

# The Foundation of Good: God

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, as I said, we begin a new series this morning, and it's just going to be for six weeks. And I think comes at really a good time.

Negatively, when we think of a good time, many challenges taking place within our culture, certainly. People facing a lot of different challenges.

We hear it described, whether it's in the various addictions that people are enslaved to or the loneliness that has become even a public health issue in the world today.

All kinds of negative reasons why this lesson, I think, comes at a good time. But it also comes at a good time because of the time of year that we're in. I mean, just this morning, people coming in seem to have a lighter step in their step and greeting each other, a happiness that's coming from them as they come in this morning because, again, the time of the year that it is.

And even though Christmastime isn't a time of year recognized by many people in our culture for its real meaning, there is still a happiness associated with it that people want to be part of.

[ 1 : 29 ] And they want it to be part of their lives. And so they hang on to this time of year for what it can really bring to their lives.

In fact, Carol and I this morning were listening to, just kind of on and off, the ten most popular Christmas carols in the U.K. of all places, Sam.

And I don't know how she came across that, but we wanted to listen to some music. And let's see, do you know what the number, could you have an educated guess as to what the number one Christmas carol was in the U.K.?

No, O Holy Night. O Holy Night, yeah. We enjoy that song.

And it's presented by someone with a great voice, singing voice. This one was Michael Ball, or you, okay, you recognize that name. I didn't know who he was, but he did a good job on the song.

[ 2 : 30 ] So whether it's in the U.K. or even in our country here, people enjoy various things associated with Christmas. I don't know if it's going to be broadcast this year, but I think every year in the past, since it first came out, a certain film that came out in 1946 has been presented every year.

Any guesses yet? Not Charlie Brown. One of the lead players was James Stewart.

What? Oh, it's on the screen. Oh, my goodness. Here I am in my blindness. Yeah. Right. It's a wonderful life.

You know, when that film first came out, it wasn't a big hit. But since then, I think as I read a little bit about it, in recent years, the American Film Institute has named it number one as the most inspirational film in America.

I mean, it was interesting to see that. So for a film to be acknowledged in that way, it must connect in some way with the people of this country.

[ 3 : 58 ] There's something that they want to draw from that in their lives at this time of year. And it is indeed that they want, as the film says, a wonderful life.

And other ways in which we could describe it that we hear that described would be the good life.

People want to enjoy the good life.

And so we're going to be taking a look at these next few weeks as to what makes the good life. And I'm going to be presenting this from, I believe, a biblical perspective, as presented in a book by the title, Jonathan Edwards on the Good Life.

Really a book that I've enjoyed reading, even to the extent that at lunchtime, when Carol and I sit down at lunch with the grandkids, I've read that book to them.

Now, they might not tell you that was an exciting book. But they sat there very nicely as we read a few pages from that each day.

[ 5 : 08 ] But really, as they were going on vacation this past year, I'm taking too long on this introduction. As they were going on vacation this past year, they passed through, was it Kansas? And you know how the states have these signs that tell you something like Bremen has the good town or something like this. Well, as they went into Kansas, it said the good life or something like that.

And the grandkids perked up and thought of the book. And so they understand, at least if they got nothing else from the time of reading, it connected that the good life is associated with Christ and the Christian life.

And if that's all they got from it, that was a good foundation that I think they can work from and that God can use in their lives. And I trust in our lives, too, as we consider some of these truths on the good life.

So the different topics we'll cover is the original design of God for mankind, how the good life came about. That's what we'll take a look at this morning. The effect of sin upon this design, how it was lost.

[ 6 : 17 ] You'll recognize these are some worldview questions that every way of thinking or worldview has to answer. How did things come about? How were they lost? How did we get into this trouble that we're in today?

The next chapter, the transforming effect of conversion, how it's regained. We're talking about hope. Is there any hope for the good life?

Once it was lost. Well, I trust in that week we'll share with you how the good life can be restored and is restored. The blessings inherent in the good life.

And we'll take a look at some of those, certainly, as we move through some of these lessons. And then the way God's gracious commandments lead us to the sweetest possible experience of his life. And how those commandments, and that's something, if you're connected at all with some of the things on some of these blogs today that certain people are saying about, we'll say, the irrelevance of the Ten Commandments in the Old Testament.

