



SERMON BASED STUDY GUIDE

Pastor Charlie Riley

Embracing the Unchanging Goodness of God

OPENING & PRAYER:

Today, we gathered around a simple but profound truth: God is good. This is not just a phrase to repeat, but a foundational mindset that shapes how we see God, ourselves, and the world. When we truly believe in God's goodness, it changes the way we read the Bible, the way we pray, and the way we face life's challenges. Too often, people say "God is good" but then hesitate when life gets hard, or when questions arise about suffering and evil. But the truth is, God's goodness is not up for debate or dependent on our circumstances. It is the unchanging reality at the heart of our faith.

"Father, we thank you for your goodness. As we study today, help us to see Your goodness through Your Word. We want to know you more, and strengthen our relationship with you. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen"

SCRIPTURE:

Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'I will punish Amalek for what he did to Israel, how he ambushed him on the way when he came up from Egypt. Now go and attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.' 1 Samuel 15:2-3

Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God (Angels) saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose. Genesis 6:1-2

And the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown. Genesis 6:3-4

And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; Jude 1:6

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, 1 Peter 3:18-19

who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. 1 Peter 3:20

For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace. Romans 6:14

For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. John 1:17

Then the Angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the Lord, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son Genesis 22:15-16

blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice." Gen 22:17-18

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Galatians 3:13-14

For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, And His truth endures to all generations. Psalms 100:5

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? Romans 8:31

We have come to know [by personal observation and experience], and have believed [with deep, consistent faith] the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides continually in him. 1 John 4:16

I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Psalm 27:13

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the Lord Forever. Psalm 23:6

GO DEEPER:

We explored how the Bible, when read through the lens of God's love and grace, reveals a God who is always for us, never against us. God's love is not based on our performance or our ability to get everything right. He loves us with a constant, unfathomable love. We are each His favorite, and His goodness is personal—God is good to me. This is not arrogance, but a recognition of His grace that goes beyond what we deserve.

Yet, we all wrestle with the “whys”—why do bad things happen, especially to “good” people? The answer is rooted in the reality of sin entering the world through the fall of Adam and Eve. Sin, as an entity, brought brokenness, suffering, and evil into the world. Sometimes the enemy attacks, sometimes people make poor choices, and sometimes we simply live in a fallen world. But none of these change God's character. Jesus Himself made it clear: the thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy, but He came to bring life in abundance.

We also addressed the difficult passages in the Old Testament where God seems harsh or angry. Understanding the context of the giants (Nephilim) and the purpose of the law helps us see that God's actions were not arbitrary or cruel, but part of a larger story of redemption. The law was never meant to be the end; it pointed to our need for grace, which is fully revealed in Jesus.

So, let these truths anchor your heart: God is good, God is for you, God loves you, and God is good to you. No matter what comes, hold fast to these confessions and let them shape your life.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

God's Goodness Is Foundational, Not Conditional

Believing that God is good is not just a comforting thought—it is the foundation for living the Christian life as it was meant to be lived. Without this mindset, our faith becomes unstable, easily shaken by circumstances or unanswered questions. When we settle in our hearts that God is always

good, we can face life's uncertainties with confidence and hope. [02:10]

The Problem of Evil Is Rooted in the Fall, Not in God's Character

When we ask why bad things happen, especially to "good" people, we must remember that sin entered the world through Adam and Eve's disobedience. Evil and suffering are not God's doing, but the result of a fallen world, the enemy's attacks, and human choices. Understanding this keeps us from blaming God and instead draws us closer to His heart of compassion and redemption. [13:50]

God's Love and Favor Are Personal and Unchanging

God's love is not based on our performance or worthiness. He loves us with a steadfast, unchanging love, and His goodness is personal—He is good to me. This truth is not just theological; it is meant to be experienced and confessed daily, shaping our identity and our expectations of God's involvement in our lives. [05:06]

Difficult Old Testament Passages Require Context and Christ-Centered Understanding

Some stories in the Old Testament, like the destruction of the Amalekites or the flood, can seem harsh or confusing. But when we understand the context—such as the presence of the Nephilim and the purpose of the law—we see that God's actions were aimed at preserving humanity and pointing us to our need for grace. The full picture only makes sense in light of Jesus, who fulfills and completes the story. [23:18]

Confession and Meditation on God's Goodness Guard Our Hearts

The enemy constantly tries to convince us that God is not for us, that He is angry or distant. We must continually renew our minds and hearts with the truth: God is good, God is for me, God loves me, and God is good to me. Making these confessions a daily habit strengthens our faith and keeps us anchored in God's unchanging character. [39:10]

LEARNING AND GROWING:

1. Based on Ephesians 5:18, what is the difference between being baptized into the body of Christ and being filled with the Spirit? [37:31]
2. Why does Jesus call the Holy Spirit our “Helper,” and how does this shape our understanding of the Spirit’s role in our daily lives? [13:46]
3. Pastor Charlie mentions that being filled with the Spirit is a daily, ongoing process rather than a one-time event. Why might this continual filling be necessary for Christian living? [37:31]
4. Pastor Charlie says, “The more we surrender, the more He fills us.” Is there an area of your life you find hard to yield to the Holy Spirit? What would it look like to surrender that area this week? [29:37]
5. The Holy Spirit’s role is to glorify Jesus and guide us into all truth. Can you think of a recent decision where you sensed the Spirit’s guidance? How did you respond, and what was the outcome? [13:46]

CLOSING PRAYER:

“Father, thank you for being a good father to us. We know that you are for us, you love us, and you want everything that is good for us. We will continue to grow in the confidence that comes from leaning on Your Word, and Your love for us. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen”