

Youth Leader  
  
Café

2014 Seminar Notes

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# Welcome

Thank you for coming to the 2014 Youth Leader Café! We hope today will be an enjoyable and enriching time as we fellowship, encourage, and learn together.

The purpose of Positive Action for Christ is to equip youth leaders—youth workers, parents, teachers—to magnify the majesty of God to young people. Feel free to take a moment to browse some our products, either at the display table or online, where you'll find samples and free downloads.

We are so glad you're here! If we can be of any assistance, please don't hesitate to ask any of our staff.

## Schedule

9:00–9:20	Registration
9:20–9:30	Welcome
9:30–10:30	Session 1
10:30–10:45	Break
10:45–12:00	Session 2
12:00–12:45	Lunch and Q&A
12:45–1:30	Activities and Fellowship
1:30–2:30	Session 3

# Today's Focus:

## *The Goodness of God*

Today, we'll be focusing on the goodness of God—specifically, why we should teach it, what it looks like, and how to help others think about it. Understanding God's goodness equips us to answer difficult questions, encourage those who are suffering, and teach others to think practically about God's goodness.

## About Positive Action

Positive Action for Christ is a nonprofit publishing ministry specializing in Bible studies and curriculum for churches, Christian schools, and homeschools. We began in 1969 when Frank Hamrick, a youth pastor, formed the first ProTeen club. Overflowing with a love for God and His Word, Frank taught his youth group using a unique blend of energy and humor. Soon other churches asked if they could use Frank's lessons, and the ministry has continued growing ever since.

Our mission is to help teachers magnify the majesty of God. Nothing is more thrilling to us than the chance to encourage pastors, youth workers, school teachers, and homeschool parents in their efforts to reveal God's glory and grace to others. We look forward to how He will enable us to pursue this work in the years to come.

If you'd like to view past sessions of Youth Leader Café, you can find them at [positiveaction.org/youth-leader-cafe](http://positiveaction.org/youth-leader-cafe)

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# Why Should We Teach the Goodness of God?

## Session 1 Notes

The world is full of suffering. Many Christians experience hostile persecution for simply identifying with Christ. Perhaps you or someone you know has experienced the loss of a loved one, failing health, or prolonged unemployment. How can we see the goodness of God in difficult situations like these?

Today, we'll be focusing on the power and truth of God's goodness. It will help us to answer some difficult questions, encourage those who are suffering, and to think practically about God's goodness.

### *Why should we teach the goodness of God?*

#### **1. God's goodness leads unbelievers to repentance (Romans 2:1–4)**

- A. Morality does not equal justification.
- B. Moral people and immoral people will all be judged by God. Morality doesn't earn favor with God.
- C. God's goodness leads people to salvation.

#### **2. God's goodness shows us His glory**

- A. God's glory is made up of two components: His goodness and His greatness.
- B. How does God's glory relate to His greatness and goodness? (See chart on next page.)

Notes

<b>God's Glory</b>	
<i>God's Greatness</i>	<i>God's Goodness</i>
Generally visible to all	Specifically directed toward individuals
Impersonal, not necessarily relational	Relational
Intended to demonstrate God's existence	Intended to establish or build your relationship with God
<i>Bright</i>	<i>Warm</i>
<b>Attributes</b>	
Omniscient	Mercy
Omnipresent	Love
Eternality	Kindness
Infinitude	Forgiveness
Immutable	Patience

C. The truth of God's goodness should be foundational to all of our experiences.

**3. God's goodness secures our hope (Ps. 78:1–8)**

- A. It gives hope to the next generation.
- B. The stories of Scripture display the goodness of God through His works.
- C. Our young people need a proper God-view in order to have a proper worldview.

**4. God's goodness motivates our obedience (Ps. 78:8 & Exo. 33)**

- A. When we focus on the goodness of God, we obey out of delight instead of duty.
- B. The concept of “delighting in the law of the Lord” is found throughout Psalms:
  - Ps. 1:2
  - Ps. 119:77
  - Ps. 119:92
  - Ps. 119:174
- C. The more we obey God, the more we experience His goodness.

*“Obedience is the happy rest of our submissive souls to ways that we trust lead to the best ends.”*

## 5. God's goodness connects the presence of God to everyday life. (Exo. 33:14–16)

A. The pursuit of God's presence is a central theme of Scripture.



B. In Exodus 33, Moses recognized the grace and blessing brought by God's presence.

C. God will never leave or forsake us. Recognizing His goodness connects His presence to everyday life.

D. The more we experience God's goodness, the more we experience His presence.

Seeing God's goodness lets us understand His ways, see His glory, and experience His presence. Why is it so important to teach God's goodness? Because it's foundational to our understanding of God's glory, ways, and presence.



