



He Is Good!

"Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever." –1 Chronicles 16:34

Jesus Christ is a good God... not One among many. He is the only One – the One you and I need to make us right before God and to protect us. Don't you just want to be more like Him? I feel so thankful for Christ today! The Bible says, *"The Lord is slow to anger and great in power . . . The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble"* (Nah. 1:3, 7).

You know that God is just, righteous and holy. We are not; we are sinners and we can never meet His righteous standards no matter how hard we try. And that's a major problem, but from His tender kindness and tremendous love He approaches us and offers us eternal life.

In Romans two, Paul didn't beat around the bush concerning this. When he lovingly sat down to pen the Romans a letter about the Gospel, he decided to take the gloves off, to call a spade a spade, and to say it straight. He refused to waste any time getting to the core of our problem: it's SIN.

Of course, he didn't stop there because the Gospel (which means "good news") provides incredible hope in Christ: our only real SOLUTION. But in order to get to the good-news-part as he hoped to do, it's necessary that everybody understands, accepts, and identifies with the bad-news-part of the Message first: we are sinners, totally and completely separated from inner goodness. Whether we're out-and-out vile and shameless (as described in Romans 1:18-32) or we are mega-pious, self-righteous, and haughtily looking down our noses at those who live such openly godless lives (as described in Romans 2:1-16), we're still depraved sinners—still as bad off as we can be before a righteous, holy God. The worst sins, the worst of us commit are not beyond any of us committing if we simply chose to.

But Paul isn't through! Next on his list is the hyper-religious Jew who thinks he's good, who believes his traditions, fleshly works, and privilege before God put him in a good position spiritually – on a higher plane than all others on the planet. *"Not so,"* says Paul in the last 13 verses of Romans 2. Even the super-religious people are sinners that need to be regenerated inside through a new birth! Many Americans don't understand that working your way to heaven as a religious person is different from being a real Christian. We are to do good works after we are saved in order to please our Lord who leads us, but many vainly still rely on doing works to try to get saved. God's Spirit directs born again Christians to do good works so others will want Christ. Nominal and carnal Christians repel sinners from the Kingdom.

Yes, our acquisition of goodness starts with Christ who is good, not with us. It begins with a new birth in Christ and of course He will respect your choice in this matter. He won't decide for any of us. Sure, He initiates all this by wooing and convicting; but you and I are to be the responders. We must decide. Unlike what many televangelists tell you, you really don't have to give a pile of money or do a bunch of good stuff to get God's affection and blessing. You don't have to sing a hundred songs for God to come down to visit you. You are in His presence right now – you've been in His presence all week. His blessings and salvation are free. **GOD LOVES YOU beyond hefty, beyond uber-massively -- IMMEASUREABLY and He tenderly reaches out to you. Please choose Him today!** He longs to rescue and restore each one

of us from all weirdness, badness and gloom ...back into His image if we will only repent and believe. And He's so dependable.

So many of us today have a vision of goodness and love that are superficial, shallow and limited. Maybe we get this from Hollywood and the world's crowd. We often display a love that wants to be remunerated – you know, full pay back. Man is not selfless or good alone. Man's love is often small and temporary according to the changing circumstances and feelings of his life. Man's love runs out. Man's love is so unlike the agape Love of God. God's kind of love for us never runs out – it's unchanging! It is totally consistent. It is inexhaustible! It is sturdy-steadfast! God always loves us no matter what we do. He loves you when you say all the right things as much as He does when you blunder and fail miserably. He loves you when you're rich or poor. Yes, He really cares for you when you do the appropriate things, but he also cares for you when you have the wrong motives, rebel or even spurn His attempts to draw you closer. Of course He wants you to live in obedience and please Him, but He is always there for you even if you stray far away. He'll receive you if you'll admit it and quit it – I mean ditch your wrong-doin's. We can be so fickle at times, but God is not. His promises are good and sure. He said what He meant, and meant what He said ...in the Bible. That's His passionate love letter to the Christian. It really wasn't written to you, but it was written for you, because you matter. PRAISE GOD FOR HIS LOVE! AND WE ARE SO THANKFUL FOR HIS GOOD BOOK! When you read it and really taste the Lord's goodness up-close and personal, His praise will be on your lips!

*Immortal, invisible, God only wise, in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days, almighty, victorious—
Thy good Name we praise. —Anonymous*

I like what Julie Ackerman said, "*Thank God that He uses His goodness not to destroy us but to save us, and that He uses His goodness not as a reason to reject us but as a way to reach us.*" But how do we grasp what the Bible teaches about the Lord being good? We inquire and listen to the Spirit as we read it. *The Lord is good* – that means that God is the final standard of good and all that He performs is worthy of approval. Does that mean God is waiting for my approval? No. He's not waiting for the world's approval either. His goodness is not dependent upon my approval or anyone's nod at all. He is God and I am not. He is good whether I agree with this or not. And if God is good, then you and I have a definition of the meaning of good that will greatly help us in our study of ethics and moralitythat can help us get along with others in a good way.

You already know how we live in a world that has lost its way for the most part – lost its good ethics and moral compass. Read the headlines. People seem to define their own good, truth and reality. We live on a planet where many call bad things good, and good things bad – where "*your truth*" is as good as "*my truth*" even if I got mine from the Bible that is authoritative.

