

All That Is Good With The World

Introduction. It is dangerous to view the world through rose-colored glasses, for this does not allow us to see sin for what it is. Many people find it easier to skip through life thinking about bunnies and daisies than life's very real problems. But this approach to life does nothing to solve evil. We can ignore sin but it most definitely will not go away. Our attention to evil in life must be biblical (Psalm 119:105; 2 Peter 2:7). The "blind-eye" approach forsakes one's personal responsibility to be salt and light to the world (Matthew 5:13-16), and it does nothing to save the lost.

That being said, however, we need to be equally careful that we do not ignore the tremendous good that exists in the world. God is the creator of everything, and He made everything "good" (Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25). If we worry about the world's wickedness to the exclusion of appreciating the good, then we are just as wrong and will continually discourage ourselves. To that end, this lesson will serve as a reminder and an encouragement of the seven good, consistent elements in the world.

I. God Is Good

- A. No sermon about good in the world is worth anything unless it begins with the fact that our God is good (Psalm 106:1; 136:1; John 3:16).
- B. One of the mystifying aspects about paganism and idolatry is that ancient idolaters worshiped "gods" who were vile and evil. They were not worshiped for blessings to be received, but rather to placate them and prevent worshipers from being destroyed by them.
 - 1. Molech — Ammonite god which was worshiped by sacrificing children in a fire pit.
 - 2. Chemosh — Moabite deity which name means "destroyer."
 - 3. Apep — Egyptian god of evil and darkness.
 - 4. Menhit — Egyptian goddess of war and murder. Her name means "She who massacres."
 - 5. Phobetor — Greek god of nightmares.

II. Humans Can Be Good

- A. Please note that humans CAN be good. Lovers of bunnies and unicorns like to think that everyone is basically good, but this is not so. There are some very wicked people in the world. There always have been (Genesis 6:5; Micah 2:1-2).
- B. However, every person has the capacity for good because God gave humans three traits which allow goodness to exist in people:
 - 1. Divine law — instructions from God regarding right and wrong, which have been clearly revealed by inspiration for all to understand (Ephesians 3:3-4).
 - 2. The power of choice — God places before us the responsibility to choose right from wrong, and we have that capacity (Joshua 24:15).
 - 3. A conscience — the conscience is that part of every person which provokes them to do what they know is right (1 Timothy 4:2).
- C. God made man in His own image to be good (Genesis 1:26-27, 31). We dare not assume that all men are evil because some are. In fact, Adam and Eve were able to love one another as a husband and wife should (Genesis 2:23-24).

- D. Gratefully, a large majority of people demonstrate the following wonderful traits:
1. Believe in God (John 8:24).
 2. Put God first in their lives (Matthew 6:33).
 3. Generous towards the needy (Acts 10:2).
 4. Kind, tenderhearted, and forgiving (Ephesians 4:32).
 5. Merciful (James 3:17).
 6. Love their brethren (1 Peter 3:8).
 7. Love their enemies (Matthew 5:44).

III. The Gospel Is Good

- A. It is easy to get disheartened and think of the landscape of religion as hopeless and bleak. How do we combat the feeling that no one wants the gospel now?
1. Consider the fact that the day you obeyed, there was a good chance that a Christian somewhere lamented that no one wanted the gospel anymore! But you did. You wanted the truth, and you responded in obedience to it.
 2. Also, there has always been an obedient minority (Matthew 7:13-14; Luke 13:23-24), so why should we expect today to be any different?
- B. The gospel is appealing to those who want to serve God.
1. While sinful people like to sin, those who want to do right find the gospel of Jesus Christ beautiful, desirable, and its terms easy to understand (Acts 2:41; Romans 10:15).
 2. Paul said the gospel is the fragrance of life to those who want to serve the Lord, but is the aroma of death to those who love sin (2 Corinthians 2:15-16).

IV. The Church Is Good

- A. When I obeyed the gospel, my sins were washed away by the blood of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:19), and I was added by the Lord to His church (Acts 2:47).
- B. The church is good because it is the only one Jesus built (Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 4:4). We who have obeyed the gospel are members of the genuine article! We are not part of something which exists by the doctrines and commandments of men (Matthew 15:8-9).
- C. When I obeyed the gospel, I learned that I was now a part of the family of God that helps me in many ways:
1. They satisfy the yearning of my heart to worship God (Psalm 122:1).
 2. They teach me the way of the Lord more accurately (Acts 18:25).
 3. They watch for my soul (Hebrews 13:17).
 4. They warn, uphold, and are patient with me (1 Thessalonians 5:14).
 5. They discipline me in hopes of saving my soul (2 Thessalonians 3:6).
 6. They are some of the best people in the world (1 Corinthians 5:11).

V. The Home Is Good

- A. The home is second only to the church as a wonderful institution built by God.
1. It provides order and structure to the world, because in the family there is the foundation for submission and love (Ephesians 5:22-25).
 2. The home provides an understanding of obedience because of the duty of children to obey their parents (Ephesians 6:1-3).

3. The home provides instruction that is invaluable in producing a love for God in our children (Ephesians 6:4).
- B. What would the world be like if it had to exist without the stability of the home?

VI. Struggles Are Good

- A. I am not envious of those who were born into wealth and privilege. It might be fun sometimes to imagine what it would be like to have all the money you could want, and be free to spend your time traveling or pursuing your interests instead of having to go to work every day and struggle to make ends meet.
- B. However, it is only a passing fantasy for sensible people. What good does that kind of life do anyone? People who have that kind of “advantage” are often spoiled and shiftless. They have no character and perseverance. Troublesome times come to everyone, and the rich often think they can buy their way out of their problems, but they cannot.
- C. The Bible clearly teaches that the struggles of life are good (2 Corinthians 12:6-9; Hebrews 12:6-7; James 1:3-4; 1 Peter 1:6-7). They build our faith and focus us on the unseen (2 Corinthians 4:17-18).

VII. Death Is Good

- A. God created us to be finite creatures. We have a beginning at birth and then our body dies (Hebrews 9:27). Believe it or not, this is good.
1. People fantasize about living to be 100 years old or more.
 2. Honestly, I do not see the attraction. While it might be good if your body and mind could maintain good health, most of us decline rapidly at some point.
- B. Paul recognized that a longer life might allow him to do more good in the kingdom, but he also recognized that if one does not die, he cannot be made alive through the resurrection (Philippians 1:23; 1 Corinthians 15:22, 42-45). John expressed that without the death of the body, there could be no passing away of what was before, and no eternal, tearless joy (Revelation 21:4).

Conclusion. We can count our blessings that we do not live in the days of the Roman Empire when Christians could, and often were, killed because of their opposition to emperor worship (Revelation 2:10). Can you imagine how bad it would have been to have lived in Stalinist Russia where freedom of religion did not exist? How fortunate we are to not live in North Korea where being a Christian might get you the firing squad, or in Communist China, where openly worshiping God might get you a jail sentence.

There is a lot of evil in the world today, but thankfully there is plenty of good in the world. Do Christians have any business being miserable about the state of our country, or about the wickedness in the world? If God described the world as “very good” (Genesis 1:31), is it not weak faith to believe otherwise? By being here, you have chosen the “good part” of all of life’s enticements (Luke 10:42). Follow it up by obedience to Christ’s gospel, or by repenting and returning to faithful devotion to God.

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