

## **THE GOODNESS AND SEVERITY OF GOD (Romans 11:22)**

### **1.The definitions.**

- a.The word for “goodness” is found ten times in the New Testament, three of which occur in Romans 11:22.
  - i.It is rendered “goodness”, “good”, “gentleness”, and “kindness”.
  - ii.It literally means “kindness”.
  - iii.Paul wants us to pay attention to the kindness of God that had been given to the Gentiles.
- b.The word for “severity” is only found two times and both in this verse.
  - i.The literal meaning is “a cutting off”.
  - ii.It has to do with roughness or rigor.
  - iii.Paul wants us to pay attention to the cutting off of the Jews because of their having fallen into unbelief and were cut off of the olive tree, which is an metaphorical illustration he was inspired to use back in verse 17.
- c.Paul is saying that we need to pay attention to both the kindness as well as the roughness or rigor of God because He has both sides.

### **2.The declarations.**

- a.Both Testament declare to us both the goodness and severity of God.
- b.God’s goodness is declared in the Old Testament in:
  - i.Psalm 52:1, where we are told God’s goodness endures continually.
  - ii.Psalm 143:10.
- c.God’s goodness is declared in the New Testament in:
  - i.Romans 11:22.
  - ii.Ephesians 2:7.
  - iii.Titus 3:4.
- d.James tells us that every good thing we have comes from God, which makes perfect sense with Him being filled with goodness (James 1:17).
- e.God’s severity is declared in the Old Testament in:
  - i.Psalm 89:14 - justice is the punishing of the wicked.
  - ii.32 times the phrase “anger of the Lord” is found in the Old Testament.
- f.It is also declared in the New Testament in:
  - i.Romans 11:22;
  - ii.Hebrews 10:31.
  - iii.2 Thessalonians 1:7-9.

### **3.The demonstrations.**

- a.Think how often, in both Testaments, the goodness of God is seen.
  - i.God is shown as being good immediately in His placing Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.
  - ii.God’s goodness is seen in extending grace to Noah and his family.
  - iii.The goodness of God is seen in hearing the cries of the Hebrews in captivity and obtaining their freedom through the sending of Moses and then the ten plagues.
  - iv.God’s goodness is seen in the sending of manna and quail to His hungry people.
  - v.God’s goodness is seen in providing a land that is described as flowing

- with milk and honey.
- vi. God's goodness is seen in allowing a remnant to come back from captivity.
- vii. God's goodness is seen in blessing both good and evil with physical gifts.
- viii. God's goodness is seen in giving us the Bible so that we can know Him and His will for us.
- b. Also, numerous times, we are shown the severity of God.
  - i. God was severe in casting out Adam and Eve from the Garden.
  - ii. God was severe in sending a world wide flood to destroy sinners.
  - iii. God was severe when He punished Egypt for oppressing His people and worshipping idols.
  - iv. God was severe when He destroyed some of His people for their murmuring and complaining against Him.
  - v. God was severe when He used nations to punish His people for turning from Him to idol worship.
  - vi. God was severe when He ultimately allowed His people to go into captivity and Jerusalem being torn to the ground.
  - vii. God was severe when He dealt with the sin of Ananias and Sapphira.
  - viii. God is going to be severe when He deals with those who don't know Him or who don't obey His commands (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9).
- c. The greatest demonstration that can be mentioned shows both the goodness and severity of God at the same time.
  - i. When we see Jesus on the cross, we see the ultimate demonstration of both sides of God.
  - ii. We see the goodness of God shine forth because He sent His Son out of love for man (John 3:16; Romans 5:8).
  - iii. We see the severity of God in how high the price for sin was: the life of His only begotten Son.
- d. God hates sin and when we listed the severity of God, and any other instance of it about which we might think, all of them dealt with a reaction to sin by God.
  - i. God is love, absolutely (1 John 4:7-8, 16).
  - ii. But, God is also just (Isaiah 45:21; Revelation 15:3).
  - iii. It is just to punish sin, just like it is just to reward righteousness.

#### **4. The direction.**

- a. When contemplating the goodness and severity of God, in what direction should we go?
- b. Notice Romans 2:4.
  - i. God's goodness leads us to repent of our sins.
  - ii. When we think about how good God is how can we not repent in order to make sure our relationship with Him is right?
  - iii. God wants a relationship with us but cannot while sin stands as a barrier between us.
  - iv. He's given everything needed to remove the barrier through His Son.
  - v. It's up to us to repent of our sins and thinking about His goodness to us should move us to do so.
- c. Thinking of the severity of God should move us to repent and obey God.
  - i. Remember 2 Thessalonians 1:8 shows us two classes of people on

whom God will take vengeance.

(1) Those that don't know God;

(2) Those that don't obey Him.

ii. Repenting of sin and obeying the gospel will allow us to escape the severe nature of God.

iii. God is able to destroy both body and soul in hell, so it is Him that should be feared (Matthew 10:28).

d. God's goodness and severity direct us towards God and obedience to His will.