

Sixth Sunday in Kingdombtide (Worldwide Communion/CYAF Sunday)

**Goodness as a Kingdom Value**

*Old Testament: Psalm 23:6, 31:19* (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup>Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.

<sup>19</sup>O how abundant is your goodness that you have laid up for those who fear you, and accomplished for those who take refuge in you, in the sight of everyone!

*New Testament: Romans 12:2* (NRSV)

<sup>2</sup>Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God-what is good and acceptable and perfect.

*General Concept: Goodness is found in the church that chooses right from wrong, truth from falsehood, and justice from injustice.*

*N/K/YE: The church loves to do good for others.*

*ME/OE: The church shows goodness by knowing what is right, true and just.*

*Y: The church demonstrates goodness by choosing what is right, true and fair.*

*A: The church manifests goodness by denouncing what is wrong, false, and unjust.*

*Exegesis of the Biblical References*

We have learned that The Book of Psalms is attributed to David. As a collection, it contains a variety of emotions from a settled conviction and orientation in life and faith to one of disorientation due to painful contradictions in reality. There are efforts towards a faith reorientation of a people expressed mostly in the context of worship.

This particular verse (Psalm 23:6) belongs to the whole poem that most of us love to memorize: an utterance of a profound trust in the Lord as the good Shepherd-King. It is actually a concluding statement that summarizes the whole of the poem. Here, two important words are uttered: goodness and love. Both words refer to the covenant benefits that are personified here. Clearly, David here was expressing that the goodness and love of the Shepherd-King will follow him, or will pursue him not with hostile intent but will attend always to him. Thus, he shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever not as a priest but as God's welcome guest in Yahweh's holy, royal house, the temple.

This passage in Psalm 31:19 is part and parcel of David's prayer of deliverance when confronted with conspiracy so powerful and open that all of David's friends abandoned him. This particular verse then is an expression of a confident anticipation of God's saving help that will restore goodness and hope in him.

Paul's primary theme in Romans is the basic gospel, God's plan of salvation and righteousness for all humankind, Jews and Gentiles alike. Paul firmly believes that restoration and reconciliation of this world is achievable when Christians will open their door to the real gospel so that they become immovable and unashamed bearers of that gospel proclaiming and not condemning others who have become sensitive and have opened their doors to the righteousness of God. The gospel proclaimed by Paul is not just about personal and individual gain and salvation but rather a kind of transformation that would bring all of the cosmos to a reality that God hoped it would really be. Even in the midst of so much persecution and in the midst of a great majority of Gentile audience who could easily

mock and make fun of his message, Paul strongly holds on to his conviction to stand firm and not be ashamed of the gospel he is proclaiming for all people to hear and eventually manifest. The gospel proclaimed is not only for a few but for all people who have faith.

Romans 12:2 is a call for all believers that we should not be conformed to the patterns of this world. This world, with all its evil and corruption has indeed been characterized by and imbued with wickedness, therefore we should all be transformed. Here, Paul was not only talking about one single event but a process: first the mind, the thought and will as they relate to morality for we know that intent precedes the act. Then, after the person's transformation just described has taken place, the believer can now carry out what God wants the believer to do here and now... things that are good, pleasing to God and perfect.

These verses in the Old Testament and the New Testament are manifestations of the church's role in the realization of God's kingdom. Having been saved we were given the responsibility and the accountability to make known that salvation is for all the people who need it. Those who are still in search for what is right from what is wrong must be given the gift and the will to discern that God chooses God's people as bearers of God's goodness. Goodness here, is not a mere passivity but a wisdom discernment of what is right and wrong, what is true and false and of what is just and unjust. For the God of justice will not allow for all who remain in faith to just perish and succumb to the easy way out- to compromise one's faith principles, values and basic convictions. Goodness then is marked by a believer's will power to bring out God's goodness by leading the way to real salvation for all not just of the self but of the whole cosmos.

