

“Goodness”

Philippians 2.12-16

- An intrinsically relational God, made us in his image as relational creatures.
- **Q: Can you think of a relationship in your life with which you are extremely satisfied?**
How about a relationship with which you are dissatisfied: strained, distant:
Romans 12.18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.
- **“As far as it depends on you”** - you can't control the other party. You can't control the response of your spouse, neighbor, unbelieving world, church, or God, BUT there are tangible habits we can practice which foster flourishing in our relationships as God intends.
- “ESSENTIALS” Series
 - January 2024: RE relationship w/ God: **THRIVE** (Bible, Prayer, Worship)
 - Later this Summer: RE: relationship w/ church: **SHARE** (Connect, Give, Serve)
 - TODAY: RE: relationship w/ the world: **Restore**.
- Relationship w/ world: most confused about: (battle, blend, bunker)
- Major theme of 1st Peter. But not isolated to Peter: “Shining as lights in the darkness” is taught by **Jesus** (mt5,etc); **John** (1Jn 1), **Luke** (acts 10), and ..**Paul** (Philippians 2.12-16) [981]

Big Idea: Be a restorative blessing with the goodness of Jesus.

Phil 2.15 ...in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world...

- Q: How to shine like lights amidst the darkness?

1. Follow Jesus' actions: live a life of obedience [12,13]

12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,

- We impact our culture by living in **obedience** to God. This was Jesus example [xref v6-8]

Jesus brought salvation to the world not by exercising power but by exercising obedience to the Father.

- The gospel offends human pride BUT far more offensive is a Christian disregarding God's instructions. Paul calls us to live out our faith...
- **12... work out your own salvation...** (NOT work FOR your salvation!)
- **Richard Melick, NAC Paul meant, that they were to act like Christians.**
- Even those who reject the claims of Christianity are happy to have someone who **ACTS like a Christian** as their neighbor...employee/employer...student/teacher...roommate...
- In a crooked and twisted world...SHINE with honesty, compassion, trustworthiness, kindness,

4-7-2024

- Q: BUT HOW!!! Vs 13...

13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

- God gives you the **desire** and **ability** to live like a Christian.
- If **hypocrisy** is biggest 'turn off' for those who might consider Christ
> close 2nd is **self-righteousness** (judgmental pride)

2. Follow Jesus' attitude: live a life of humility

14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing, 15 that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,

- Context: attitude of Christ transforms your relationships [xref v 1-11] Christ's attitude was humility!

Jesus transformed the world not by asserting superiority but with a posture of humility

- Humility looks like: not **grumbling**. Q: Are we known for what we complain about?
- Humility looks like: Not **disputing**. Contentious, arguing, slander Q: Are we primarily known for what we are against?
- Goal: **blameless and innocent** (not perfect BUT 'above accusation')
> so people can't point to your attitude of pride/contention/grumbling as offense
- Vs15 (if you live like Jesus in humble obedience) you will be "**children of God**" > compare Jesus' words in sermon on the mount [**Matt 5.44.47**]
- Q: How to act like **sons** or daughters **of God**? A: **love your enemies!**
- We may think: our self-righteous rant, snarky comment, pious complaining about our twisted generation is shining a light BUT it's not the kind of light that helps! Like shining a Utility light in someone's face.
- IF you really want to be a shining light in a dark world...
Follow Jesus' example of **obedience** and **humility**.

Challenge: Shine with goodness.