

church of Christ at Greenwood

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Well Placed Faith

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“He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” (Romans 8:32)

As our Father, God asks to believe in the goodness of His fatherhood. For many of us, faith in God’s character requires growth in our own character. To believe that God exists is a step in the right direction. To believe that He is “a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6) is an even further step. Yet this is a step that we can take personally. Based on what happened at the Cross, our confidence in the love of God is not wishful thinking, but well placed faith.

In practical terms, what does God’s goodness mean? First, we should be sobered by it. The very worst thing would be for us to presume upon the grace of our Father. Paul asks the pertinent question when he says, “Do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?” (Romans 2:4). And he urges us to consider not only God’s “goodness” toward those who obey Him, but also His “severity” toward those who refuse to do so (Romans 11:22). Having determined to seek God reverently and obediently, however, we should be encouraged by the fact that God is gracious to those who take Him seriously. If we are willing to relate ourselves rightly to God, we need not doubt that a right relationship is what He gave His son to make possible for us.

In all that God has spoken, we must believe that He has told us the truth. Most of all we must believe Him when He says that He loves us. “Faith is nothing else than trust in the divine mercy promised in Christ” (Phillip Melancthon). We can’t claim to have read the Bible thoughtfully if we’ve not noticed its emphasis on God’s goodness. And we can’t claim to have taken its claims seriously if we’ve not been touched by the tenderness of God’s invitation to trust Him. “For He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’ So we may boldly say: ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not fear’” (Hebrews 13:5, 6). We may have learned many things since we were young, but none of our adult thoughts is more profound than the simple one that we sang in our childhood: “Jesus loves me! This I know, for the Bible tells me so.”