

The Broadmoor Bulletin

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A God of Both Mercy and Justice

Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off. (**Romans 11:22**)

Knowing of both the "goodness" and the "severity" of God, we ought to seek Him with reverence as well as gratitude. Even though He is a God of love, God is not to be trifled with. Our love for Him must be tempered with sobriety. Indeed, it would not be right to say that we loved God if we failed to take Him seriously. A love that presumed upon His grace and treated Him as if His commandments were inconsequential would be something less than real love. Thus it is our gratitude for God's goodness, just as much as our respect for His severity, that causes us to be careful about His instructions.

As has often been pointed out, it is the justice of God that makes His mercy meaningful. Just as our love for God would mean little if we were robots who had no choice but to love Him, God's mercy toward us would be meaningless if punishment were an impossibility. And it would be hard to have much respect for a God who never did anything about the wrongs and the injustices that are in the world. In his speech in Athens, Paul affirmed that God "has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness" (**Acts 17:31**). And the question that Abraham had asked in his day is a question that answers itself: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (**Genesis 18:25**).

The alternatives are set before us in Paul's letter to Rome. God, wrote the apostle, will render to each one according to his deeds: "eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath" (**Romans 2:7, 8**). And in John's writings, Jesus Christ is pictured as both the "Lamb of God" (**John 1:29**) and the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" (**Revelation 5:5**). There is no conflict between the Lamb and the Lion. The Son of God is both, and both should govern our faith, our hope, and our love.

"The vague and tenuous hope that God is too kind to punish the ungodly has become a deadly opiate for the consciences of millions. It hushes their fears and allows them to practice all pleasant forms of iniquity while death draws every day nearer and the command to repent goes unregarded. As responsible moral beings we dare not so trifle with our eternal welfare." (A. W. Tozer)

Gary Henry

Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?

Romans 2:4

Good for Evil

Most Bible students are familiar with Jesus' teaching to "turn the other cheek." In the Sermon on the Mount he referred to the Jewish practice of exacting an "eye for an eye" and a "tooth for a tooth" and then taught his disciples that if a man "smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Matt. 5:39).

At first this seems to be a "hard saying"-- one that is difficult to accept and practice. And it is. But as the years go on -- maybe it's age, physical weakness, or my natural tendency to be cowardly -- I have found this command less demanding. I seldom build up feelings of retaliation. Where I struggle is the next level to which both Peter and Paul take this instruction.

Paul taught the brethren at Rome to "render to no man evil for evil" and then said "if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink ... be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:17, 20, 21). Peter says essentially the same thing and then tells brethren to render a "blessing" to those who mistreat them (1 Pet. 3:9).

What both apostles tell us is that the love of Christ demands that we act with positive good will toward our enemies. I would be fine if I could pray for them, as Jesus also taught (Matt. 5:44), and then ignore them. I have found this to be true in many situations in the church and even in family life. I seldom feel the need to get even, but it is a real temptation to sulk, become moody, and treat brethren and family members with indifference.

How many times I have done this, how many times I have preached to myself about it, how many times I have taken days, weeks, and even months to get back to a normal relationship with the persons involved. We should really pity folks who are petty and who wrong us, we should leave them to the Lord for judgment, and we should seek to show them goodness -- manifesting to them a benevolent and kind spirit. How well I know this, but how pitifully I practice it.

May God help me and all of us to love and do good at all times.

L. A. Stauffer

Chrestotes – A Fruit of the Spirit

The fifth word in the list of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22 – 23 is the Greek word *chrestotes*. This word is usually translated kindness or goodness. It originally meant usefulness, suitability, or properness. The meaning broadened over time to include the moral excellence that comes from a good and kind heart.

The adjective form of this word refers to God's character in Luke 6:35. "But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men." God showed kindness to us when He raised us up from our dead state of transgressions to walk with Christ in newness of life, having the hope of eternal life (Eph. 2:4 – 7; Titus 3:4 – 7).