# What Does the Goodness of God Look Like?

## Session 2 Notes

Just as a builder gathers the correct materials to start building a house, we need tools to teach what the goodness of God looks like. We know that teaching God's goodness has a specific purpose. Now we need to answer the "how" question. How do we teach young people the goodness of God? What does His goodness look like?

### 1. God's goodness looks like His mercy (Exo. 33:19; 34:6-7)

A. God's mercy is more than just withholding punishment when we deserve it.

B. God's mercy involves three parts:

- Mercy is an expression of God's goodness.
- He gives His mercy to the helpless.

C. He grants mercy out of His kindness.

*"Mercy is an expression of God's goodness toward those who are incredibly needy because He is kind."*

D. We see an example of God's mercy to Israel when they were slaves in Egypt.

- Not only did He show mercy to them in the present, but He was planning future acts of mercy—such as raising up Moses to lead them.

## Notes

E. God's mercy is connected to His patience and longsuffering.

- Israel is described as "a stiff-necked people."
- God truly suffered long with Israel's repeated failure and sin.

### **2. God's goodness looks like grace (Exo. 34:6)**

A. The definition of grace is deep and complex, but it involves two aspects:

- It comes only from the goodness of God.
- It is undeserved.

B. The difference between grace and mercy:

- Mercy is God's goodness to the needy.
- Grace is God's goodness to the guilty.

C. Examples of both in God's dealings with Israel

### **3. God's goodness looks like faithfulness (Exo. 34:6-7)**

A. More than just goodness, faithfulness is a loyal, unfailing love that works to express kindness to the one who is loved, because of a promise made to them. Often described as lovingkindness.

B. Faithfulness comes from the loyalty part of the definition.

C. God is saying He will always be loving and kind to His people.

D. God is faithful to love, and He is faithful to His promise.

- He expressed love to Israel.
- His is faithful to His promise to Abraham.
- God is dependable.

#### **4. God's goodness looks like righteousness (Exo. 34:7)**

A. God's love and mercy does not mean He will contradict His righteousness and justice.

B. God shows goodness to the sufferers by judging the guilty.

#### **5. Seeing God in His goodness (Exo. 33:19; 34:6)**

A. God is not merely good because His works are good; His works display the goodness of His character.

B. The joy we derive from God's works should always lead to joy in God's character. We delight in the Giver, not just in the gift.

C. When God declared His goodness to Moses, He used His name, demonstrating that goodness begins with Him, and ends with Him.

**Two basic truths to remember:**

A. Everything that we think is good falls short compared to God's goodness.

- The best things we enjoy reflect only a small part of God's goodness to us.
- Our highest, most enjoyable experiences are tainted by sin.

B. Only God is infinitely good.

- Nothing is better than God.
- When we diminish God's goodness, we diminish His glory. We must fight the temptation to think this way by remembering God's works.
- When we believe that God is not the greatest good, our lives become purposeless and the sacred becomes trivial.

**Conclusion**

A. Don't try to derive joy and satisfaction from God's gifts.

B. But enjoy God's gifts, as He intended, and let that enjoyment point you to God Himself.

# How Do I Help People Apply God's Goodness?

## Session 3

We've discussed the importance of teaching God's goodness, and what it looks like. Now we'll focus on the practical "how" of helping people to apply the goodness of God.

### **1. Help people understand God's goodness.**

How does the gospel reflect God's goodness and other attributes?

How does studying the Bible help us understand God's goodness?

What other biblical resources help us teach the goodness of God to others?

Ponder: How do our unique situations influence us as we teach God's goodness?

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### **2. Help people identify God's goodness in their own lives.**

How can we help others see God's goodness at work in their own lives?

How will our strategies change depending on our ministry context?

What role does discipleship play to help others identify God's goodness?

What role does fellowship play to help others identify God's goodness?

Ponder: What are some strategies to help others identify God's goodness both in church ministry and through personal discipleship?

### **3. Help people remember God's goodness.**

*Notes*

How can we actively help people remember God's goodness?

How should we think about testing or trials in the light of remembering God's goodness?

Ponder: What are some useful strategies for remembering?

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### **4. Help people reflect on God's goodness.**

Ponder: How should our understanding of God's goodness:

Change how we read the Bible?

Change how we pray?

Change our interaction with believers?

Change how we view sanctification?

Change how we parent?

Change how we minister?

Change how we worship?