#### *Companion Guide for the Teachers and other End-users*

Jesus is often addressed as good teacher, to which he would respond that "no one is good but God alone" (Mark 10:17). This implies that when God's reign comes to prevail, citizens of the kingdom will be exhibiting God's goodness. In the meantime, God's goodness is the absolute and unchanging norm of what is good in any ethical situation.

The church exists to show God's standard of goodness in the kingdom but under the conditions of a fallen world. In such a state, good is real but only in the relative sense, that is, in relation to certain realities that are manifestly evil. Thus, injustice is the lack of justice which is good; falsehood is the opposite of truth which is good; wrong is a deviation from what is right which is good. The Spirit of truth is there to teach the church to separate one from the other.

It makes good sense for the church not to burden itself with making definitions of the ideal good. Rather, it is called to make a judgment on actual, concrete, historical things and then establish by inference what is justice, truth and righteousness. In this way, the church will be spared from making universal statements that have no bearing at all to the concrete realities of the time.

This is evident in the biblical understanding of justice, truth and uprightness. When the prophets spoke of justice they made specific reference to farmers who were robbed of their ancestral land, of merchants who cheated with their weighing scales, or of farmer-debtors whose working tools were confiscated as pledge. Jesus' Nazareth Manifesto was addressed to the real poor of his time, to the captives of war, the infirmed and those who lived in ignorance. That's the reason why they won the hatred and fear of people who prospered at the expense of others.

The church today has only to follow the lead of Jesus and the prophets in order to identify what is good so as to escape being mired in endless debates and procrastination.

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## Nursery/Kindergarten/Younger Elementary Levels

### I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. define goodness by doing what is right with God as their life's center;
2. support the fact that being good to others pleases God;
3. demonstrate acts of goodness at home, in school, and in the church.

### II. Concept: The church loves to do good for others.

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (preferably NRSV), worksheets, song sheets, materials and pictures in the lesson

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time: Arrange the chairs in a circle. As the children arrive, let them sit there.
2. Opening prayer: "Eternal God, we give you thanks for this day. We thank you for bringing us together to once again learn more about Jesus. Amen."
3. Opening song: "God is so Good"  
God is so good, God is so good.  
God is so good, God's so good to me.

#### B. Getting Ready

1. Ask the class if they have seen identical twins. Assist the class to talk about how these twins are similar in looks, in height, and weight. But emphasize that they have also differences. Tell the class that the value of kindness last Sunday has also a twin value.
2. Have the children recall how the Samaritan showed his kindness to a person who was robbed. Explain to the class that this Samaritan is often called Good Samaritan because he was both kind and good. He was kind when he helped someone in need. He was also good because he did what is right in the eyes of God. Kindness and goodness are sometimes called the twin values.

#### C. Learning Time

1. Say: "In today's lesson, find out how Jesus showed the Kingdom values especially kindness and goodness."
2. Present different pictures showing the things Jesus did: Jesus healing the sick; Jesus making a blind man see; Jesus telling people about the Good News of salvation; Jesus feeding many people; Jesus healing a demon-possessed man; Jesus letting children come to him; Jesus calling Zacchaeus from the tree; Jesus calling his believers as his sheep and protecting them; etc. (If the church has illustrated Bibles, the teacher can show this to the class. If there no illustrated Bibles, the teacher can download some pictures from the Internet.)

#### D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time

1. When Jesus healed the blind, the sick, and the demon-possessed, what kind of a healer was Jesus? (Jesus was a kind and good healer.)
2. When Jesus fed many people, what kind of a person was Jesus? (Jesus was a kind and good provider.)
3. When Jesus called Zacchaeus from the tree, what kind of a person was Jesus? (Jesus was a kind and good Savior.)

