

Our devotion today is an outline of the message at Belfield Baptist Church for August 29, 2021.

DAMAGED GOODNESS ROMANS 14:13-19

LET NOT THEN YOUR GOOD BE EVIL SPOKEN OF, (Romans 14:16)

Damaged goodness is goodness (a) with a flaw in it, (b) which is less than badness, and (c) which instead of being a help to Christianity is against it. There are some people that though their concept of goodness does more harm to Christ than a whole church can do good at times.

The point Paul is making is simply that a Christian's goodness may falsify his religion and do Christ great harm. When goodness becomes a damaged article, outsiders will say; If that is what Christianity means, we don't want any of it.

1. GOODNESS IS DAMAGED WHEN IT IS PROUD OF ITSELF. That is, when righteousness becomes self-righteousness; when we think that all is well in our moral life, that we are splendid examples for others to follow, and only if everybody were as good as we are, we would live in a perfect country.

When we lose our humility and become proud, we have been defeated in our Christian life.

Paul tells us that the worst sins are not the vices that we hear so much about, but the sins of the spirit (small s): ROMANS 13:12-14: **¹² The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. ¹³ Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.**

¹⁴ But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Paul has also told us that when we become self-righteous, we become judges ourselves. Romans 2:1-2 **¹ Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the**

same things. ² But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.

We don't have the authority to judge one another, even though some think that they do in all things. In church and out of church.

2. GOODNESS IS DAMAGED WHEN IT IS MAINLY NEGATIVE.

1. The Hebrews said: THOU SHALT NOT. In other words, a man was good if he did not do certain things.

2. To Jesus goodness was positive in character. It was what the people were willing to do. Look at the parable of the "good Samaritan" the priest and the Levite were condemned because they did nothing. (Luke 10:25-37, Goodness is damaged when we do not do anything.

3. **GOODNESS IS DAMAGED WHEN IT IS STRAINED.** It is strained when it is unnatural, or an effortless performance. If we have to be an actor or hypocrite, then our goodness is hurting. It should come natural as Jesus' did.

4. **GOODNESS IS DAMAGED WHEN IT IS SERVED IN A PINT MEASURE.** Whenever goodness becomes a mere performance of defined duty and not the expression of giving grace. Putting it another way: **There is something lacking in goodness that never rises above the obligations imposed upon it.** It should not be, I Got To, it should be, I want to.

The Pharisees were like this. (a) They were faithful to duty, but never went beyond the call of duty. (b) They were faithful to the letter of the Law, but not more. What about us?

5. GOODNESS IS DAMAGED WHEN IT CASTS A CHILL.

Like a volcano, it might be pretty from a distance, but it does not make a good companion. Have you met "Christians" that when they entered a room a hush came over the crowd or no one like to be around them? (Just like the Pharisees.)

I have met people in God's work like this.

What about your goodness, is it the best it could be?

Have you put on Jesus Christ?

As Christians today, we need to be faithful to God and the church because we want to be faithful, not because we feel obligated to do so. I have heard people say, I will do it, if nobody else will. Wrong! We should be willing to serve the Lord and His church out of love.

Pastor Larry Vickery
PO Box 133
South Heart, ND 58655
Cell: 701-260-5940
Email: ldvickery@gmail.com