

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU'RE TALKING TO?

40 Days of Prayer – Week 3

(Note – may only be reproduced for use as a participant in MCF's 40 Day of Prayer campaign)

Irritate – people who **don't identify themselves** when they call.

They just start talking & assume you know...

UNTIL YOU KNOW WHO YOU ARE TALKING TO YOU DON'T KNOW:...

What to talk about (what content is appropriate)

What tone of voice to use.

What **words are appropriate**

How to **address them properly** (*pope/pizza guy*)

In a store: can always **tell** if someone is part of SB

"Hey Pastor Rick!" - "Hello REV. Warren" *you talkin to me?*

What you know about someone determines how you talk to them

SAME WAY Your understanding of what God is really like **shapes everything else in your life, including how you pray!**

Nothing influences your life more than how you view God!

CARD 1 Misconceptions

So what is God really like? God has many characteristics
Omniscient...Omnipotent...Just... Loving... Kind...Unchanging...Holy...

Today: just look at GOD'S GOODNESS

PS. 100:5 *aloud*)

"THE LORD IS ALWAYS GOOD. He is always loving and kind, and his faithfulness goes on and on to each succeeding generation."

The reason there is good in the world – Good Creator

God is the source of all Good in the World.

Can't spell Good w/o God

The reason... evil.. **God doesn't force us to do good!**

IF God is **not** a good God ...zero reason to pray!

BUT BECAUSE GOD IS ALWAYS GOOD...

we know 4 implications- that affect how we talk to him

1st^d **BECAUSE** God is *always* good

1. GOD'S PLANS FOR MY LIFE WILL ALWAYS BE GOOD

Is there anything God can't do? Yes! Do evil! Can't deny his character.

JER. 29:11 **"I know what I've planned for you," says the Lord. "I have GOOD plans for you, not plans to hurt you! My plans will give you HOPE and a GOOD future. And when you call to me and pray to me, I will listen to you!"** (NCV) see the connection w prayer?

- You are not an accident! A purpose for your life!
- God put a lot of thought into creating your life
- God's plans for me are revealed & realized through prayer!

God didn't have to **create a plan** for your life!

Could've left it all chance, but he didn't. Why? Because he's Good!

PS 31:19 **screen** **God, your goodness is so great! You have stored up great blessings for those who honor you. You do so much for those who come to you for protection, Blessing them before the watching world!"** (NLT) "stored up" indicates intention and thoughtfulness

I want you to experience those blessings - why 40 DOP

"BUT RICK - not everything in my life is good!"

God did not promise that!

Broken planet... We make bad choices

But God is even greater than your choices!

ROM.8:28 **"We know that God causes everything to work together for THE GOOD of those who love God and are called according to his purpose."** (NLT) The more you pray, the better you know your purpose

The better you know your purpose -more God **can use everything** for good.

... Even your hurts from the sins of others! *Joseph's 11 brothers*

GEN.50:20 **Joseph: "Your plan was to hurt me, but God turned your evil plan into a GOOD plan to save the lives of many people!"**

(this is redemptive suffering)

The more you trust the goodness of God-the happier you'll be:

ROM. 5:3 **"So, we can rejoice when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they are GOOD for us—they help us learn patient endurance."** On earth, God is more interested in your character-comfort

SCREEN: EVERYTHING God does in my life, he does for my good.

You cannot say that about anybody else

2nd **BECAUSE** God is *always* good

2. GOD ALWAYS GIVES ME WHAT I NEED, NOT WHAT I DESERVE

If we all got what we deserved none of us would be here

PS.103:10+12 **"He has not treated us as we deserve for our sins or paid us back for our wrongs...(In his goodness), he has taken our sins away and removed them as far as the east is from the west!"**

ILL: When David committed murder and adultery—did he deserve mercy? NO but he knew God is good, so here's what he prayed...

PS. 51:1-2 "God, in your goodness, have mercy on me ... Wash away all my guilt; and make me clean again. From my sin cleanse me." (NAB)

Noe: God forgives you not because you're good, but because he is!

But God does more than forgive us when we sin, he welcomes us back!
He *doesn't reject* us. He *receives* us.

Secret: **One of your greatest fears is the fear of rejection**
- *We do everything possible to avoid it.*
- *Why you try to cover up* all the bad parts in your life.

But *because God is good*, he will NEVER reject you, *No Fear!*

PS.27:10-13 "Even if my father and mother abandon me, the Lord will hold me close... my enemies are waiting for me to fall... Yet I remain confident that I'll see the **GOODNESS** of the Lord while I'm living here in the world." (NLT) He's the God of second chances

Because God is good & gracious, we're **bold & confident** in prayer

HEB. 4:15-16 "(Jesus) understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same temptations we do, yet he did not sin. So let us come boldly with confidence to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find the grace to help us when we need it." (NLT)

3RD BECAUSE God is always good

GOD PUT MY GOOD ABOVE HIS OWN GOOD

This is the *heart* of the gospel. The king sacrifices his life for peasants!
The ultimate expression of love! The shepherd dies for the sheep!

JN.10:14-15 "I am the **GOOD shepherd**; I know my own sheep, and they know me ... And I will sacrifice my life for my sheep." **really?**

JN. 15:13 screen "The greatest love you can have is to give your life for others." (TEV) The Cross = ultimate picture of God's goodness!
No one else has ever offered to pay for your sin! *Love in 1st Degree!*

But Jesus didn't just die for you. He *imputed his goodness* inside you!