Gilbert Booher

True Repentance

Repentance means to change your mind, do an about-face, to change direction. In the context of salvation, it refers to changing one's mind about sinning, turning from sin, and turning to God. It is prompted by a guilty conscience (Acts 2:37-38) and is attainable through the goodness and kindness of God (Rom. 2:4). But for repentance to be accepted by God, it must be genuine and sincere. It is here that I fear Christians sometimes abuse repentance.

It is possible, for example, to use repentance as an escape hatch for "planned sinning." That is, a Christian might knowingly commit sin, thinking that they can "always repent later." Or, one can go through the motions of repenting, without understanding or intending to comply with the changed life which it demands. After all, repentance has fruit, John the Baptist said (Matt. 3:8). Peter commanded his hearers to "*Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out...*" (Acts 3:19). And Paul told Agrippa that he "*preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds*" (Acts 26:20).

Any prayer to God for forgiveness which leaves a mental loophole for continued sinning is no repentance at all. Such mental finagling is an attempt to mock God, which Paul says cannot be done (Gal. 6:7). Have you really changed your mind about your sin, or are you trying to have it both ways? Remember, the Lord already knows the answer.

Jim King

For an additional study on kindness or goodness, visit the site http://executableoutlines.com/fs/fs_13.htm to view an outline by Mark Copeland.

Times of Service

Sunday Bible Class	9:00 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	9:55 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:00 p.m.

Visit us on the web at <http://www.broadmoorchurch.com>

"Amazing Grace"

John Newton was born in 1725 and died in 1807. It seems that the only godly influence in his life was his mother, who died when he was only seven years old. When she died, John was virtually an orphan. His father remarried, sent him to a strict military school, where the severity of discipline almost broke his back - he left in rebellion at the age of ten. One year later, deciding that he would never enter formal education again, Newton became a seaman apprentice, hoping somehow to step into his father's trade and learn at least the ability to skillfully navigate a ship.

By and by, through a process of time, Newton slowly gave himself over to the devil, determining that he would sin to the fill without restraint, now that the righteous lamp of his life had gone out. Later drafted into England's Royal Navy, he

deserted, was captured like a common criminal and beaten publicly several times at the mast, and was dismissed from the service. After enduring the punishment, Newton again fled, entertaining thoughts of suicide, and made his way to Africa, deciding that would be the place he could get farthest from anyone that knew him. Again he made a pact with the devil to live for him.

Somehow, through a process of the events, Newton got in touch with a Portuguese slave trader, and lived in his home. After suffering hostile treatment, he fled to the shoreline of Africa, penniless and owning only the clothes on his back. There he built a fire, hoping to attract a ship that was passing by. A skipper took him on thinking he had gold or slaves or ivory to sell and was surprised because the young man was a skilled navigator. It turned out to be a slave ship, and John lived on this ship for a long period of time. It was not uncommon for as many as six hundred blacks from Africa to be in the hold of the ship, down below, being taken to America.

During these years, on a number of occasions, Newton went through all sorts of narrow escapes from death. One time Newton fell overboard. Because he couldn't swim, the skipper harpooned him to get him back on the ship, and John lived for the rest of his life with a large scar in his side. On board, inflamed with fever, John was enraged with the humiliation. A storm broke out, and he wound up in the hold of the ship, down among the pumps. To keep the ship afloat, he worked as a servant of the slaves. There, bruised and confused, bleeding, diseased, he became the epitome of a degenerate man. It was then that John Newton remembered the words of his mother and began to seek God.

His epitaph, which he wrote himself, reads:

John Newton, Clerk

Once an infidel and libertine,

A servant of slavers in Africa,

Was, by the rich mercy of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ,

Preserved, restored, pardoned,

And appointed to preach the Faith

He had long laboured to destroy.

First entitled "Faith's Review and Expectation", this hymn, was sung to the plantation melody known as "Loving Lambs".

Verse 1

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound That saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but now am found, Was blind but now I see.

Verse 2

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, And grace my fears relieved; How precious did that grace appear The hour I first believed!

Verse 3

Through many dangers, toils, and snares, I have already come; 'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, And grace will lead me home.

Verse 4

When we've been there ten thousand years, Bright shining as the sun, We've no less days to sing God's praise Than when we'd first begun.

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