4. When Jesus protects us as his own sheep, what kind of a shepherd was Jesus? (Jesus is a kind and good shepherd.)
5. When Jesus told the people about the news of salvation, what kind of a person was Jesus? (Jesus was a kind and good teacher.)
6. How can we describe Jesus when Jesus called the children to come to him? (Jesus is kind, loving and good.) Ask the class to sing the following:  
Jesus loves the little children, All the children of the world.  
Red, brown, yellow, black, and white, All are precious in His sight,  
Jesus loves the little children of the world.
7. Is it right to say: "Jesus went about doing good." Why or why not? Can we tell ourselves "I went about doing good."?
8. David calls God as the Good Shepherd. What promise is given to him as long as he trusts God and remain as God's sheep? (Read Psalm 23:6) What does God promise to us if we remain faithful to God? (Goodness and mercy. Kindness is sometimes called mercy.)

*E. Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Ask: Why does the church teach young children how to do good to others? (The church teaches young children to do what is right because that is showing goodness.)

*F. Applying the Biblical Truth*

1. Teach the memory verse "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long." (Psalm 23:6)
2. **For N/K:** Prepare an outline of pictures that show any of the following: a child helping a crippled classmate carry some of his or her things; a child helping the Sunday School teacher prepare the classroom; a child helping a classmate read the story. Below the drawing, write the sentence God wants me to be good. Tell the class to decorate the picture and copy the sentence below the picture on their notebooks.
4. **For YE: Dramatization:** Divide the class into three groups. Tell them to dramatize a situation where they can show goodness in different places. Assign the first group, to dramatize a situation in the home, the second group, a situation in the playground, and the third group, a situation in church. After they have presented their dramatization, tell the first group to complete the sentence: I can be good at home when I \_\_\_\_\_, the second group, I can be good in the playground when I \_\_\_\_\_, the third group, I can be good in church when I \_\_\_\_\_.

*G. Closing Worship*

1. Tell the class to recite the memory verse.
2. Offering
3. Closing song: "Jesus Went about Doing Good" (Tune: Kum Ba Yah, *Children Praise God*, 30)  
Jesus went about doing good, Jesus went about doing good  
He told everyone God is love, God cares for you.  
Jesus went about doing good, Jesus went about doing good  
He makes people well and He said, "God cares for you."  
Jesus went about doing good, Jesus went about doing good.  
He held children close and He said, "God cares for you."
3. Closing prayer: "Dear God, we thank you for teaching us today how to be good. We ask you to help us always do the right thing. Remind us that in doing good to others, you will be pleased! This is our prayer in Jesus' name. Amen."

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## Middle and Older Elementary Levels

### I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. define goodness by doing what is right and being true and just to others;
2. support the fact that being good to others pleases God; and
3. demonstrate acts of goodness at all times.

### II. Concept: The church shows goodness by knowing what is right, true, and just.

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (preferably NRSV), pieces of cartolina, coloring materials, copy of the prayer and song

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time: Greet each other warmly as the children arrive.
2. Opening prayer: "Dear God, you are our Via, Veritas, Vita - the Way, Truth and the Life. We want to follow you so that in everything we do, you will be pleased by our good deeds. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."
3. Opening song: "God is so Good"  
God is so good, God is so good.  
God is so good, God's so good to me.  
God answers pray'r, God answers pray'r.  
God answers pray'r, God's so good to me.

#### B. Getting Ready

1. Ask the class if they have seen identical twins. Assist the class to talk about how these twins are similar in looks, in height, and weight. But emphasize that they have also differences. Tell the class that the value of kindness last Sunday has also a twin value.
2. Have the children recall how the Samaritan showed his kindness to a person who was robbed. Explain to the class that this Samaritan is often called Good Samaritan because he was both kind and good. He was kind when he helped someone in need. He was also good because he did what is right in the eyes of God. Kindness and goodness are sometimes called the twin value or the twin fruit.

#### C. Learning Time

1. Present the following verses and discuss with the class the definitions of the underlined words as they are used in the verses.
  - a. Psalm 23:6: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.
    - 1) Goodness and mercy (kindness) are the twin promises of God for us for all our tomorrows when we remain in God as we follow God's will in our lives.
    - 2) God will also provide God's presence through the Holy Spirit.
  - b. Psalm 31:19: O how abundant is your goodness that you have laid up for those who fear you, and accomplished for those who take refuge in you, in the sight of everyone!
    - 1) God's goodness is abundant for all people who fear God (does what is right in the eyes of God).