2 COR. 5:21scr "God took the sinless Christ and poured into him our sins. Then, in exchange, he poured God's goodness into us!" (LB)
The Great Exchange! "Let's Make a Deal" gameshow

ROM.4:25 "Jesus died for our sins and rose again to make us right with God, filling us with God's **GOODNESS.**" (LB) Heaven!
This is amazing! But what does it have to do with prayer? **EVERYTHING!**

ROM. 8:32 "Since God did not spare even his own Son but gave Christ up for us all, won't he now also give us everything else we need?" (NLT) See the logic? *small potatoes*

SONG: GOOD, GOOD FATHER

Now this 4th truth is the **hard** one: **BECAUSE** God is always good...

4. HE DOES NOT SAY YES TO EVERY REQUEST!

No loving parent gives a child everything they ask for

4 Answers: request wrong **NO...** timing **SLOW...** you **GROW. GO!**

LK.11:11-13 "You fathers—if your children asked for a fish to each, would you give them a snake instead? Or if they asked for an egg, would you give them a scorpion? Of course not! So if you, as sinful people, know how to give **GOOD gifts** to your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Point: God will never give you anything hurtful or bad for you

James & John Mother "Can my sons sit... on either side in heaven?"

MT.20:22 Jesus replied "You don't realize what you are asking for!"
Limited perspective. Don't see the whole picture.

Reality: It's easy to trust God's goodness *when things are going good*

The Test: when everything seems to be bad in your life.

- When things don't work out the way you planned
 - When my wife got **breast cancer** the month we launched PEACE
- When the prayer I've **prayed every day 45 yrs-** *yet to be answered*
- When my youngest son *lost his lifelong battle* with mental illness

Will you say in FAITH like Job "You give... My heart will choose to say... You know a lot of times what you pray for doesn't happen!"

On Wed of this wk I got a **terrible stomach pain** lasted several hours
I **cried out to God and asked him to take it away.**

You know what? He didn't take it away

I was in pain for several hours before it subsided

Now what did that tell me about prayer?

That prayer doesn't work? No!

That God isn't good? No!

That I should give up prayer because I don't get everything I ask for?

NO. God is not a vending machine, or a genie or a magic wand.

PRAYER IS NOT A PAINKILLER that removes all the pain in my life.

Nowhere in the Bible

has God promised a pain-free life!

has God said prayer will make *every moment of your life easy!*

It just doesn't say that,

So should I give up praying? No!

*My job is to keep praying & trust God with the answer
because I KNOW that everything he does in my life is for my good*

I ACCEPT a NO, SLOW, GROW, or GO answer

Because I know that God is a Good Good Father

even when I'm in pain.

Q: **IF a doctor does a surgery that saves your life
and that surgery or recovery causes you pain...**

DO YOU SAY THAT DOCTOR WAS A BAD DOCTOR ?

When God didn't immediately end my pain

- He was just saying "MY GRACE IS ENOUGH FOR YOU!

"I know you can handle this!".

I've learned nothing from pleasure.

Almost everything I've learned in life I learned from pain,

If you never had any pain or difficulty in your life
how strong the mature would you be?

EVERYTHING GOD DOES IS FOR YOUR GOOD!

ISA.55:8-9 *God says, "My thoughts are completely different from yours, and my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts."* (NLT)

FINALLY, **BECAUSE** God is *always* good

5. HE INVITES US TO LIVE WITH HIM FOREVER

God wants to show his goodness to you not just while you're here on earth – but for all of eternity! WOW!

2 TH 2:16-17 *"Our Lord Jesus Christ, and God our Father who loves us, has given us by his grace an everlasting encouragement and a GOOD HOPE that will last forever, May this encourage your heart and give you strength for every GOOD THING you do and say!"*

PS. 23:6 *"Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, then I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever!"* (NIV)

Until you are absolutely convinced that God is always good to you, your prayer will be **powerless, passionless, and pointless**

What do you want to see God do in your life in the next 40 Days

CLOSE:

Satan is not afraid of your plans.

Satan is not afraid of your programs

But he is afraid of your prayers

Because anytime God wants to do something great in your life, in your family, in your church, in your career, or in your nation he begins by moving you to pray.

Our nation needs spiritual reawakening, a renewal, a spiritual revival
It won't happen through politics or petitions

Things happen when a group of people commit to pray together!

PRAY THIS WEEK

PS.119:37 +40 *"Lord, keep me from paying attention to what is worthless. (Instead) let me live by your Word... I want to obey to your principles. Please RENEW my life with your GOODNESS!"*

LAM. 5:21 *"Bring us back to you, God; we're ready to come back. Give us a fresh start."* (Mes)

PRAY **Revive My Heart.... My Small Group ... Our Church Family**

I WANT YOU TO STAY FOR SPECIAL THEME SONG

This wk in your SG – learn 4 purposes of prayer

CARD 1 Some people have a mental image of God as...

The Grumpy God - Cranky, Angry, & Upset about everything.

Crouching Tiger God – just waiting to pounce on you!

Flaky Father God – moody & changes his mind about you continually

Cosmic Cop God – whose *only purpose it to enforce the rules*

Dictator God – always demanding more. & more

Santa Claus God – making a list & checking... *naughty or..nice*

Play Dough God – make him into any form you want,,,

Mr. Potato Head God *I like to think of God as...*

BOTTOM LINE: WHO DO YOU THINK YOU'RE TALKING TO?
(when you pray)

A.W. Tozer ***“What comes into your mind when you think about God is the most important thing about you.”*** F