[ 7 : 19 ] But indeed, we're going to be taking a look at the essential nature of those commandments to enjoy and experience the good life. And how they're very relevant for us today, at least for those who want to live the good life from a biblical perspective.

So while in our world, and we'll see this a little bit next week, there's presented many versions of what constitutes the good life and how it's achieved and experienced.

It's what will be presented and what's presented in the book. And I trust in our lessons is a quote from the book, radically God-centered and deeply rooted in Scripture, just like our verse this morning.

He had hope for life because he was focused on God's Word. So we want to live the good life that's going to be radically God-centered and deeply rooted in God's Word, in Scripture.

And this and no other path leads to lasting happiness for the souls of human beings. So we're understanding that the good life begins with God.

[ 8 : 30 ] This really is foundational for us and for our ongoing walk, even as believers, and enjoying the good life and be able to resist these other versions of the good life that are out there.

Because all those other versions also have a foundation in which they're building on. And if their foundation is not the foundation that we have, which they are not, then they cannot be as sure as what our foundation is, and cannot be as sure in guaranteeing and producing really what is ultimately the good life.

So the foundation of our good life certainly comes from God, and it is God. And he is the foundation of the good life because he is good.

In Arthur W. Pink's book on the attributes of God, he writes this, The goodness of God respects the perfection of his nature. There's such an absolute perfection in God's nature and being that nothing is wanting to it or defective in it.

Nothing can be added to it to make it better. So even in just that description or definition from Arthur W. Pink on God and the goodness of God, we begin to understand why having God as the foundation of the good life is the best and really only foundation one can have that could guarantee the good life.

[ 10 : 09 ] Because there is none good like God is good. And that's what, remember, the rich young man that came to Jesus was somewhat seeking.

As he came to Jesus trying to find out how he could have eternal life. And as he addressed Jesus, he came to Jesus and called him good teacher.

Mark 10, 18, why do you call me good? Jesus answered, no one is good except God. Now, Jesus wasn't saying he wasn't God by saying that.

He certainly was challenging the man about his shallow understanding and use of the term good.

The man, as you would go through the rest of that passage, you would see that he had really a high view of his own goodness as he explained to Jesus his character, his manner of life, and how he has kept the laws to that point and probably wondered, what else could I do?

I've done everything there is to do in order to obtain eternal life. So a very high view of himself and his own goodness. And at the same time, really a low view of Jesus Christ and his goodness.

[ 11 : 35 ] Because the way he was using that term good teacher was more or less in a complementary fashion. Not in the fashion that is described in the way Arthur W. Pink gave his definition.

He wasn't recognizing Jesus as God come in the flesh, good, perfect in every way. When he used that address of Jesus.

The quick point that I'm trying to make from this passage is that Jesus declared only God is absolute, perfect goodness. And that's why God in and of himself can be the perfect foundation for the good life.

Do you hear me say that over and over again? I guess that's the thought I want you to go with today. The best, the only sure foundation for the good life is found in God because he is good. Nothing lacking in him that would make him a poor foundation for declaring unto us what the good life is or designing what the good life should look like.

[ 12 : 51 ] Nothing was missing in him. That he was, oh no, I forgot to put this in. How could they live the good life now? Now they're going to miss out because there's an element that they're missing.

No, nothing was missing in God that he would make a mistake or forget anything like that. He's the sure foundation for the good life. And not only is he good in and of himself as God, because he is that way, what he does is good.

What comes from him is good. Psalm 119 verse 68, the psalmist says, you are good and what you do is good.

I said, well, of course. Now, how could it be any other way? Well, it couldn't be any other way because that is who he is in his nature. He is good. And so that's what we see in Genesis 1 and 2 and the good life that he designed.

He designed God who is perfect and good, what he designed and brought forth for, at that time, Adam and Eve or potentially all mankind.

[ 14 : 00 ] He was the designer of what we see there in Genesis 1 and 2. So God glorified himself, our second point, when out of his goodness, he designed people to know and to experience a measure of his glorious perfections.

And I say a measure of his glorious perfections because God is infinite. He's infinite in all his glorious perfections. And so there couldn't be an infinite expression in a temporary, limited way in the lives of mankind and what they were going to be living.

