

INI Hymns:

7th Sunday after Trinity

**Psalm 100**

Sermon 24-27

7/14/24

1 *“Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands! 2 Serve the Lord with gladness; Come before His presence with singing. 3 Know that the Lord, He is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. 4 Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. 5 For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations.”*

**Dear Fellow Redeemed,**

“God is Good!” That has become a popular saying among Christians. Whenever something good happens in their lives, you might hear them exclaim, “God is Good!” That’s so true! James reminds us, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights.” James 1:17. We should recognize every good thing in our life as being a gift from God and be in the habit of proclaiming God’s Goodness to the world. That’s what our Psalm tells us to do. Especially when we come “into His courts,” as we have today and every Sunday. We come here to show our thanks to Him for the thousands of good things He has done for us every week. When we live our daily life seeing and rejoicing in God’s goodness, Our own joy in life will multiply greatly. So we continue our theme:

**Make A Joyful Shout to the LORD - For He Is GOOD!**

**-I- How Good is the LORD?**

In order to understand this better let me ask, what do we mean when we say, this or that person is a GOOD person? Or she is such a GOOD Christian? What does that mean? Don’t we talk about a person being good in a relative sense? They are “Good” compared to many other people that are not so good. We like to compare ourselves to people who are worse than us and that makes us think we are pretty good. But Jesus challenged that concept of anyone being good when a rich young man, who thought of Jesus as just a man, came to Him and said, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” Jesus responded, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.” Matthew 19:16-17 No one is good!

Not only that but the Apostle Paul says, “There is no one who does good, no, not one.” (Rom. 3:12) Really? There is not a single person in the world who “does good?” What about the guy who risked his life to pull a child from a burning building? What about the people who devote their lives to helping the poor and needy, or the sick and dying? What about all the things you have done for others, sacrificing your own time and money for them? Isn’t that good? Not according to God!

God clearly has a different standard than we do of what GOOD means. No one in this world is GOOD because we “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23 There are not differing degrees of goodness. God is good, everything that comes short of His goodness, and His standard of holiness is not a little less good, they are evil. Adam and Eve were created good just like God, but as soon as they disobeyed one little command, they were no longer good. They became evil, separated from God.

We need to understand this in order to be able to understand what it means when the Bible says “God is Good.” He is absolutely Good in every way. In everything that He thinks and does. In other words, He is perfect. Good is not a sliding scale. When God created the world He looked at it all and said it was very good. It was perfect! It was spectacular! Nothing could be improved on.

Everything about God is Perfect. Moses said in Deut. 32:4, “He is the Rock, His work is perfect: for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He.” King David said, “As for God, His way is perfect.” (2 Sam. 22:31), and again he says, “The law of the Lord is perfect.” (Psalm 19:7) Job says of God that He “is perfect in knowledge.” Isaiah says

“You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.” Isaiah 26:3. Yes, God is GOOD, absolutely perfect in every way.

-II- Now the question is, **Do you believe it?**

I know you know it is true, but do you believe it? How many of you have ever heard anyone give thanks to God and exclaim, “God is Good!,” when they receive a diagnosis of cancer? Or when their child is born with complications, or is still born? Do we praise God for His goodness, when we are struggling with financial troubles, or any other disaster?

Let me ask it another way. Is there ever a time when the Lord is NOT good to us? When James said, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights,” he was stating that everything good in our lives is from God. Then he goes on, “with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.” James 1:17 There is no variation in His goodness. Not even in the slightest bit. He is always good!

Yet don’t we doubt His Goodness at times, or at very least question it? That was a recurring theme for the Children of Israel. They witnessed God’s amazing love and power to deliver them from their slavery in Egypt and to miraculously save them from the army of Egypt at the Red Sea, but then a short time later they ran out of water and they complained that God brought them out of Egypt to kill them in the wilderness. When God brought them to the land of Canaan to finally enter into the land that God had promised to give to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—a land flowing with milk and honey; they saw the strength and size of the people in the land and they complained: “Why has the LORD brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims?” Numbers 14:3 Accusing God of evil.

Don’t we also doubt God’s goodness and complain that He is not Good, when disasters happen? Do you realize when we do that we are sinning against God’s very first commandment, for then we are not, “fearing, loving and trusting in God above all things.” Martin Luther said in His Large Catechism, *“To keep the first commandment is to expect nothing but good from God.”*

We need to learn that everything God does is good, even when that involves some suffering. He is chastising us out of pure love and promises that He “makes ALL things work together for GOOD to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.” Romans 8:28. When the people of Judah had their homes destroyed, their cities burned, their loved ones killed and the rest taken away from the Promised Land to Babylon, they understandably thought that God had forsaken them and forgotten them. God reassured them, “I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.” Jeremiah 29:11 “God is Good?” Even that tremendous suffering was a part of God’s Good Plan to rescue them from their unbelief in order to save them from eternal damnation.

That’s the key. We think of good as being things we enjoy. God does take pleasure in giving things we enjoy, but above all, He is always looking out for our eternal good. We especially see His goodness in times of trouble for God not only allows only those trials that He knows will help us in our faith, but He also promises to be with us in those times of trouble, to comfort us and to keep us with His love.

There are so many things that show God’s goodness. Psalm 103:1-5 mentions several, “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! 2 Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, 3 who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, 4 who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, 5 who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.” Psalm 100 summarizes everything with

just two simple statements. “The Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations.”

“His mercy is everlasting.” The Hebrew word translated “mercy” is so rich in meaning. It could also be translated as “steadfast love,” or even “Grace.” All of those concepts show His goodness.

His **Mercy** takes pity on us in our lost condition and comes to save us and help us in every time of need, the way Jesus had compassion on the crowds and fed them.

His **Grace** is His UNDESERVED Love. We sin against God daily and arouse His anger, yet He doesn’t forsake us or punish us as we deserve. He continues to love us and provide for us. He gave His only Son to suffer and die for us when we deserved to die. By His grace He forgives us and is always good to us.

His **Steadfast Love** never fails. He loves us and wants the best for us. He even loves us enough to discipline us. Every trouble is part of His loving discipline to curb our sinful nature and keep us in the faith so that we don’t lose the salvation that He purchased with His own blood.

That is why James tells us to “count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.” James 1:2-4 So yes, even in the times of the greatest hardship and suffering we can see God’s goodness, and give thanks to Him for His everlasting mercy.

The second evidence of God’s Goodness is that “His truth endures to all generations.” Oh thank God every day that He has preserved His Word for us. In that word He has given us “His truth,” absolute truth. Truth that we can depend upon. And thank Him that His truth endures to all generations it doesn’t change. Therefore our faith and our life is built upon the solid rock of God’s truth which will never change. It will never fail or let us down. We can count on it. The liberal Christians today, who deny the Bible is entirely God’s inspired word, have nothing to build their faith upon but their own faulty and fickle idea of what is right and wrong. They go against God’s clear and simple word. Such faith will fail them because it is not based on God’s truth.

May we be eager to do as the Psalmist urges, especially in our worship. We need to examine our own attitudes about worship. Some may feel they don’t really get anything out of the worship service. It’s always about things I already know, so if I miss a week here or there, it’s not going hurt. But worship at its very basis is giving thanks and praise to God. God is Good! In all things every day. We owe Him all thanks and praise. When we recognize that, we will be compelled to come and worship and bow down to our good and gracious God always and give thanks to Him. And the wonderful thing about it, as we do, God does richly bless us even more with His word and with His Love. So may we be eager at every opportunity to “Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. 5 For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations.”

“Oh give thanks to the LORD for He is good, for His mercy endures forever.” Amen