1:31). Thus, the goodness of God is seen, first, in creation. The more closely the creature is studied, the more the beneficence of his Creator becomes apparent. Take the highest of God's earthly creatures, man. Abundant reason he has to say with the Psalmist, "I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well" (Ps. 139:14). Everything about the structure of our bodies attests to the goodness of their Maker. How suited the hands to perform their allotted work! How good of the Lord to appoint sleep to refresh a wearied body! How benevolent His provision to give the eyes lids and brows for their protection! So we might continue indefinitely.

Nor is the goodness of the Creator confined to man, it is exercised toward all His creatures. "The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing" (Ps. 145:15-16). Whole volumes might be written, and have been, to amplify this fact. Whether it is the birds of the air, the beasts of the forest, or the fish in the sea, abundant provision has been made to supply their every need. God "giveth food to all flesh, for his mercy endureth forever" (Ps. 136:25). Truly, "The earth is full of the goodness of the LORD" (Ps. 33:5).²

The Mercy of God

Out of the Goodness of God flows **Mercy**...or God's NOT giving His creatures what we deserve. Mercy carries the idea of **underserved compassion and kindness**. The Webster 1828 Dictionary says that mercy is:

That benevolence, mildness or tenderness of heart which disposes a person to overlook injuries, or to treat an offender better than he deserves; the disposition that tempers justice, and induces an injured person to forgive trespasses and injuries, and to forbear punishment, or inflict less than law or justice will warrant.

² https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/sdg/attributes_online.html#chapter12

That God is Mercifully Good accounts for our lives at this very moment! Indeed, we deserve NOTHING but wrath, death, and hell, and He has stayed His hand! He is merciful unto us! Another great quote from from Pink:

"O Give Thanks unto the LORD; for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever" (Ps. 136:1). For this perfection of the divine character God is greatly to be praised. Three times over in as many verses does the Psalmist call upon the saints to give thanks unto the Lord for this adorable attribute. Surely this is the least that can be asked from those who have been such bounteous gainers. When we contemplate the characteristics of this divine excellency, we cannot do otherwise than bless God for it. His mercy is "great" (1 Kings 3:6); "plenteous" (Ps. 86:5); "tender" (Luke 1:78); "abundant" (1 Pet. 1:3); it is "from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him" (Ps. 103:17). Well may we say with the psalmist, "I will sing aloud of thy mercy" (Ps. 59:16).

*"I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy" (Ex. 33:19). Wherein differs the mercy of God from his grace? The mercy of God has its spring in the divine goodness. The first issue of God's goodness is His benignity or bounty, by which He gives liberally to His creatures, as creatures; thus He has given being and life to all things. The second issue of God's goodness is His mercy, which denotes the ready inclination of God to relieve the misery of fallen creatures.*³

A Few More Verses in which to Rejoice!

Isaiah 63:7 (KJV) *I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses.*

Psalms 51:1 (KJV) *To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.*

Lamentations 3:21-23 (KJV) *This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. **22** It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. **23** They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*

When explaining the Parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus asked which of the three men who encountered the man who had been robbed helped Him...

Luke 10:37 (KJV) *And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, **Go, and do thou likewise.***

Ephesians 2:4-8 (KJV) *But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, **5** Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) **6** And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: **7** That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his*

³ https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/sdg/attributes_online.html#chapter15

kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. **8** For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

John Flavel (1627-1691) wrote, "There is a threefold mercy in God: preventing mercy, which steps between us and trouble; delivering mercy, which takes us out of the hand of trouble; and sparing mercy, which though it does not prevent nor deliver, yet it mitigates, allays, and graciously moderates our troubles."

We have been recipients of all three, Praise His Great Name!

Psalms 106:1 (KJV) Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

The Love of God

Beloved, every divine attribute of Yahweh Elohim could be preached about for many weeks! His great love is no different. Indeed...

Jeremiah 31:3 (KJV) The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

Deuteronomy 7:6-9 (KJV) For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. 7 The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: 8 But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. 9 Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations...

Oh steadfastness of the Love of God, shown so clearly in Scripture by His...

- Creating Mankind
- Allowing Man to live after the Fall
- Preserving Man through Noah's family
- Calling Abram and establishing a people through whom would come our Redeemer
- Calling His people out of slavery and bondage in Egypt
- Providing miraculous food and water for Israel in the wilderness
- Giving His Holy Law, that He might be acceptably worshipped
- Protecting and providing for a stiff-necked and rebellious people over and over again
- Rising early and sending prophets to preach repentance and faithfulness to God

But the greatest expression of the love of God is "in Christ." Christ Jesus is the manifest agape of God in saving sinners and granting them eternal life! There is no greater love than this!

John 15:13 (KJV) Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

John 3:16-17 (KJV) For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. **17** For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

Romans 5:8 (KJV) But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 8:31-39 (KJV) What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? **32** He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? **33** Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. **34** Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. **35** Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? **36** As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. **37** Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. **38** For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, **39** Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 John 4:7-10 (KJV) Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. **8** He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. **9** In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. **10** Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Songwriters Steve and Vikki Cook wrote in the first two verses of their song, "O Wondrous Love":

O wondrous love that will not let me go
I cling to You with all my strength and soul
Yet if my hold should ever fail
This wondrous love will never let me go

O wondrous love that's come to dwell in me
Lord who am I that I should come to know
Your tender voice assuring me
This wondrous love will never let me go

Closing Exhortations

CRC. God really is good! In Christ, you have found infinite mercy; it endureth forever! God really does love you, and proved it by sending Jesus to die for your sins! Please be encouraged to remember this...

1. When you doubt your worthiness in the LORD
2. When the enemy and his devils attack you and yours
3. When you encounter a personal difficulty or disappointment
4. When the world around you seems to be falling apart
5. When you have a difficult loss
6. When you are mentally or emotionally stressed
7. When you fall to temptation and struggle with forgiving yourself

Meditate upon His Goodness, Mercy, and Love, and watch your joy rise in Him!

Amen!