- 2) God's goodness is abundant for all people who take refuge (trust) in God.
- c. Romans 12:2: Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God-what is good and acceptable and perfect.
  - 1) Conformed means not letting the world shape, or mold you or pressure you not to follow God's will.
  - 2) Transformed means to become a changed person or Christ-like through the intervention of the Holy Spirit.
  - 3) Doing what God wills for us is good, acceptable, and perfect in the eyes of God.

*D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time*

1. God is called the Good Shepherd (John 10) and Good Teacher (Mark 10:17/Luke 18:19). Why do you think Jesus is called good? (Jesus is goodness and mercy because of his love and righteousness.)
2. Why do you think David said that God will be good and merciful to him all the days of his life? (David followed God and he did God's will.)
3. Why is the love of God abundant to the people who fear and take refuge in God? (Fearing God means doing God's will and taking refuge in God is trusting God with everything.)
4. Why does Paul warn us not to conform to this world? (Paul wants us to conform to the ways of Christ instead of the ways of the world so that we will live well.)
5. Does God promise us to fulfill all of our longings? Why or why not? (God does not promise to fulfill all of our longings. What God promises is God's presence to accompany us in our life.)
6. God's presence is a gift for us from God. Read the following prayer and comment on God's presence in our lives.

The Prayer of St. Patrick, An Irish Prayer

(Anonymous)

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,  
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,  
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,  
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,  
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,  
Christ in the mouth of every man who speaks of me,  
Christ in the eye that sees me,  
Christ in the ear that hears me.

*E. Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Ask: How does the church teach us to do what is right, true and just?

*F. Applying the Biblical Truth*

1. **For ME:** Comic Strip/Drawing. Divide the class into groups. Provide each group the needed materials. Let each group create a situation or a scenario in different places where they can apply the value of being good.  
Group 1: Doing good at home  
Group 2: Doing good in school  
Group 3: Doing good in church

2. **For OE:** Slogan making. Divide the class into small groups. Let each group make a slogan with the theme: "We do good because it is right, true and just." Provide each group with cartolina and coloring materials. Encourage them to explain their work in class. Give each group a copy of the following song as their guide or reference.

"Jesus Went About Doing Good"

Jesus went about doing good, Jesus went about doing good

He told everyone God is love, God cares for you.

Jesus went about doing good, Jesus went about doing good

He makes people well and He said, "God cares for you."

Jesus went about doing good, Jesus went about doing good.

He held children close and He said, "God cares for you."

G. *Closing Worship*

1. Memory Verse: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long." (Psalm 23:6)
2. Offering
3. Closing song: "Jesus Went About Doing Good"
4. Closing prayer: "Merciful God, we thank you for making us your children. Thank you for teaching us how to be good children. Help us to always do what is right, true and just by doing what is good for others. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

## Youth Level

### I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. recall church activities that promote goodness by doing what is right and being true and just to others;
2. compare injustice with justice, falsehood with good, and wrong with right; and
3. list ways by which one can participate in the church ministries that promote goodness.

### II. Concept: The church demonstrates goodness by choosing what is right, true and fair.

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (preferably NRSV), worksheets, resolution form

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time: Smile and greet the children as they come. Check the attendance.
2. Opening prayer: Compassionate God, we are indeed thankful for always reminding us of your goodness so that we can overcome temptations each day in our lives. This is our prayer in Christ's name. Amen.
3. Opening song: "Oh Give Thanks unto The Lord"  
Oh give thanks unto the Lord, Oh give thanks unto the Lord  
Oh give thanks unto the Lord for He is good.

