2017. 1. 29. Sunday Morning Service

Title: ‘Goodness of God’

Passage: <Romans 12: 2>

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

<Introduction>

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, members of over 10,000 branch churches in Korea and all over the world, local sanctuary members, those who are attending the service on the Internet worldwide, GCN viewing audiences, <children of Sunday school>,

While cultivating human beings on this earth, God the Father has shown His love and goodness to the people numerous times. But because people have fleshly attributes, they always change their minds even after seeing goodness and love of God the Father. Even though they hear about His goodness and love many times, they cannot deeply understand them. When they hear about the depths of God’s goodness, they understand it as knowledge for the moment but they cannot understand it at heart.

Even at the time of Jesus, there were so many people who couldn’t understand the goodness and love of God, although they were seeing the Son of God Himself in front of their eyes. Because they were not good-hearted and they lacked integrity, they couldn’t understand goodness in their heart, even while seeing Jesus who was completely good and truthful.

And how do you think it’d be like for this generation which is so stained by sins? It’s a generation in which they neither know about goodness nor become touched even after seeing something good.

And to these people, God the Father wanted to show the deep goodness of God. For this reason, He established a church and a shepherd to fulfill His end time providence, so that people can see, hear and understand the deep goodness of God. And those of you who have been in this church for some time came to learn about good and evil correctly, and you’ve been trying to cultivate goodness. You also came to learn how pleasing it is to the Father for you to follow goodness. You also witnessed what great blessing it is to follow goodness through my personal life.

In this session, I’d like to explain to you about the goodness of God in 3 aspects that He has shown to you through your shepherd. Through this message, I hope you will understand the goodness of God at heart, long for it and cultivate it. In so doing, may you reach the perfect level of goodness that is pleasing in the sight of God, I pray this in the name of the Lord!

<Main>

Dear brothers and sisters,

**The first kind of goodness that the Father God has shown you through the shepherd is the goodness to give you chance and to be patient.**

Psalm 103:8 says, “The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness.” What would have happened if God were not compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, or abounding in love?

God knows everything about each act and mind of the people, even the deepest things of heart. So, how great would men’s evil be in the sight of God who is goodness itself? Men live in unrighteousness and sins, and if God were quick to anger, how many people would have survived until today?

When God measures each person’s good and evil, most people have more evil than goodness. If God did not show compassion and lovingkindness to them, how many people could receive blessings? God hates evil so much. And if He does not acknowledge as His child anybody who has any evil, then who could become His child?

But God gives the souls chances again and again with His goodness. He gives them countless chances for them to be changed. How many messages has He given us, and how many powerful works has He shown to us? He has given us chances, so by hearing the word and seeing the power of God we could turn from sins and go the way of Heaven again, and we could cast away sins and change to take hold of better heavenly dwelling place.

Some souls finally seized the opportunity after several chances were given, or for some others some scores of chances were given, or for still others, some hundreds of chances were given. But there are still some souls who are not accepting these chances. So, did God say, “I’ve given them so many chances and they are not responding, so I can’t help it?”

Matthew 12:20 says, “A battered reed He will not break off, and a smoldering wick He will not put out, until He leads justice to victory.” This is the goodness of God with which He endures while giving us chances. If they have the least bit of possibility, or even if they are impossible, by planting some possibility in them, God wants to save everyone and not lose even one soul. This is God’s goodness.

I’ve been ministering for the last 35 years with this kind of heart. I could not and did not give up on anybody; even though they committed unforgivable sins, even though they committed sins that are totally unacceptable, even though they were at the threshold of Hell, and even though they were forsaken by God. Even though they piled evil upon evil so much that they already received the verdict of Hell, I could not give up on them either.

I took all the burden of their sins and filled up the measure of justice for them for a long time. And for this reason my body lost all life-force. However, I cannot give up just yet, even though my body is in this condition. If they can just have a chance again, I will endure again and again. This is the goodness of God with which He gives chances and endures. And I hope none of you will miss these chances given by God. Seize it before it’s too late.

**The second kind of goodness shown through the shepherd is the goodness to look forward to the fruit.**

God the Father doesn’t just give a chance and leave us to do everything on our own. Even if we couldn’t seize the opportunity, He did not forsake us right away. Even if we didn’t come forth as fruit of holiness, He did not give up on us. He believed we’d come forth as beautiful fruit and believed in us.

But as a matter of fact, there are some souls who are so slow to change that they have no sign of changing. Even though they were given chances again and again, they show no indication that they will begin to change.

If you just think about getting the fruit, as for some trees, it’d be better you just give up on them and plant other trees. Suppose you watered them, fertilized them, and pruned them, and if there is no sign of any fruit, probably it’d be better if you stop wasting your time and money and care for other trees. Also, there are some cases where there are fruits on the tree but they look very weak, or they will fall soon, or they will not keep on growing.

Some souls belong to this category. But even when I saw those souls, I always had hope for them seeing them with the eyes of faith and believing they’d someday come forth as good fruits. I believed in them from the depth of my heart. That is why I could be patient with them.

But I did not just hope and continued being patient. Psalm 126:5-6 says, “Those who sow in tears shall reap with joyful shouting. He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying his bag of seed, shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.” As said, I filled up the measure of justice on their behalf, shedding tears for them. I kept on feeding them with the words of life, and I planted faith in them by showing them increasingly greater power. Sometimes they did not want to take the bread of life. They didn’t want to believe in the clearly visible works of power. And yet, I kept on sowing the seeds with tears for the past 35 years.

