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# GOD'S GOODNESS HIS GLORY

EXODUS 33:18-34:7



When we hear someone's name, a little picture pops up in our mind doesn't it. The pop-up picture is what we think of first when we think of someone. That picture is usually their defining characteristic. It's a snapshot summary of them. It may be a smiling picture, a frowning picture, a stressed picture, a kind picture, a scary picture. Whatever it is, it reveals what you think of the person. And that pop-up is deeply influential. It determines how much you like the person, how you speak to them, how you respond to them, if you want to be with them, and so on.

So let me ask you a question. What picture comes into your mind when you think about God? Anger? Justice? Distance? Coldness? Judgment? Softness? Weakness? Whatever it is, that pop-up picture of God defines your relationship with God. It impacts and influences everything in your life.

What picture should pop into our minds when we think about God? What does God want us to think about when we think about him? We get the answer to that question in Exodus 33:18-34:8. The answer may surprise you. It should certainly inspire you.

## LEARNING

### **GOD'S GOODNESS IS HIS GLORY (33:18-23)**

After God assured Moses that he would personally go with Israel, Moses said, **"Please show me your glory"** (18). Moses was asking God to show him his defining characteristic, what he wanted people to think of when they thought of God. In essence, he said, "Show me the right pop-up picture. Show me the image you want me to carry with me as we travel to the Promised Land."

God's answer is stunning: **"I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name 'The Lord.'"** (19). He effectively said, "My glory, my defining characteristic, is my goodness. That's what I want you to think of when you think of me. That's the image I want you to carry with you in life."

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It was such a glorious image, such a bright and astounding picture, that God had to hide Moses in a cave so that when his goodness passed by, it would not blind him with its brilliance (20-23).

GOD'S GOODNESS  
IS GOD'S GLORY

What does God's goodness mean?

### **GOD'S GOODNESS IS OUR GOSPEL (33:19-34:7)**

When God promised that he would show Moses his goodness in Exodus 33:19, he gave further details of that glorious goodness in verse 20. **"And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy."** Then, in Exodus 34, God passed before Moses and proclaimed his goodness, **"The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin"** (34:6-7).

God was saying, "My goodness is undeserved, patient, abundant, truthful, sovereign, and saving." God's goodness is our Gospel. But it's a goodness that demands a response. He went on to say I **"will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation"** (7). The saving goodness of God is available, but he will not clear the guilty who do not want or appreciate his goodness

GOD'S GOODNESS  
IS OUR GOSPEL

LOVING

It's a beautiful, brilliant picture of God's glorious goodness, isn't it? But there's an even better one in the New Testament. At Calvary, God said, "Here is my glory as you've never seen it before." There he made all his goodness pass before us and explained his name 'The Lord.' There he proclaimed, "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." Seek and savor that goodness because remember he will by no other means clear the guilty. As Moses bowed in worship in the cave, let's bow in worship at the cross for the glorious Gospel of God's goodness.

LIVING

Whenever you think of God, think first and most of his glorious goodness, especially as it was proclaimed at the cross.

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