#### B. Getting Ready

1. Prepare index cards and write different characters in the Bible (David, Deborah, Paul, Miriam, Esther, Micah). Divide the class into six groups. Give each group a card and instruct them to read the character and describe him or her using one or two adjectives. Encourage them to refer to the Bible for a more accurate description of each character.
2. After the activity, ask the following questions:
  - a. Which character is hardest to describe?
  - b. Which character is easiest to describe?
  - c. Which character can you relate with and why?

#### C. Learning Time

1. Ask the class to study the operational meaning of the following words and phrases used in the biblical references:
  - a. *Kindness or mercy*. Being kind or merciful means having the willingness to do that which is right or good. Being kind is being compassionate towards those who needs help and those who seek it.
  - b. *Goodness*. Being good means (1) upholding the truth and righteousness (Ephesians 5:9, 2 Timothy 4:2); (2) teaching by admonishing, warning, or exhorting (Romans 15:14); producing good works for the benefits of others (Ephesians 2:10); glorifying God in our lives by serving others (2 Thessalonians 1:11); and opposite of evil (3 John 1:11).
  - c. *Kindness and goodness as twin fruit*. A kind person is a good person; a good person is by nature a kind person. Kindness is compassionate love and goodness is ministering love.



- d.. *Fear* of God means doing the will of God. *Taking refuge* is trusting God for everything.
  - e. *Conform*. Paul warns the people of God not to follow the ways of the world but the ways of God.
  - f. *Transformed*: To transform is to change ways into something different. Through the Holy Spirit, we are changed to be more Christ-like. To be transformed is to be renewed in heart and mind.
- 2. Form three groups. Assign each group with one of the biblical references.
    - a. Group 1. *Psalms 23:6*: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.
    - b. Group 2. *Psalms 31:19*: O how abundant is your goodness that you have laid up for those who fear you, and accomplished for those who take refuge in you, in the sight of everyone!
    - c. Group 3. *Romans 12:2*: Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

#### D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time

- 1. King David affirms the goodness of God who promised to give him goodness and mercy all his life. What do you think God wants us to learn from God to receive this promise? (To trust that God will always be with us through good times and tough times, just as the whole of Psalm 23 says.) If we follow God, can we also sing of God's goodness and mercy all our life? (When we do God's will, we will know and experience God's goodness and mercy, not only towards us, but towards others who need God's goodness and mercy the most.)
- 2. King David sings of the abundant love for those who fear God and take refuge in God. How may we reciprocate God's abundant love? (One way by which we could respond to God's goodness and love is by ensuring that others experience God's goodness and love in their lives too. We should be channels of God's goodness and love.)
- 3. Paul's stern warning for us not to conform to the world but be transformed in mind. Why is this transformation significant? (When a follower of Christ starts becoming more like Christ (transformed), he or she discovers that God's will is the very best for his or her life which is pleasing to God (1 Corinthians 2:9 and Isaiah 64:4). What does it mean to do God's will? What is the difference between injustice and justice, falsehood and good, wrong and right?)
- 4. Reflect on this paragraph from the biblical exegesis: "These verses in the Old Testament and the New Testament are manifestations of the church's role in the realization of God's kingdom. Having been saved, we were given the responsibility and the accountability to make known that salvation is for all the people who need it. Those who are still in search for what is right from what is wrong must be given the gift and the will to discern that God chooses God's people as bearers of God's goodness. Goodness here, is not a mere passivity but a wisdom discernment of what is right and wrong, what is true and false and of what is just and unjust. For the God of justice will not allow for all who remain in faith to just perish and succumb to the easy way out, to compromise one's faith principles, values and basic