But what he did present and design for us was wonderful and was good. And so what he designed, he brought forth for mankind to enjoy, that measure of his glorious perfections.

A couple of quotes from the book. God created the world to display and reflect his glory. We know that from Psalm 19, verses 1 through 6, the heavens declare the glory of God and on and on.

It goes there in those verses. All that the eye can see exists to remanate, we don't use that word very often these days, or to send back God's original glory to himself.

[ 15 : 18 ] God alone is worthy of such a system, for he alone is God. All of creation participates in the cycle of beauty that begins with God and returns to God.

And so it's a beautiful thing that we're seeing there, that God, out of his perfect goodness, all of his manifold perfections designed and created and brought forth this world that would be a display of all those glorious perfections of God.

A beautiful display that he was worthy of because he is God in all of his perfections. Continuing on, the quote, but while all things in some way display and reflect the beauty of God, only humans may do so with awareness.

I mean, this, when I read this quote like this, it really, oh, I guess brought to my mind how thankful to God I should be.

Even just as a human being, that I could be one that has an awareness of this glorious creation that he designed.

[16:30] Only mankind can participate consciously in the cycle of beauty. God desired a special sort of being to commune with him and to joyfully image, and I also add, and know his goodness in the world.

And that is us, human beings, as originally designed by God. That in all this, the wonders that he had made, even all the animals there, they weren't thinking, oh, man, God is good.

Look what we have to enjoy from this great creator. They had no awareness of the one who designed the things that they were participating in. But man could. Being made in the image of God, man had that ability and that awareness of the creator who made all this glorious beauty that he was experiencing.

Genesis 1, 26 and 27. We're familiar with these verses. God said, let us make man in our image, in our likeness. Let them rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all creatures that move along the ground.

So God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created him. Male and female, he created them. So God, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, there even before the creation of anything that was made and created, joyfully happy in and of himself.

[17:59] Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He had need of nothing, really enjoying himself as God. There was nothing else better than that to enjoy. Nothing else existed.

There was nothing more glorious than God. So what should God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, glory in and have pleasure in but himself, who was the ultimate in beauty and splendor?

And so they had this awareness as God of the wonders of himself. And so God made man to be able to experience a measure of that wonder, of the glory of God.

And all that was in him, his beauty. And to have that experience of pleasure in what is good and glorious in God.

Edwards quote, It's a thing infinitely good in itself that God's glory should be known by a glorious society of created beings. It is an excellent thing.

[19:06] It almost seems like a little thing to say. But he's trying to say it in as rich and full a way as possible. It's a thing. It's infinitely good in itself that God's glory should be known.

It's known by God. But the rest of creation didn't know it. So it was an infinitely good thing that God would make known his wonders to a people, a creature, who could be aware of this glory.

That's an infinitely good thing. It's an infinitely good thing for God because he's worthy of it. But it's an infinitely good thing for us that we would have the privilege of being able to be aware of the glory and wonder of God.

Another quote by Edwards. It seems to be a thing in itself fit and desirable that the glorious perfections of God should be known and the operations and expressions of them seen by other beings beside himself.

As God's perfections are things in themselves excellent, which they are, so the expression of them in their proper acts and fruits is also excellent.

[20:26] And the knowledge of these excellent perfections and of these glorious expressions of them is an excellent thing. How many different times can you use the word excellent to communicate that something's excellent?

So what God did in the beginning there in making us as human beings to know him as the God who is so good and glorious was a good thing.

It's good not just known, experienced by him in his existence as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but also known to people who could experience living in the delight of them.

And that's what Adam and Eve were experiencing there. This is what the good life is. Knowing God, bringing him glory and pleasure by certainly praising him for who he is and the wonders that he's done.

I've got to believe Adam and Eve were doing that on a regular basis. We don't have everything recorded in those first two chapters of all their conversations with each other as they move through their day.

[ 21 : 38 ] But I can't help but to think that praise was on their lips on a regular basis for what they were experiencing and what they were aware of, of God and the creation that was there that they were enjoying.

But it's also, we can, the good life is a life that where people by faith joyfully live by his design and in his counsel in the world that he created.

