

Driving thought: Christ-centered goodness starts where obligation stops.

What is goodness?

- Rare word only found 4 times in the entire New Testament.
- ἀγαθωσύνη is not found in the classical writings or even in Josephus (Ben Witherington III).
- Conveys the idea of benevolence and generosity toward someone else, a going the second mile when such magnanimity is not required (Timothy George).
- Goodness is an uprightness of soul that abhors evil, a clean-cut honesty of motive and conduct (Wycliffe Bible Commentary).
- Goodness (*agathōsynē*) may be thought of both as an uprightness of soul and as an action reaching out to others to do good even when it is not deserved (Bible Knowledge Commentary).
- Positive moral quality characterized...by interest in the welfare of others (BDAG Greek Lexicon).
- *Goodness*...refers to that quality in a man who is ruled by and aims at what is good, namely, the quality of moral worth (Wuest's Word Studies).

So how does Christ-centered goodness differ from worldly integrity and honesty?

- Dictionary-defined integrity: the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles; moral uprightness.
- Worldly integrity remains faithful to _____ whereas Christ-centered integrity goes the _____ mile in order create an opportunity to share Jesus.

Objection: Don't many lost people have integrity and do good things? Do you need to be a Christian in order to be good?

- We should applaud those who do good in order to create a more free and virtuous society. It provides common ground for Gospel discussions but without God there is no such thing as _____ goodness, only social morays.
- Even "good" things a non-Christian does, if not done for God to the glory of God, is *still* stained with sin or, at the very least, is unable to erase a sinful past or _____ salvation.

How Christ-centered goodness transforms how we live:

1) Christ gives us _____ clarity and a properly functioning _____ – Rom. 15:14

2) Christ gives us changed patterns of _____ and _____ – Eph. 5:7-11

3) Christ gives us "follow through" ability on our deepest _____ – 2 Thess. 1:11-12

Key: duty/second/objective/earn/moral/conscience/behavior/values

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How Christ-centered goodness transforms how we live:

- 1) Christ gives us **moral** clarity and a properly functioning **conscience** – Rom. 15:14
- 2) Christ gives us changed patterns of **behavior** and **values** – Eph. 5:7-11
- 3) Christ gives us "follow through" ability on our deepest **desires** – 2 Thess. 1:11-12