- convictions. Goodness then is marked by a believer's willpower to bring out God's goodness by leading the way to real salvation for all not just of the self but of the whole cosmos." As a transformed youth, how can we make a difference in this world and make an impact to those around us? (Be good by speaking the truth, doing what is right and just, and glorifying God by serving others for their benefit.)
6. What is the biblical understanding of justice, truth and uprightness? (Read the Companion Guide for the Teachers and other End-users.)
7. God promised presence in our lives. Read and analyze the following prayer and find out if truly Christ is with us always.  
The Prayer of St. Patrick, An Irish Prayer  
(Anonymous)  
Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,  
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,  
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,  
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,  
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,  
Christ in the mouth of every man who speaks of me,  
Christ in the eye that sees me,  
Christ in the ear that hears me.
8. Sing this song. Choose a song leader.  
Song: Psalm 23 (Surely Goodness, Surely Mercy) Artist: Shane and Shane  
Key: B Time: 4/4 Capo 4

Intro:

C G C D G

Verse 1:

C D G C D G  
The Lord is my Shepherd I shall not want. In green pastures He makes me lie down  
C D G D/F# Em C D  
He restores my soul and leads me on for His Name, For His great Name

Chorus:

C G C G  
Surely goodness, surely mercy Right beside me all my days  
C G C D G  
And I will dwell in Your house forever And bless Your Holy Name

Verse 2:

C D G C D G  
You prepare a table right before me In the presence of my enemies  
C D G D/F# Em C D  
Though the arrow flies and the terror of night is at my door 'll trust you Lord

Chorus:

Bridge: (x2)

C G  
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil

C

G

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death You are on my side

Chorus:

Outro:

C G C D G

*E. Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Ask: What programs does the church offer to help the youth to be good?

*F. Applying the Biblical Truth*

Based on the discussion about being good, tell the class to make their resolutions to produce good works.

*G. Closing Worship*

1. Memory Verse: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect." (Romans 12:2)
2. Offering: Ask the class to offer their resolutions during the offertory prayer.
3. Closing song: "Surely Goodness, Surely Mercy"
4. Closing prayer: "Dear God, help us to discern what your will is so that we may follow you and do what is good, acceptable and perfect. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

## Adult Level

### I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. recall how Jesus promoted goodness by doing what is right and being true and just to others;
2. tell how the church can use Jesus' example in choosing good from wrong, justice from injustice, and truth from falsehood; and
3. participate in church activities that denounce wrong, unjust, and false actions, thereby pleasing God.

### II. Concept: The church manifests goodness by denouncing what is wrong, false, and unjust.

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (preferably NRSV), song sheet, worksheets

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time: Smile and greet each one as they come. Check the attendance.
2. Opening prayer: Compassionate God, we are indeed thankful for always reminding us of your goodness so that we can overcome temptations each day in our lives. This is our prayer in Christ's name. Amen.
3. Opening song: "Oh Give Thanks unto The Lord"  
Oh give thanks unto the Lord, Oh give thanks unto the Lord  
Oh give thanks unto the Lord for He is good.

#### B. Getting Ready

1. Prepare index cards and write different characters in the Bible (David, Deborah, Paul, Miriam, Esther, Micah). Divide the class into six groups. Give each group a card and instruct them to read the character and describe him or her using one or two adjectives. Encourage them to refer to the Bible for a more accurate description of each character.
2. After the activity, ask the following questions:
  - a. Which character is hardest to describe?
  - b. Which character is easiest to describe?
  - c. Which character can you relate with and why?
3. Write Jesus on the board and let the whole class describe Jesus. Tell the class to relate their descriptions with what Jesus did.

#### C. Learning Time

1. Ask the class to study the operational meaning of the following words and phrases used in the biblical references:
  - a. *Kindness or mercy*. Being kind or merciful means having the willingness to do that which is right or good. Being kind is being compassionate towards those who needs help and those who seek it.
  - b. *Goodness*. Being good means (1) upholding the truth and righteousness (Ephesians 5:9, 2 Timothy 4:2); (2) teaching by admonishing, warning, or exhorting (Romans 15:14); producing good works for the benefits of others (Ephesians 2:10); glorifying God in our lives by serving others (2 Thessalonians 1:11); and opposite of evil (3 John 1:11).