Again, that's Genesis 1 and 2. A really a record of the good life Adam and Eve enjoyed as they experienced living in that expression of the glory and goodness of God with each other, certainly as man and woman, but also in their relationship with God and then also in their relationship with the rest of the environment around them.

Jonathan Edwards recognized the need for people in his day to know of God's goodness to them. He said in the book that early on in his life he discovered a simple but vitalizing truth.

God had not made mankind to be miserable. Being a Christian did not mean the absence of pleasure. God made mankind to experience unending delight and joy in him.

[ 23 : 01 ] To be happier and happier as knowledge of God increased. You think back to John 17, 3 in Jesus' prayer, said this is eternal life, that they might know you and Jesus Christ whom you've sent.

I mean, that is what really truly makes the good life that Adam and Eve were experiencing and that we will learn in three weeks of how it's restored after the fall, that we too can experience now as we grow in the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ whom you've sent.

Without the knowledge of God, there cannot be the ultimate of the good life. You know, how many times do you see something that's so nice and designed to put together well, and we say, I wonder who made that?

And somehow in knowing who made it, we have a richer enjoyment of the thing that is there that we're enjoying. And so that's, again, how we are made.

We're made to delight in the knowledge of God, and as that increases in us, there's a greater glory and happiness within us.

[ 24 : 15 ] And the end of the quote, and to constantly soak up the sweetest pleasure the world affords in the life of faith, all of which flow together to constitute the good life.

And so that's why we start with this firm foundation of God and the goodness, the very character of God as good for our good life. Because, again, you will be presented in the world, and we'll see some of this next week, with other variations of what the good life is.

And a lot of those do not include God. And so there's a different foundation on which they're building the good life. If you're not careful, you can fall into this trap of thinking, well, maybe it is better, because of, usually, the circumstances I'm in now.

Again, we've heard in the past weeks here about Asaph and how he fell into that trap. Well, look at these guys. They're not going through all this trouble.

You know, life seems to be good for them, the good life. It was only when he went back to the sanctuary of God, and was reminded again of, we'll say, the goodness of God, the expression of that goodness of God to him.

[ 25 : 38 ] And what they were missing out on, both now in this life and what their end would be, was he able to get back on track and, again, truly experience the good life.

And so that's why it's so important that we start here with this foundation. If you don't have the sure foundation, you're just going to follow somewhere else that's going to be presented.

And it is presented. You know, we all know it's presented. Whether it's in commercials or at work, school, wherever you go, there are other options presented to you that do not include God that will promise the good life.

We'll just keep using that term. And so you're going to have to keep going back in those times and realize, now wait a minute, there's something they're not building on here. Therefore, if they're not building on God, the sure foundation who is good and perfect, what they're promising can never really measure up to what God has promised and designed for me to experience.

And so I will not give in to it. Go back to the sanctuary of God and his word and be reminded of who he is and the design that he has established for you in life, even in this fallen world.

[ 27 : 00 ] And it's only in that way that you will be able to experience what truly the good life is at this time. Well, as there are different versions in our day, so it was in Jonathan Edwards' day, he recognized that there was some wrong thinking of his congregants that he needed to overcome and

help them overcome and to recognize.

There were some that thought the life devoted to knowing God and living by faith in him squashes happiness, as he put it. But again, this isn't what we see in Genesis 1 and 2.

What we see in Genesis 1 and 2 is God, out of his goodness, creating man and his environment in such a way that would produce man's greatest pleasure and happiness.

God was interested certainly in the ultimate glory. And in his ultimate glory, he would design that which would produce the greatest happiness and pleasure that men could experience in life in the world in which they were presented.

God created and designed man to live and experience the good life in relationship with him, God, each other, husband and wife, and his environment.

[ 28 : 26 ] In Genesis 1, 31, we see God saw that he had made and it was kind of good, mediocre, not too bad. It was very good. Everything that was necessary, all of it, all that was necessary for the good life God made for Adam and Eve, all that was there, both materially, spiritually, relationally, all of it was very good.

And all of it would lead to them as they lived within that, sitting at the end of the day with each other. Man, this is the good life that we're living here.

And that would be their testimony. As he dealt with this issue, he taught how God emanates or sends his beauty or glory out and the creature receives and delights in it.

