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## Chapter X

### GOD IS GOOD

Comrades and Friends, -- I have been thinking about the goodness of God. The Psalmist was right when he said, 'Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.'

The very word rendered 'God' in our language means 'good'.

1. God is not only good, but He is 'The Good.' Not only is He good Himself, but He is the Author of all good. 'Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above.' He is the Source of all blessedness. Bless His holy name! He is the Stream of lovingkindness that never runs dry. He is the Fountain of Mercy that never fails.

2. The world in which we live was good when it came from His holy hand. Its mountains and valleys, oceans and rivers, trees and flowers, beasts and birds, and every living thing, including our first parents, Adam and Eve, were good, when first He called them into existence.

Surely, God knows a good thing when He sees it and we read in the Bible that when He looked down on the beautiful world He had created, He pronounced it 'very good.'

3. But God, in the overflowing benevolence of His Heart, arranged for the bad work of Satan to be counteracted and overcome. To effect this desirable end He sent His Son Jesus Christ to live and suffer, in order that man, who had so cruelly rebelled against Him, might be pardoned, and that the law he had broken and disgraced might be honored. By this plan the way was opened for the race to find again the goodness it had lost. Every true Salvationist has been made good through that precious gift.

4. May I ask whether you, my friends, who are here today, have found this treasure?

Do you possess a good heart? Are you leading a good life? Are you doing good work? Are you trying to make people good?



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Is this your aim with your husband or wife, your father and mother, your sons and daughters, your brothers and sisters, your friends and workmates? Are you trying to make them good?

Are you seeking this object by teaching them the true idea of goodness; and, above all, are you setting them an example of goodness yourselves? Are you, by your prayers, pulling down from Heaven the spirit of goodness upon them? Are you trying to make your homes the holy, happy, and useful places which God desires them to be; that is, are you making them good?

Are you trying to make the people around you good. Is this your aim in the Meetings, in the saloons and public-houses, with your neighbors and workmates?]

Are you trying to win back to purity, usefulness, and God some souls who have returned to their evil ways?

Oh, if God has made you good, you must delight in the godlike task of making other people good!

I cannot bring myself to believe that you have a good nature, a good religion, a good hope, unless this is your aim, your delight, your everyday practice. Does not the Apostle Paul tell us that if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His? And we all know that the spirit of Christ was the spirit of goodness, and that it was this spirit that brought Him from Heaven, not only to save a world of sinners from Hell, but to make them good; that is, useful and holy and fit for Heaven. The Bible tells us that 'without holiness' – that is, without true goodness – 'no man shall see the Lord.'

5. If you are not good, in temper and disposition, in conversation and employment; in fact, in everything connected with your heart and life, you must seek to be made good right away. Go to God. He, and he alone, can make you good. You must know how to go to Him. If you do not, I will tell you. Kneel down, here and now, in submission before Him, and—

- a. Tell him that you give up everything in your heart and life which you have reason to believe is bad and wrong and opposed to His glory and the wellbeing of those around you; that you turn away from it for ever.



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- b. Tell Him that you will be a lover and friend of all and everything that is good; in yourselves, your homes, your Corps, your work, and your pleasures.
- c. Tell him that you now only believe that He can, but that, through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, He does, here and now, make you good. That it, that He forgives you sins, adopts you into His family, and enlists you as Soldiers of the Cross.
- d. Go right on, in the spirit of this surrender, wherever you may be, and whatever may happen, until, without a doubt, and without a fear, you realize in your inmost souls that God has made you good.

6. My comrades, it is a beautiful thing to be good – beautiful in the sight of God and beautiful in the sight of good people around you; but to have the consciousness of being good brings the fullest satisfaction to your own hearts.

I suppose it is a pleasant sensation to feel that you are rich. I do not know what that pleasure is so far as my own experience goes. Earthly riches were never my portion.

I suppose it is a pleasant thing to know that you are great and powerful in the sight of men. Of this I have had some little experience.

It must be a pleasant thing, I fancy, to realize that you are wise, and that you are considered such. It must be an unpleasant thing to be counted a fool, and more unpleasant still to know that you are one.

But, in my estimation, it is a far greater satisfaction to feel that you yourself, are really and truly good, and engaged in the work of making other people good; and that you are, by the blessing of God, doing the Christlike work with success.

In such a case you have, I think, sufficient reason to justify you in concluding that God loves and cares for you, for we all know that He loves good people.

And you can also count, I think, sufficient reason to justify you in concluding that God loves and cares for you, for we all know that He loves good people.



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And you can also count, I think, on Heaven being your final dwelling place; for the Celestial City has been prepared to be the everlasting home of the good.

So let us all resolve that whatever comes or whatever goes, we will be truly good.

Your affectionate General,  
William Booth.