- c. *Kindness and goodness as twin fruit.* A kind person is a good person; a good person is by nature a kind person. Kindness is compassionate love and goodness is ministering love.
  - d.. *Fear of God* means doing the will of God. *Taking refuge* is trusting God for everything.
  - e. *Conform.* Paul warns the people of God not to follow the ways of the world but the ways of God.
  - f. *Transformed:* To transform is to change ways into something different. Through the Holy Spirit, we are changed to be more Christ-like. To be transformed is to be renewed in heart and mind.
2. Form three groups. Assign each group with one of the biblical references.
    - a. Group 1. *Psalms 23:6:* Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.
    - b. Group 2. *Psalms 31:19:* O how abundant is your goodness that you have laid up for those who fear you, and accomplished for those who take refuge in you, in the sight of everyone!
    - c. Group 3. *Romans 12:2:* Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

#### D. Deepening Activity/ Sharing Time

1. King David affirms the goodness of God who promised to give him goodness and mercy all his life. What do you think God wants us to learn from God to receive this promise? (To trust that God will always be with us through good times and tough times, just as the whole of Psalm 23 says.) If we follow God, can we also sing of God's goodness and mercy all our life? (When we do God's will, we will know and experience God's goodness and mercy, not only towards us, but towards others who need God's goodness and mercy the most.)
2. King David sings of the abundant love for those who fear God and take refuge in God. How may we reciprocate God's abundant love? (One way by which we could respond to God's goodness and love is by ensuring that others experience God's goodness and love in their lives too. We should be channels of God's goodness and love.)
3. Paul's stern warning for us not to conform to the world but be transformed in mind. Why is this transformation significant? (When a follower of Christ starts becoming more like Christ (transformed), he or she discovers that God's will is the very best for his or her life which is pleasing to God (1 Corinthians 2:9 and Isaiah 64:4).
4. As a transformed adult, how can we make a difference in this world and make an impact to those around us? (Be good by speaking the truth, doing what is right and just, and glorifying God by serving others for their benefits.) Recall how Jesus promoted goodness by doing what is right and being true and just to others. How can the church follow Jesus' example in choosing good from wrong, justice from injustice, and truth from falsehood.
5. Reflect on this paragraph from the biblical exegesis: "These verses in the Old Testament and the New Testament are manifestations of the church's role in the realization of God's kingdom. Having been saved, we were given the responsibility

and the accountability to make known that salvation is for all the people who need it. Those who are still in search for what is right from what is wrong must be given the gift and the will to discern that God chooses God's people as bearers of God's goodness. Goodness here, is not a mere passivity but a wisdom discernment of what is right and wrong, what is true and false and of what is just and unjust. For the God of justice will not allow for all who remain in faith to just perish and succumb to the easy way out, to compromise one's faith principles, values and basic convictions. Goodness then is marked by a believer's willpower to bring out God's goodness by leading the way to real salvation for all not just of the self but of the whole cosmos."

6. What is the biblical understanding of justice, truth and uprightness? (Read the Companion Guide for the Teachers and other End-users.)

*E. Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Ask: How can the church denounce wrong, false and unjust acts to promote goodness to prepare God's people for the Kingdom?

*F. Applying the Biblical Truth*

Let the class identify activities of the church that promote goodness. After they finish the list, have them commit to serve in love by getting involved in the area that they believe God has gifted them with. Encourage the class to be inspired by this: "The life of goodness is a life with God at the center. It's a lifestyle which recognizes that God has placed within each of us the potential of goodness which can be lived every day."

*G. Closing Worship*

1. Memory Verse: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God-what is good and acceptable and perfect." (Romans 12:2)
2. Offering: Ask the class to offer their commitments during the offertory prayer.
3. Closing song: "A Little Prayer"  
Words: John Josey Music: Pam Beall

Lord, Jesus, help me day by day to grow like You in ev'ry way  
So good, so kind, so gentle, too, That all may know I follow you.

4. Closing prayer: "Dear God, help us to discern what your will is so that we may follow you and do what is good, acceptable and perfect. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