Happiness of God and happiness of humanity are not, as some have suggested, at odds. Instead, God and man ideally work in harmony with God emanating glory that's received and reflected by mankind who grow happy in performing this divine duty.

Because what God has designed for him to be glorified in their lives is good for them. And when they do it, they're having a great time.

[ 29 : 46 ] They're enjoying living God's design in the world in which they were living. And so, their happiness was just part of God's design in what he created for them and the way he wanted them to live.

All of that would produce their happiness and pleasure that would glorify and magnify him even more. in a way that the rest of creation that was unaware of God and his glories couldn't do.

Man could do it because he, again, had an awareness of God and what God had made. Again, that's what we see in Genesis 1 and 2.

Adam and Eve living and enjoying the goodness of God toward them. Well, there was another objection that he had to deal with. Living for God means that one had to sacrifice concern for oneself and adopt a pattern of living that impedes happiness for the sake of obeying and loving God.

But Edwards believed that one best loved oneself by loving God. and went, wait a minute, you know, isn't that selfish?

[ 31 : 09 ] Well, it can be. Here's this quote. Loving oneself without God meant that one strayed from the source of all wisdom and truth and thus consigned oneself to destruction.

Ultimately, that's what it would be. But also, in the meantime, they're trying to live life apart from the wisdom, knowledge of the creator who understands and knows life, how it's to be lived, and has revealed himself to these people.

And even in the, in those first two chapters, we see how he was providing them counsel that they needed in relationship with each other, in relationship with God, their environment, giving them counsel that in this wisdom that they were receiving from God, this knowledge that they were receiving from God would enable them to live the good life.

And without that, they would be stumbling or, we've got to figure this out. And you know, it must be this way. This is the way my role is supposed to, no, it's not. You know, it should be this way.

And the good life, they're missing because they do not have the wisdom, recognizing that, the wisdom and accepting that, the wisdom and knowledge of God.

[ 32 : 27 ] Instead of living selfishly, mankind could live for God and experience His boundless goodness in doing so, they would actually care for themselves far better than if they ignored the Lord and went their own way.

Makes sense, right? You want what is best for yourself, you want what is to enjoy the good life, then go to God.

Listen to His counsel. Pursue loving Him and obedience to Him. In faith, believing what He has counseled you to do and how to live.

That's the best thing for you. You want what's best for yourself, then pursue God. We don't need to separate doing what is best for myself from love for and obedience to God.

The best thing people can do for themselves is to follow, as we know, the greatest commandments. Mark 12, 29-31. The most important one, answer Jesus, is this, Here is the Lord our God, the Lord is one.

[ 33 : 32 ] Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, with all your strength. The second is this, Love your neighbor as yourself. There's no commandment greater than these. So when a person, another quote, lives a life of benevolence to God and accordingly to his fellow man, he preserves his soul.

And as a result, loves himself more than the person who lives without virtue and who operates out of selfishness. You want to hurt yourself, deny yourself the pleasure, the goodness of life, then turn from God and his ways and his wisdom.

Follow a different way. And that's what many people are doing, thinking that, No, there's, I mean, if I follow God and, you know, it's no good for me, what good is there in that for me?

They're convinced that there's terrible things there that they'll lose out on. It's just not the case because God, who is good, only gives us that kind of good counsel that is good for us and produces the greatest happiness and pleasure that man can know and experience.

Truths that we have to know and that we have to draw upon in our world that says, No, no, that's not true. That God squashes happiness, you know, and it won't be good for you.

[ 34 : 48 ] But the best thing a husband can do for his own joy in marriage is to love his wife, to nurture and care for her. The best thing a wife can do for her joy in marriage is to be her husband's helper, submitting to his leadership and showing him in reverence.

The best thing a child can do to enjoy family life is to honor and obey parents. A single person can find joy in his or her contentment in Christ and not merely looking out for his or her own personal interests but also for the interests of others.

A person enjoys work when he or she doesn't do it just to please men but as a servant of God to please the Lord, to contribute to the welfare of others, exercising dominion over the earth, all this wisdom, these principles from God who is good that gives us for knowledge and living in this world.

