



## Behold The Goodness And Severity Of God



**Speaking of God, Job declared, “He is not a man as I am”** (Job 9:32). He is absolutely right! Whatever God is, He is that to perfection!

- ◆ “God is love: (1 Jn. 4:8) God is love -- perfected. He is love, perfectly.
- ◆ He is El-Shaddai, that is, Almighty God. He possesses all power (Gen. 17:1)
- ◆ He is Lord of heaven and earth, He has sovereign Lordship over everything. (Acts 17:24)
- ◆ He has absolute knowledge of everything (Psa. 147:4-5). “And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account” (Heb. 4:13).
- ◆ He is holy (1 Pet. 1:15-16).

**When God created the heavens and earth he did it not of necessity but because He chose to.** He chose to make man with that capability to chose right or wrong, obedience or disobedience, for the purpose of man being able to chose whether or not to love and worship Him. The Bible teaches us that the natural branch (the Jews) who rebelled in unbelief are cut off from God (Rom. 11:17-18). In their place the gentiles who have faith are grafted into God’s kingdom, **and they should not be arrogant about it, but instead fear, because if they sin as the Jews sinned they** may be cut off as the Jews were cut off (Rom. 11:19-21). The text goes on to declare, “**Therefore consider (behold) the goodness and severity** of God ...” (Rom. 11:22). God’s goodness cannot be overstated and His severity cannot be overstated. “God is to be greatly feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be held in reverence by all those around Him” (Psa. 89:7)

**This modern concept that God and Christ are our “Buddies”, or that God is a “big cuddly Daddy” cannot be found in the Bible.** This con-

cept is robbing God of His due respect for He is **NOT** a man! Casualness in worship is now one of the American idols. God will be our friend but not be a casual friend. **Christians will not find God’s approval worshiping at the alter of casualness, indifference, or weariness!** Malachi 1:6 declares the Jews who had received God’s bountiful blessings treated God disrespectfully, casually, and disdainfully. How? Verses 7 and 8 declare their heart was not in their offerings of worship (their attitude was one of, “I don’t like doing this!”) **So, they didn’t offer the very best of themselves in their sacrifices! Today the Christian is to offer their life, their body, as a living sacrifice** unto God. “I beseech you brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service” (Rom 12:1).

**Those Jews didn’t want to give the best of themselves nor or the sacrifices required by them; and they didn’t! What if the Christian doesn’t want to give the best of them self nor give the best of the sacrifice of service** commanded by God? **The Jews gave their blind** in animal sacrifice (Vs. 8) . The Christian may give their **blind** sacrificial service by going through motions of worship without their heart being in it. The Jews gave lame animals in sacrifice. The Christian may give **lame sacrificial service** of worship by being unprepared and unavailable for the Lord’s work before them. The Jews gave the **sick** of their animals in sacrifice, instead of the well. The Christian may give sick sacrificial service of worship by not growing in the word, nor growing spiritually. Therefore, they languish month after month and year after year in sin and ignorance, being habitually absent from the assemblies and work of the church; literally refusing to feed on God’s word that they may grow

thereby (1 Tim. 3:15; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). Jesus declared those who understand what is acceptable worship of God and respond accordingly will receive more from God. But those who understand but and respond accordingly, -, even what they have will be taken away (Mk. 4:23-25).

**Few if any employers or governors would accept the kind of service that many of the Jews (spoken about in the Book of Malachi) offered unto God back then, or that Christians sometimes can be found offering unto God today.**

There are Christians who “shop till they drop” after a hard day of work, or watch TV late into the night, but do not assemble with God’s people to hear and study God’s word for an hour on a Sunday evening or Wednesday night. Why? **The reason is really simple, isn’t it?**

Malachi 1:9-10 teaches us God will not find pleasure in, nor accept one’s service, unless one’s heart (attitude) is right, for anything else is vain worship. In Revelation chapters 2 and 3 Jesus warned the seven churches that He would remove any Christian or congregation that continued in offering vain worship. Malachi 1:12-13 declares the Jews had grown weary of offering sacrifices of worship. It was the same thing month after month, year after year. An attitude of weariness leads to dissatisfac-

tion, even contempt and disdain. **How many Christians grow weary of Sundays, or Wednesday nights, or Saturday fellowships! or work parties.** **How many become satisfied with presenting unto God less than the best of their lives in sacrificial service to Him?** “Should I accept this from your hand? Says the Lord” (Mal. 1:13). It’s a rhetorical question. The answer is, “No!” Let us not be found to be offering up blemished service to our God while holding back the unblemished for ourselves. “The soul that sins, it shall die” (Ezek. 18:20), speaking of God’s severity. “But if the wicked turn from all his sins that he has committed, and keeps all my statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die” (Ezek. 18:21), speaking of God’s goodness!

Today, the severity of God is not a popular topic, but it is a dangerous thing to sugar coat away the warnings in God’s word as to what happens to the Christian who becomes a Christian in name only, and not in heart and service unto the Lord.

Emerald Coast Messenger  
Cecil Belk, Evangelist  
Emerald Coast Church of Christ  
300 South Avenue  
Fort Walton Beach, FL 32547  
January 12, 2007

You may call us at 850-863-4300. Visit us on the web at [www.eccofc.org](http://www.eccofc.org) for other downloadable Bible studies and church bulletin articles. We encourage you to attend the church of Christ where the Bible is believed and taught, and the gospel of Christ is preached in love.

**This bulletin article may be reproduced in part or in full for church bulletins, other church publications, and as a Bible study resource when ever the following conditions are met: (1) When both “The Emerald Coast Messenger” and the author of this article are credited as the originating source on the reproduced or printed material. (2) No fees, or collections may be charged, received, or collected in distribution or use of this article. (s). Dissemination of this article in any form must be as a gift.**