

Oak Grove Church of Christ Newsletter - 2025.01.19

Website: oakgrovecofc.org
Facebook: facebook.com/oakgrovecofc

Sermon recordings

Scan the QR code below with your phone's cam, or visit oakgrovecofc.org/sermons.

Speaker-AM: Jamie Rinehart

Title: When We Are Low

Recording:

tinyurl.com/JamieLow



Speaker-PM: Kraig Benney

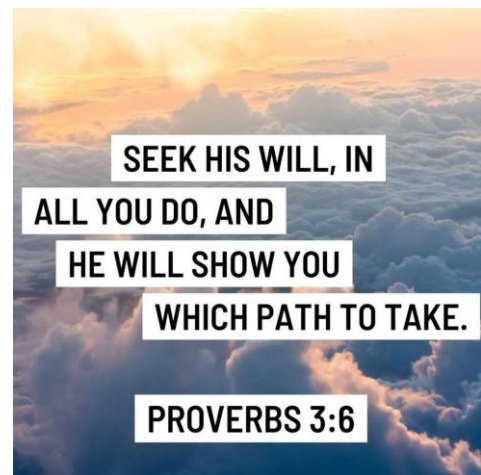
Title: Life Would Better Be

Recording:

tinyurl.com/KraigLifeBetter



THAT IS WHY, FOR THE SAKE OF
CHRIST, I DELIGHT IN
WEAKNESSES, IN INSULTS, IN
HARDSHIPS, IN PERSECUTIONS, IN
DIFFICULTIES. FOR WHEN I AM
WEAK, THEN I AM STRONG.
- 2 CORINTHIANS 12:10



Articles

The Goodness and Severity of God, 09/2014 by Jim Mickells

"Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off" (Romans 11:22).

It seems that many, if not most, in the religious world today only want to hear lessons on God's grace, mercy, love, and goodness. Paul, in this letter to the Romans, reminds his readers about the Father's severity and also that He is a God of vengeance (Romans 12:19; quoted from Deuteronomy 32:35). In Hebrews 10:30, the same verse is mentioned from the book of Deuteronomy, with the added warning, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Hebrews 10:31). God is not only good but He is severe as well.

Consider

The apostle wanted to stir the minds of his audience. The word "consider" is defined as "universally, to perceive, notice, discern, discover" (Thayer, 173). They needed to seriously contemplate not only the Father's goodness and graciousness but also His strictness and severity.

When you think of the goodness of God, what comes to mind? That He created us in His own image (Genesis 1:26)? He has blessed us with family and friends (Genesis 2:18; Psalms 127:3). Think of all the material blessings He showers upon us every day (Matthew 6:25-33); this great country in which we live, the freedoms we enjoy and the peace we experience - what a gift from God. These blessings, along with thousands of others, are truly great, yet this is not what Paul had in mind. The goodness of Jehovah to which he refers is the saving of the Gentiles' souls by grace through faith (Romans 11: 11). The greatest display of the Father's goodness is through the gift of His Son to redeem all from their sins. Consider the goodness of God!

It is not hard to consider many cases of God's severity throughout the Bible. The flood destroyed the inhabitants of the first world because their hearts were on evil continually (Genesis 6:5-6). The lives of Nadab and Abihu were lost because they offered profane fire, which the Lord did not command (Lev. 10:1-3). In the New Testament, there were the lies of Ananias and Sapphira concerning the amount of money they had sold their land for, each breathing their last because of their sin. Yet the severity which the apostle Paul wanted his Gentile readers to think about was the Jews being cut off from their relationship with God because of their unbelief (Romans 11:20). How tragic it would be for a person to lose the only thing he has of any value, his soul, because he failed to believe and obey our Lord. Consider the severity of God!



Continue

AMG defines this word as "Metaphorically, to continue in any state or course, to be constant or persevere in." This should be a warning to everyone: though the grace of God has saved us through our faith in Jesus Christ, we must remain faithful and loyal to the Lord. He promises to save only those obedient to Him (Hebrews 5:8-9). When writing to the church at Smyrna, John told those members not to fear anything they were about to suffer. Yet they were told to "be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Revelation 2:10). I have known many through the years, who obviously have not considered the goodness and severity of God, because they did not continue in the faith.

Otherwise

What if I don't continue in the goodness of God? "You also will be cut off." The word "otherwise means, "Before questions implying a negative answer and before similar hypothetical clauses, it stands in the sense of 'for,' by implication meaning for then, for else, for otherwise" (AMG). One of the things the apostle was warning the Gentiles about was manifesting a haughty spirit toward the Jews because they had been cut off, while the Lord had grafted them in (Romans 11:18-20). These Gentiles are reminded that the same thing could surely happen to them as well (Romans 11:21). The Lord wanted to graft the Jews back into the olive tree, and He would if they would not continue in unbelief (Romans 11:23). There was a lack of trust and faith on the part of these Jews. They disobeyed their Father, rejecting the only source for their salvation.

May we all be motivated to faithful service as we consider God's goodness in giving His only Son to redeem us. Hopefully, we will never experience the Father's severity if we continue to love and serve Him all the days of our lives so that we will not be cut off.