A person enjoys life as part of a church when he or she begins using his or her gifts to serve others and live out the one another commands in scripture. Matthew 16, 25, whoever would save his life will lose it and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

What? How can that be true? It's true. It's true. Losing ourselves in the person of Jesus Christ, denying ourselves and what our flesh would drive us to do contrary to truth and the good counsel of God would not be good but is good when we know the truth, set our mind on the truth, set our focus on living that truth on a daily basis.

[ 36 : 30 ] That is the good life. True self-interest, another quote, involves turning one's life over to God and accepting his plan for life over against anything the human mind can conceive, I say, in and of itself.

If one desires to know happiness in this life and the next, one must hand one's life over to the Lord. And that's, again, what we see happening in Genesis 1 and 2.

And it's a message that kept ringing out, even throughout the scriptures, as we'll see in the coming weeks, but just to toss out some other verses because God is interested in this in the lives of human beings, instructing them to turn from their independence from God and instead turn to him to love, trust, and obey him and be blessed.

Know the goodness of God in life. The children of Israel, Exodus 6, 5 through 9, as they came out of the bondage, the land of Egypt, God said, moreover, I have heard the groaning of the Israelites whom the Egyptians are enslaving and I have remembered my covenant.

Therefore, say to the Israelites, I am the Lord, I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm, with mighty acts of judgment.

[ 37 : 57 ] I will take you as my own people. See, all these good things, I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the Lord, your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians.

I will bring you to the land I swore with uplifted hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob. I will give it to you as a possession. I am the Lord. Reminders to them over and over again. Let's not forget who I am. I am well able to perform all that I am promising to you. Moses reported this to the Israelites.

Man, this is wonderful news. Let me tell these people. They didn't listen to him. What? They didn't listen to him because of their discouragement and cruel bondage, their feelings and their circumstances.

They chose to continue not living the good life when they could have been living the good life that God was bringing to them and promised that God wanted to give because of their feelings and their circumstances.

[ 39 : 06 ] Psalm 1, 1 through 3 is another area. Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of the sinners or sit in the seat of mockers, but his delight is in the law of the Lord and on his law he meditates day and night.

He'll be like a tree planted by the streams of water which yields its fruit in its season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. That's a good life for this man who's walking in the counsel of God.

Verse that we all know, Proverbs 3, 5, and 6, Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Lean not to your own understanding. Wouldn't this be better if I lived a good life this way? No, it won't be if it denies God and his wisdom and counsel.

In all your ways acknowledge him and he'll make your paths straight. The good life. I'm not saying there won't be any trials or any difficulties. You can still live the good life whatever the circumstances are.

And then John 4, 13, remember that woman at the well. Certainly she wasn't living the good life. Did Jesus have anything that he could offer her that would give her hope for a life that was better than what she was experiencing?

[ 40 : 27 ] Jesus answered, Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again. But whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.

The good life. Promising her a last quote by Edwards. How exceeding great is the reward of the godly. What a reward have they in the world to come.

What joys in another life. But yet this is not all. No, they have a reward in this life. In the very keeping of God's commands there's great reward.

Psalm 19, 11. The reward they have in hand besides that which is promised is well worth all the pains they take, all the troubles they endure. God has not only promised them a great reward and exceeding great beyond conception, but he has given them a foretaste in this world.

And this taste is better than all the pleasure and riches of the wicked. The good life. Jesus said, I have come that they might have life and have it to the full.

[ 41 : 40 ] And that's what we celebrate today as well. Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace and goodwill toward men.

Well, we can keep celebrating that as we shift from here to the morning service. But let's stop with a word of prayer. Thanking God for his goodness. Great God, this morning we thank you that you are who you are.

Without you being who you are, Father, we would not be people of hope for anything, certainly in eternity or even in this world today, but because you are who you are from eternity past and when you created humanity that we would be aware of your glory and goodness.

We give thanks to you, your ongoing work of redeeming a people unto yourself that we could be numbered among, again, have an awareness even of greater riches that even Adam and Eve didn't know about.

We give thanks for that and pray that as we move into the morning service, oh Lord, we'd celebrate the way in which you continue to express your goodness in the sending of your son, Jesus Christ, who humbled himself even as a child and took the form of a servant made in the likeness of man.

[ 43 : 08 ] We give thanks to you for that and pray that you would just lift our hearts more and more toward Jesus Christ and to yourself as a firm foundation for life in our world today.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen.