

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: What Is the Good Life?

SERMON REFERENCE: Galatians 5:22, Micah 6:8

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1442

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Galatians 5:22
- b) The word “good” is an overworked word today.
 - i) We say that something feels good, it tastes good, it looks good, you have done a good job, etc.
- c) People today are interested in living the good life.
 - i) For some people, the good life is feeling good.
 - ii) For other people, the good life is looking good.
 - iii) For some, it is accumulating things.
 - (1) None of these things have a moral quality to them.
- d) The “good” that the Bible talks about has a moral characteristic.
 - i) The fruit of the Spirit is goodness.
 - (1) Galatians 5:22
 - ii) Goodness is being good; therefore, it is doing good.
- e) Micah 6:8
 - i) This passage gives a definition of goodness.
- f) In today’s message, we will discuss three things about goodness, which is one of the fruits of the Spirit.

2) THE REASONS FOR GOODNESS (ACTS 23:1)

- a) In today’s world, it seems that it doesn’t really pay to be good.
 - i) But it does pay to be good.
- b) The inward reason:
 - i) We will never have inward peace until we have inward, intrinsic goodness.
 - (1) We know ourselves, but we may deceive others.
 - (a) We cannot really deceive ourselves.
 - (b) We know what we are.
 - (i) We cannot run away from ourselves.
 - ii) To be able to look ourselves in the eye is what the Bible calls a good conscience.
 - iii) Look at what happened in the life of the Apostle Paul:
 - (1) Paul was held and taken to court.
 - (a) He was not guilty of anything except for preaching the Gospel of Jesus.
 - (b) There was a possibility that he may not only be put into prison but that his life might also be taken from him.
 - (2) Acts 23:1
 - (a) When Paul looked into his heart, he had a good conscience.
 - (3) Acts 24:16
 - (a) In this verse, the word “exercise” refers to something that we diligently do.
 - (b) A good conscience is void of offence toward God and men.
 - (i) It is knowing that if someone knew us as we know ourselves, then that person would still respect us.

- (ii) Do we have that transparency where no one is able to point a finger of accusation against us because we have a conscience devoid of offence toward God and men?
 - (4) The Apostle Paul was in trouble.
 - (a) What enabled him to stand before the court without flinching was that he did not have to look at his life and wonder if he was in that situation because of something wrong he had done.
 - (i) A clear conscience liberates us in a time of trouble.
 - 1. It removes fear.
 - iv) A bad conscience causes fear.
 - (1) Adam and Eve had a defiled conscience.
 - (a) After Adam and Eve sinned, they ran and hid themselves from the Lord.
 - (i) Genesis 3:8-10
 - (ii) They didn't have a clear conscience.
 - (iii) They were not right with God.
 - (b) Rather than having fellowship with God, they were hiding from the Lord Jesus.
 - (2) There are those today who feel uncomfortable coming to church.
 - (a) They do not read the Bible or pray.
 - (i) They have a conscience that has an offence toward God.
 - v) The conscience is that inner judge that God has put in us that accuses or excuses us.
 - (1) It cannot make us do right, but it shows us what is right or wrong.
 - (2) When our conscience is right, we have tremendous freedom.
 - (3) After David had sinned, his sin was ever before him.
 - (a) Psalm 51:3
 - (b) The deed that he had done reverberated through his consciousness.
 - vi) A good conscience brings rest.
- c) The outward reason:
- i) Others are looking on.
 - ii) Our lives influence others.
 - iii) 1 Corinthians 8:13
 - (1) The Apostle Paul did not want to do anything that would cause anyone else to stumble or fail.
 - (a) When a giant oak falls in the woods, not only does that oak fall, but it also pulls down all kinds of saplings and other trees with it.
 - iv) None of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself.
 - (1) We are the best Christian and the worst Christian that someone knows.
 - (2) We are the only Bible that someone is reading.
- d) The upward reason:
- i) There is a God in the Glory, and He is looking down.

- ii) What a joy to have a conscience that is void of offence toward God.
- iii) There are times when we backslide, and our hearts get cold.
 - (1) There are times when the things we do for the Lord Jesus Christ seem to take the place of the Lord Jesus.
 - (a) We find ourselves studying more than praying.
 - (b) We counsel with others more than talking with God.
 - (2) We need to get alone before God and surrender everything to Him.
- iv) Matthew 6:22
- v) To be able to say that there is nothing between our soul and the Savior is a good reason for being good.
- e) The Bible says that Barnabas was a good man and full of the Holy Ghost.
 - i) Acts 11:24
 - ii) It is more important to be good than it is to be great.
 - (1) If we are not good, then we are not great.

3) THE PROBLEMS WITH GOODNESS (ROMANS 3:12)

- a) The problem is that we are not good.
 - i) Romans 3:12
 - ii) Isaiah 64:6
 - iii) Romans 7:18
- b) How do we know that people are not good?
 - i) The Bible teaches it.
 - (1) Romans 3:12
 - ii) History proves it.
 - (1) Just read the news and look around us.
 - (2) We do not have to teach our children to lie.
 - (a) They lie by nature.
 - (b) Psalm 58:3
 - (3) Children have to be taught not to be selfish.
 - (4) Children do not have to be taught to be hurtful.
 - (a) They have to be taught not to be hurtful.
 - (5) Proverbs 22:15
 - iii) Personal experience teaches it.
 - (1) Jeremiah 13:23
 - (a) We could no more will to be good and be good than a leopard could will to change its spots.
 - (i) There is a problem in us.
 - 1. Psalm 14:3
 - (2) We know that there is a problem of wickedness and sin in our lives.

4) THE PATHWAY TO GOODNESS (ROMANS 7:17-25, 8:2)

- a) Romans 7:18
 - i) In this passage, the word “flesh” does not mean skin, bones, hide, or hair.
 - (1) Our “flesh” is the old nature that we have.

- (a) It is the Adamic nature that the Bible calls the “flesh.”
- ii) The Apostle Paul wanted to do good, but he did not know how to do it.
- b) Romans 7:19-21
 - i) In verse 21, the word “law” means a principle.
- c) Roman 7 shows how the fruit of the Spirit will work in our lives and become the goodness that gives us that transparency, that conscience that is void of offence toward God and man.
- d) Paul’s desire for goodness:
 - i) Romans 7:17
 - (1) Paul did not want to sin, but sin dwelt in him.
 - ii) Romans 7:22
 - (1) Paul, in his innermost nature, had been born again.
 - (2) He loved God and wanted to serve God.
 - (a) This was his great desire.
 - iii) In Romans 7, the Apostle Paul is describing himself as a saved man, but he had not discovered the way of victory.
- e) Paul’s determination for goodness:
 - i) Romans 7:18
 - (1) Paul had not given up.
 - (a) He was determined to do good.
 - ii) Romans 7:7-24
 - (1) Paul referred to himself with a personal pronoun over forty times.
 - (2) In Romans 7, He used the word “law” over twenty times.
 - (3) He did not mention Jesus or the Holy Spirit one time.
 - iii) Paul knew the law of God; and, like many Christians, he was going to keep God’s commandments and live for Him.
 - (1) And then we sin.
 - (a) We promise God that we won’t do it again, and then we fail again.
 - (b) We get clean again, and then we fail again.
 - (i) Then, the devil tries to tell us that we weren’t saved at all or that there is no God or that the Bible isn’t true or that there is no victory.
 - (ii) The devil tries to tell us that we’re a hypocrite and that we shouldn’t go back to church.
 - (2) We had a desire, but that was not enough.
 - (3) We had the determination, but that was not enough.
- f) Paul’s despair for goodness:
 - i) Romans 7:24
 - (1) Some people will say that if the Apostle Paul could not be victorious, then neither can they.
 - (a) So, they settle back in their sin.
 - (i) The Apostle Paul did not settle back in his sin.
 - (ii) Romans 7 goes on to Romans 8 and on to victory.
 - ii) When Paul’s desire and determination failed, it led to despair.

- (1) Many today need to come to this place of despair where we realize that we cannot do it.
 - (a) Romans 7:24
 - (i) Bible scholars tell us that what Paul was referring to, in this passage, was one of the most ironical forms of punishment that the ancient people had for a murderer.
 - (ii) If a man killed another man, then the corpse of the man who had been murdered would be strapped onto the living body of the murderer.
 - 1. Paul was crying out to be delivered and set free from the old flesh he was carrying around.
- iii) God wants to bring us to that place of despair.
 - (1) Most of us think that we are too weak, but that is not the problem.
 - (a) The problem is that we are too strong.
 - (i) We still think that we can do it.
 - (ii) It is still us and the law.
 - (iii) We are still trying rather than trusting.
- iv) Paul came to a place where he said, “Who shall deliver me from this dead body?”
 - (1) Romans 7:24
 - (2) He did not say, “What.”
 - (a) He had been trying “what” for long enough.
 - (3) He decided to try “Who.”
 - (a) Romans 7:25
- v) Paul learned that goodness is not a work of the flesh.
 - (1) Romans 7:18
- vi) Goodness is the fruit of the Spirit.
- g) Paul’s deliverance:
 - i) When we leave Romans 7 and get into Romans 8, it changes like darkness to light.
 - (1) In Romans 8, the words “Spirit” and “Christ Jesus” are used over and over again.
 - ii) Romans 8:2
 - (1) When a person is saved, the old flesh is still there.
 - (a) The law of sin and death has never been cancelled.
 - (2) But there is a new law.
 - (a) It is the law of life in Christ Jesus that makes us free from the law of sin and death.
 - (b) It does not cancel the law.
 - (i) It is not sinless perfection.
 - iii) As long as we abide in the Lord Jesus Christ, then the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes us free from the law of sin and death.
 - iv) A lot of people today would like to have an experience that would free them from sin and eradicate the old nature.

- (1) God will never allow it.
 - (2) It is imperative that we abide in the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (a) Therefore, He will never give us an experience that we could rest in.
 - (b) But He gives us a relationship that we abide in.
 - (i) That relationship is to abide in the Lord Jesus.
- 5) CONCLUSION
- a) Romans 7:18
 - i) In our flesh is no good thing.
 - b) Galatians 5:19-21
 - i) Paul mentions the works of the flesh.
 - c) Galatians 5:22-23
 - i) Paul speaks of the fruit of the Spirit.
 - d) Do you know how to be good?
 - i) Philippians 2:13
 - ii) God gives the desire and the dynamic, but you must abide in the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - iii) If you are not full of the Holy Spirit, then you will not be full of goodness.
 - iv) Quit trying to be good and start trusting.
 - e) The fruit of the Spirit is goodness.
 - i) You cannot produce this fruit.
 - (1) You bear it.
 - ii) He produces it as you abide in Jesus.
 - f) The only way to abide in Jesus is to know Him personally.
 - g) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
 - h) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16