

Belgic Confession, Article 1, “God’s Goodness”

Scripture Lesson: Psalm 73

Lesson Aim	To understand the meaning of the goodness of God and to be able to apply this knowledge to one’s life.
Steps to Learning	Read Belgic Confession, Article 1 (3forms.org/b1) and Psalm 73 (can be done in one sitting or over several days).
What to Understand	<p>The Belgic Confession is summarizing what the Scriptures teach about God. In this particular article, the Belgic is helping us to understand the nature of God including his incommunicable and communicable attributes. Incommunicable (attributes not shared with people): God is eternal, incomprehensible, invisible, immutable, infinite and almighty. Communicable (attributes that people can share with God): God is wise, just and good.</p> <p>Definition of the goodness of God: “God's goodness is his bounty and generosity in self-giving love and devotion. As one who is intrinsically good, God displays his goodness in the grace he bestows upon his creatures in his providential care and sustenance. Particularly, in his purpose to redeem his people in Christ, God exhibits his grace or unmerited favor, his mercy or heartfelt pity, his steadfast or unflinching love, and his patience or slowness to anger.” Cornelis P. Venema</p> <p>Short definition of the goodness of God: God’s goodness is his ability to produce human flourishing both in the creation and redemption.</p>
Discuss	<p>How do we see God’s goodness in the creation? We can observe that God provides for all people food and drink and work to do with our hands.</p> <p>How do we see God’s goodness in redemption? God has provided salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. God also sanctifies his people through the Word and the Sacraments.</p> <p>How does knowing God’s goodness affect our lives as Christians? See the Heidelberg Catechism question and answer 28 (We can be patient in adversity and thankful in prosperity).</p> <p>Discuss further: How has God blessed you in the different circumstances that you find in your life?</p>
Bible Reading for This Week	Genesis 1–3 (covering the great Bible stories)