

Home Group Leader's Notes
Week of January 21, 2024

Sermon Series: *You CAN Have It All*, week #3 – “Goodness”

Our focus this week is on adding “goodness” to our faith. It may not be what you think. The root of this word means “to fulfill the purpose for which it is made.” After your group understands the word, you will also dive into chapter three to discuss ‘How do we fulfill our purposes as followers of Christ?’

A FORBIDDEN WORD

My son was an English teacher that taught writing classes at a community college. One of the forbidden words to use in a paper was “good.” In our culture, this word is overused and vague. When you were a 10-year-old, what did it mean to be “good?”

The purpose of this question is to help people to engage by discussing something that is ‘safe’ to share.

IN PURSUIT OF GOODNESS

But in our study for this week, “goodness” is a quality to be pursued. The apostle Peter wrote this, “*His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and **goodness**. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith **goodness**.*” (2 Peter 1:3-5)

The word translated as “goodness” (NIV), or “virtue” is the Greek word *aretē*. It can also mean “excellence.” As Pastor Doug explained on Sunday, the root meaning of the word means ‘to fulfill the purpose for which it was made.’ For example, “virtue” can mean, “conformity to a standard of right.” In this case, virtue could mean in our passage, the call to live out what is right before God. The idea of “excellence” describes the quality of being “eminently good.” And “goodness” in our passage would mean to be “good” as God is “good,” (verse three) to live as God intends.

To understand what Peter means by adding goodness, look up the specific applications found in chapter three of this letter. Read 2 Peter 3:1-16 and consider the questions.

What was Peter’s purpose for writing this letter? (1-2) How are these purposes connected with “goodness” (fulfilling the purpose / conforming to being right)?

Peter wrote these letters as “reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking.” Peter said that these reminders came from “words spoken in the past” by prophets and “our Lord and Savior through your apostles.” These words carry the weight of ‘Thus sayeth the Lord.’

God is calling us to “goodness” (cf. excellence, virtue) that has already been commanded by the Lord.

3 Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. ² I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the **holy** prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles.

³ Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. ⁴ They will say, “Where is this ‘coming’ he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.” ⁵ But they deliberately forget that long ago by God’s word the heavens came into being and the earth

was formed out of water and by water. ⁶ By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. ⁷ By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

⁸ But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.^[a]

¹¹ Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives ¹² as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.^[b] That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. ¹³ But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

¹⁴ So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. ¹⁵ Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. ¹⁶ He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

¹⁷ Therefore, dear friends, since you have been forewarned, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure position. ¹⁸ But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

Reread the passage and consider what we learn about the character and actions of God. What actions remind us that God is "good."

- His prophets are "holy" which reflects God's character.
- With the Lord a day is like a thousand years,
- ⁹The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise,
- he is patient
- not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.
- the Lord will come like a thief.
- The heavens will ...be destroyed by fire,
- But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.
- ¹⁵ Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation,
- the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

Read 3:11-16 and consider these questions:

According to verse 12, how should we live to fulfill our purpose as followers of Jesus?

By looking forward to His return and realizing that He will judge the earth

According to verse 13, how should we live to fulfill our purpose as followers of Jesus?

By looking forward to His return and our future place in heaven

According to verse 14, how should we live to fulfill our purpose as followers of Jesus?

make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him

According to verse 17, how should we live to fulfill our purpose as followers of Jesus?

be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure position.

According to verse 18, how should we live to fulfill our purposes as followers of Jesus?

Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

DISCUSS TOGETHER

What should motivate us to add “goodness” to our faith? What shouldn’t be the reason?

SHOULD: Our motivate is love for Jesus (John 14:21), a desire for His glory to be known throughout the earth, and compassion for the people who might face God’s wrath in judgment.

SHOULDN’T: An attempt to appease God, to earn salvation, or to be worldly religious

According to chapter three, what is required of us to add goodness?

See questions about. Goodness is about fulfilling the purposes of God in our lives.

Is this not just being religious? Why or why not?

The purpose of this is to clarify the reasons for our actions. We are tempted to go back to law to justify ourselves or appease God.

PLEASE PRAY

- God is doing amazing things in Micah House. Please pray for the team and the students.
- Pray for the search team as they consider candidates for our next Lead Pastor.
- Pray for the Global Partner Care Team as they travel to encourage our partners.
- Pray for the Ohana Team as they travel to support teams on the field.

Brothers and Sisters, please know that we love and pray for you.

Steve