

God's Goodness Leadeth To Repentance

(Rom 2:4)

- I. How could someone despise God's longsuffering and goodness?
 - A) By not seeing its purpose is designed for man's welfare
 - 1. Despising His goodness and longsuffering by confusing it for weakness or feebleness, and using it as license to sin
 - i. 2 Pet 3:9- "Slack" (like a parent who threatens and never acts)
 - ii. 2 Cor 10:9-11- Accusation of "slackness" made against Paul
 - a) 2 Cor 1:15-24- Paul's apparent slackness was actually him giving the Corinthians room for repentance
 - iii. "Slackness" is a failure in character, an ineptness and a weakness
 - a) So to lay this trait to God is to "despise" Him
 - b) "God talks a lot about righteousness and justice, but in the end it's all just talk"
 - 1) Does a child respect a parent that is "slack," who threatens and never acts?
 - 2) Modern man has applied "Dr. Spock" character to God and reduced him to no more than the modern parent
 - (a) By doing this, man takes one of God's greatest attributes and turns it in to a thing to be despised
- II. "Not knowing"
 - A) Word means to "not consider, to willfully disregard," to not know and to not want to know, a complete lack of regard
 - 1. 2 Pet 2:5- "Willingly ignorant of"
 - 2. Acts 13:27- Jews disregarded the prophets they read every Sabbath day
- III. "Leadeth"
 - A) Word means to "a constraining influence" like the reins we use on a horse
 - 1. Rom 8:14- Same word used here
 - 2. It does not mean to force, to drive or to push
 - B) We must remember this passage is written concerning unbelievers, not for believers
 - 1. This goodness of God in this passage is something that is designed for the good of man, and to lead him to repent, but the unbeliever will not be led by God in this, and are thus always in rebellion
 - C) How is this passage to be understood? Does God desire a thing that He is unable to do? And what about "Election"?
 - 1. 2 Pet 3:9- God not "willing" that any should perish but that all should repent

- i. Ezek 33:11- God has no pleasure in the death of the lost
 - ii. 1 Tim 2:4-5- God would have all men to be saved
 - iii. Matt 23:37- How often I would have called you and you would not
- 2. Some say that this aspect of God's goodness toward all men is simply a tool that is to leave them w/o excuse before Him in judgment
 - i. But Paul doesn't say that, he instead says the "goodness LEADETH"
 - ii. Leadeth is much too strong a word for the meaning of just being found without excuse. It is a positive word, given in the active voice
- 3. God's goodness is literally designed to bring all to repentance
 - i. Matt 5:45- He gives rain to the just and the unjust
 - a) Read Matt 5:43-48- God loves the unjust and does this toward them in love
 - b) Acts 14:17- God does good toward all men
 - c) Rom 1:20- Power of God a witness
 - 1) God's goodness is a manifestation of His grace and is designed to lead men to repentance towards the One Who has been so gracious to them
 - ii. This is "universal grace" and not "effectual calling"
 - a) There is obviously a difference between what God "wishes" and what God "wills"
 - 1) A father wishes all the children in the neighborhood would be obedient, but he "wills" his own son be so
 - b) Far from "hyper-Calvinism," this verse proves no man would repent if not for the active power and "willingness" of God
 - 1) John 1:12-13- God "wills" and God "does"
 - 2) Phil 2:12-13- God "worketh" in the believers
 - (a) No man repents on his own, ever!
 - (b) God must bring us to repentance by an act of His will and restraining grace
 - (1) Acts 11:18- God grants repentance
 - (2) Acts 5:31- God "giveth repentance"
 - (3) 2 Tim 2:25- God gives repentance
 - c) Acts 17:30- God commandeth all men everywhere to repent
 - 1) Mark 16:15- Go preach the gospel to every creature
- 4. Notice that "repentance" is always in the 1st place
 - i. Man must know God and His goodness and yield to Him and it
 - a) The gospel is not simply "persuasion to repent", that is the job of "His goodness"

- 1) Rom 2:4 proves this: the unbeliever hates God's goodness and uses it as means to attack God and despise His goodness, as well as license to sin
- 2) Rom 8:7- Man must be given a new nature in order to repent
 - (a) The natural man uses God's goodness for everything but repentance

IV. "Repentance"

- A) To think again, to change the mind and turn to God
 - B) Again notice repentance is always at the beginning
 1. Paul doesn't say "the goodness of God leadeth thee to believing"
 2. John preached this, the Lord Jesus Christ, the 12 and Paul, all preached this same message
 - i. We have to see ourselves as unrighteous sinners at odds with a just God Who has showered us with His goodness
 3. Acts 20:21- Repentance 1st, faith after
 4. Acts 26:18- Open eyes and turn to God from this world and self
 - C) The charge made in Rom 2:4 by Paul is that the unbeliever takes that which is designed for his own good and uses it to attack and mock God, and this in ignorant wilfulness
 1. And yet God showers grace on even these He knows will not repent
- #### V. God in this passage is giving us a glimpse into His mind, and we are not to fret if we do not understand it, for no man ever has and ever will on this side of the glory
- A) Isa 55:8-9- His ways so far above our ways