

Sermon Title - God is Good

Scripture Text – Lamentations 3

For years there has been a saying around here that when spoken is always followed by a specific refrain. “*God is good...*” And “*all the time...*”

But what does that actually mean? **Is God really good all the time?**

- What about when life is not good... Is God still good?
- What about when others seem to receive good from God and we don't?
- **What about when “good for you” does not match what we call good?**
- What about when we receive from God is His justice and wrath?

Is God still good when what we experience is not? Does God's goodness waver, or change, based upon our perception of Him, &/or what we experience in life?

If God is transcendent, then He is above all & nothing catches Him off-guard!

If God is immanent, then He is involved in all & nothing is void of His presence!

If God is sovereign, then everything that happens is according to His plan!

If God is immutable, then what He ordains will happen no matter what!

If God is love, then everything that happens comes from a loving disposition!

If all these things are true, then why is life so hard... So disappointing... Why do bad things happen... Why does evil prevail... Why do we struggle w/ sin...

If God is so good, why doesn't He just fix everything that is broken, and fallen in this world, and make us happy, comfortable, and content?

A good, good father doesn't just take away the things in life that are hard... Or remove all our disappointments... Or just give us everything we want...

It's often in the bad things that happen, that good comes... Coming face to face with our sin can bring about repentance & restoration... Experiencing the effects of this broken/fallen world can redirect our focus to that which is beyond it... Recognizing what we don't have can point us to what is needed!

God's goodness is often revealed through the things that cause us the greatest pain! But it is faith, & faith alone, that gives us eyes to see it!

The O.T. prophet Jeremiah is a good example of this! Jeremiah experienced

the fall of Judah and the destruction of Jerusalem (including the Temple).

Jeremiah experienced firsthand the pain & suffering that can come into our lives, not by chance, but by design from our transcendent, immanent, sovereign, loving, immutable, and good God!

Lamentations 3:1-6 – Has anyone ever felt this way? God's people have been overthrown, their city destroyed, lives lost, survivors captured and taken away to Babylon! Most of us have not experienced such darkness!

But Jeremiah recognizes that this wasn't just misfortune, bad luck, or by chance.

Vs. 1 – “I am a man who has seen affliction under the rod of his wrath.”

This awful experience was the result of God pouring out His wrath upon His people, and using **Babylon as the instrument of His divine punishment!**

Lamentations 3:7-15 – There was no escaping God's wrath! It is a terrible thing to find yourself, a sinner, in the hands of an angry God!

Lamentations 3:16-18 - **When God removes His favor, all peace, happiness, endurance, and hope are lost!** For these things come from God, & when we lose sight of that, & fail to put God in His rightful place, He is not pleased!

- **God will oppose us**, when we are living a life dishonorable to Him, & cause our endurance in these earthly pursuits to fail... & that's a good thing!
- God will take away earthly happiness, so that we discover better things that make us Holy, & fit us for Heaven! This too is a good thing!
- God will cause our hope in earthly kings, & kingdoms, to come crashing down if that's what it takes for us **to set our eyes on His heavenly kingdom!**

But just like a good father who disciplines the son he loves, in order to see that son restored, so too does our good God seek our restoration as well!

This was Jeremiah's hope! He trusted that God would remember His promises... that God would keep His Word... & **that God would be true to Himself!**

Lamentations 3:19-32 – **“Though he causes grief, he will have compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love...”** Prov. 3:11-12, Heb. 12:11

God's goodness, like His other attributes, are all tied to each other! His goodness is never removed from His wrath, nor His wrath from His goodness

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