What is good? Good is what God approves according to the Scriptures. Wait—where do I come into this? I don't. Either I wake up to that fact and acknowledge that it is true or I foolishly think I am smarter than God. Basically, all my opinions are worthless if they don't agree with God's Word. My opinions are only as good as the next guys, but what God says is true. That might sound audacious, but He can meet all your needs in His goodness. You can't meet all your needs. Our good God wants to do this if we'll only turn to Him. The Israelites in the wilderness had doubts about his ability in this area and wanted to turn back to Egypt. Do you remember when God said, "**I AM**"? Their question was: "**IS HE?**"

Truth says: **HE IS** (everything He says He is)... He cared for them and in His goodness He cares about everything you and I face -- down to the minutest detail.

People often ask us about our good God. And they thoughtfully ask about how we are doing. Like most Americans, I say we are doing well. But it's true. We really are. He takes good care of us.

They ask How?: It's because **HE IS** greater than he that is in the world (1 Jn. 4:4)...
It's because **HE IS** a friend that sticks closer than a brother (Prov. 18:24)...
It's because **HE CARES** about us more than the birds of the air and the lilies of the field (Matt. 6:25-34)...
It's because **HE CARES** so much for us that we can cast all our cares upon Him (1 Pet. 5:7).

HE IS God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments (Deut 7:9).

HE IS your praise, and **HE IS** your God, who has done for you these great and awesome things which your eyes have seen. (Deut 10:21).

HE IS your life and the length of your days (Deut. 30:20).

HE IS the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you. (Deut. 31:6).

HE IS the Rock, His work is perfect (Deut. 32:4).

HE IS God in heaven above and on earth beneath. (Josh. 2:11).

HE IS our God (Joshua 24:18).

HE IS a shield to all who trust in Him. (2 Sam. 22:31).

HE IS the tower of salvation to His king, And shows mercy to His anointed, To David and his descendants forevermore. (2 Sam. 22:51)

HE IS God! The LORD, **HE IS** God! (1 Kings 18:39).

HE IS good! For His mercy endures forever (1 Chron. 16:34).

HE IS good, For His mercy endures forever (2 Chron. 5:13).

HE IS strong (Job 9:19).

HE IS unique (Job 23:13).

HE IS mighty in strength of understanding. (Job 36:5).

HE IS excellent in power, In judgment and abundant justice; He does not oppress (Job 37:23).

HE IS at my right hand I shall not be moved. (Ps. 16:8).

HE IS a shield to all who trust in Him. (Ps. 18:30).

HE IS the King of glory (Ps. 24:10).

HE IS the saving refuge of His anointed (Ps. 28:8).

HE IS our help and our shield (Ps. 33:20).

HE IS their strength in the time of trouble. (Ps. 37:39).

HE IS a great King over all the earth (Ps. 47:2).

HE IS my rock and my salvation; **HE IS** my defense; I shall not be greatly moved. (Ps. 62:2).

HE IS awesome in His doing toward the sons of men. (Ps. 66:5).

HE IS my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust. (Ps. 91:2).

HE IS my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him. (Ps. 92:15).

HE IS clothed with majesty (Ps. 93:1).

HE IS our God, and we are the people of His pasture, And the sheep of His hand (Ps. 95:7).

HE IS high above all the peoples (Ps. 99:2).

HE IS good! For His mercy endures forever (Ps. 106:1).

HE IS gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous. (Ps. 112:4).

HE IS a shield to those who put their trust in Him (Prov. 30:5).

HE IS called the God of the whole earth (Isa. 54:5).

HE IS the living God and the everlasting King (Jer. 10:10).

HE IS the Maker of all things (Jer. 10:16).

HE IS the living God, And steadfast forever; His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed, And His dominion shall endure to the end. (Dan. 6:26).
HE IS gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm (Joel 2:13).
HE IS just and having salvation (Zech. 9:9).
HE IS risen (Matt. 28:6).
HE IS kind to the unthankful and evil. (Lk. 6:35).
HE IS kind to the unthankful and evil. (Acts 10:36).
HE IS not far from each one of us (Acts 17:27).
HE IS the Savior of the body (Eph. 5:23).
HE IS able even to subdue all things to Himself. (Phil. 3:21).
HE IS before all things, and in Him all things consist. (Col. 1:17).
HE IS the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence (Col. 1:18).
HE IS able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day. (2 Tim. 1:12).
HE IS able to aid those who are tempted. (Heb. 2:18).
HE IS also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. (Heb. 7:25).
HE IS also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises (Heb. 8:6).
HE IS the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance (Heb. 9:15).
HE IS, and that **HE IS** a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (Heb. 11:6).
HE IS precious (1 Pet. 2:7).
HE IS glorified (1 Pet. 4:14).
HE IS faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 Jn. 1:9).
HE IS pure (1 Jn. 3:3).
HE IS coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him (Rev. 1:7).
HE IS Lord of lords and King of kings (Rev. 17:14).

"And God said unto Moses, I AM that I AM: and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." Exodus 3:14 Maybe you've noticed that the title God chose to describe Himself is really an incomplete sentence? Most people would finish that sentence, "I am..." But not our Lord. He purposefully did not complete the sentence. "I AM." He is. Are you hungry? He is the bread. Are you in the dark? He is the light. Are you searching? He is the truth. Are you lost? He is the way. Are you in need? He is your Shepherd. What are you looking to God to meet today? Trust Him right now to meet you there.

"God is great, God is good. Let us thank Him for this food." For years I heard the words of this prayer without stopping to consider what life in general would even be like if it were not true—if God was not good. We who follow Christ have every reason to heartily express our gratitude vertically and horizontally, especially for God's enormous goodness ...as we grow in the knowledge of who He IS. Let's daily thank and praise Him for His goodness!

Have Kurt's fishing devos blessed you? Click on the "Contact" button and let him know!