And when there was just a little bit of sign of change in them, I rejoiced more than they did. I was happy as if I had gained a beautiful fruit at the moment. It’s because I believed they’d come forth as big and good fruit in the end.

Even if they had 9 evil things and only 1 good thing in them, I did not see the evil in them but only good in them. And I grew that 1 good to increase to 2 and 3. It’s because, even though the fruit was weak at the moment, I believed they’d certainly become good fruits in the end.

Those fruits have today become fruits of whole spirit, near-whole spirit, spirit, and rock, and many people are following them. Now they are supporting me as pastors, elders, Levites, and other leaders in their respective areas.

If I just considered the reality in the past, it seemed that there were many people who couldn’t grow up and bear fruit. It seemed there were souls with dry field of heart, and the seeds couldn’t even sprout in them. But I did not give up just because the seeds didn’t sprout quickly enough or because the sprouts didn’t grow up. I didn’t give up just because there was no indication of any fruit or because the fruits were not being borne. I wasn’t disappointed just because the fruit was small and weak. I didn’t even give up on the fruits that were eaten by worms.

And only the heavenly Father knows about all these years. For this reason God the Father often gives me words of compliments, knowing what kinds of heart I’ve had during all those years. It’s because that kind of heart is the Father’s goodness that resembles His heart.

My only joy is that you believers come forth as beautiful fruits before the Father God. I hope you will feel the heart of the Father and the shepherd who believe and expect that each of you will certainly come forth as beautiful fruits. Then, do come forth as such fruits.

**The 3rd kind of goodness of the Father God that He showed through the shepherd is the goodness that lets you have discernment and understanding.**

Brothers and sisters, men cannot even begin to understand the depth of God’s goodness. Also, the goodness in men’s view and that in God’s view could be very different from each other. Men might think something is good, but it could be evil in God’s sight. What is evil in men’s sight might not be evil in God’s sight.

1 Corinthians 2:13 says, “which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.” 1 Corinthians 2:15 says, “But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one.” As said, spiritual things can be discerned only by spirit. Flesh cannot discern spiritual things.

The same goes for goodness. When men of flesh see the things that are done in spiritual level, they might misunderstand what is good as evil.

We can see such a case in the parable in Matthew chapter 20. The owner of the vineyard did something good, but those who were evil thought they were being mistreated and complained against him. The master paid the same wage both for the workers who worked from early morning and those who worked only for a short time. And the workers who came in the morning held grudges against this. But they received wage that was agreed!

So the owner of the vineyard said in Matthew 20:15, “Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with what is my own? Or is your eye envious because I am generous?” It was an act of goodness, but those who have evil might pass judgment saying it is evil.

I’ve experienced such cases many times during my ministry. I provided financial help for some people, and others complained to me saying I did not help them and I helped those who didn’t deserve to receive help. I forgave and showed goodness but I was misunderstood.

I did those things with an understanding of the deep goodness of God, but people passed judgment on me. Because they were in flesh and their hearts were full of evil, they couldn’t feel goodness as it was but they passed judgment with their flesh. It is likely that thieves think others are also thieves, and liars are likely to think others lie, too.

That is why we must have clear understanding about goodness in God’s sight. It means we have to discern between what is good and what is evil in God’s sight. We should also understand the levels of goodness: the depth and width of it and reach the highest level of goodness. You shouldn’t think you are good while you are staying within your limit. You should know there is higher level of goodness and reach that level.

But we can never understand these things unless God who is goodness itself teaches us and lets us realize them. That is why I taught you with so many messages that God has given us, so that you could discern between good and evil and you could advance toward higher level of goodness.

I taught you about goodness in so much detail, even about things you really think are good but are evil in God’s sight. Only then can we reach the level of goodness that God wants us to attain to, and can we avoid stumbling in our arrogance thinking we are good-hearted.

Matthew 13:49-50 says, “So it will be at the end of the age; the angels will come forth and take out the wicked from among the righteous, and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” It says God will take out the wicked from among the righteous. Of course, the righteous here does not refer to the righteous truly recognized by God. They are the ones who mistakenly thought they were righteous. Also, they lifted themselves up thinking they were righteous, and as a result they were estranged from God.

God discerns these people precisely. Of course, I have discernment, too. I can see those who pretend to be good on the outside but are actually evil inside; and those who mistakenly think they are good even though they are doing evil things. But I never thought, “They are evil and they are cheating, and I have to get rid of them.”

I just tried to lead them to the way in which they could realize their evil that they couldn’t realize before and change. In this way, wouldn’t they be able to realize what God’s goodness is and turn from wrong ways? Then they can also realize the evil placed deep in their heart and change by goodness so that they can take hold of better heavenly dwelling place by force. God the Father has been giving you grace continually through the shepherd in this church so that you could understand the goodness of God and reach the perfect level of goodness.

<Conclusion>

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Today’s reading passage Romans 12:2 says, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

But this generation is only going toward increasingly greater evil being unable to discern and prove what is good or evil. Even if you hear about goodness and desire to cultivate it, it’s not easy to change the heart that has been stained with evil for a long time.

But in this church you constantly heard about good and evil and you receive the strength, comfort and power to renew your heart. And now, there are fruits of change that are being borne. And you should all come forth as beautiful fruits.

In this New Year, may you understand and practice the good will of God the Father to please the Father God and to dwell in the perfect will of God, I pray this in the name of the Lord.

Dear brothers and sisters, Happy Lunar New Year!