

GOD IS: GOOD

One of the first prayers many people learn is "God is great, God is good, we thank Him for our food." Our English word for God comes from the Germanic word for good. But stop someone on the street, and whether or not they think God is good probably depends on their present circumstances.

1. God is GOOD in His character. Anyone who says God is not good must think they are greater than God. We don't know "good" apart from God. He defines good because He is good, in every attribute. Psalm 100:5, "*The Lord is good.*" Psalm 106:1 "*Praise the Lord, O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.*" Zechariah 9:17 "*How great is His goodness.*" Psalm 52:9 "*Your name is good.*" SJ Lawson says, "Within Himself, in His own being, God is abundantly good. His heart is the perpetual fountain of goodness, from which is flowing down like a swelling river, waves of goodness, descending from His throne upon His creation. God is good. He is the source of all good. He is the supply of all good. The constant testimony of Scripture affirms the goodness of God." He gives "common grace" to all.

2. God is GOOD to all creation, to every creature. Psalm 145 "*the Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. The Lord is good to all, and His mercy is over all that He has made. The eyes of all look to You, and You give them their food in due season. You open your hand; You satisfy the desire of every living thing.*" Psalm 136:25 and Psalm 104:27 echo "*all creatures look to You; when you open Your hand they are filled with good things.*" Job 38:41 "*He provides the raven its prey.*" Matthew 6:26 "*birds of the air neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your Heavenly Father feeds them.*" God gives all that is necessary for all of life, as He sustains all of His creation. Colossians 1:17 "*in Him all things hold together.*" Hebrews 1:3 "*He upholds the universe by the word of His power.*" God is good to every creature in His created order, in all His good creation.

3. God is GOOD even to unbelievers. Matthew 5:45, "*He makes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.*" Acts 14:17 shows He does this as a witness to unbelievers. The unconverted live the same physical life as believers, with the same abilities, aspirations, and God-shaped vacuum in their souls. God's "common grace" is not redemptive, but it can lead to saving grace. Romans 2:4 "*do you presume on the riches of His kindness, forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?*" Believers also can misinterpret God's goodness. Psalm 73 "*I was envious of the arrogant, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked, and said all in vain have I kept my heart clean, for I have been stricken. Until I went into the sanctuary of God, then I discerned their end.*" Psalm 37 "*fret not yourself because of evildoers; be not envious of wrongdoers. Trust in the Lord, and do good; dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness. Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart; commit your way to Him.*" The "common grace" good that unbelievers experience is only earthly, not eternal. But God's goodness can transcend your situation.

4. God is GOOD especially to His children. God pours out "special grace" on believers. James 1:17 "*every good and perfect gift*" comes from Him, including these: Pardon, Psalm 86:5 "*for You O Lord are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon You.*" Provision, Matthew 7:7 "*how much more will Your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask Him.*" Psalm 34:8 "*taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed is the one who takes refuge in Him.*" Protection, Nahum 1:7 "*the Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; He knows those who take refuge in Him.*" Psalm 84:11 "*the Lord God is a sun and shield; He bestows favor and honor. No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly. Blessed is the one who trusts in You.*" Purpose, Jeremiah 29:11 "*I know the plans I have for you, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.*" And the perfect gift of salvation, Jeremiah 31:12, "*the Lord has redeemed him, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord, and they shall languish no more. My people will be satisfied with My goodness, declares the Lord.*"

5. God is GOOD, so how should YOU be? God is good in all that He is and in all that He does. His re-born children are to be like Him, by His power within. Romans 3 says *no one is good*. The only way you can BE good is to receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, regenerated by the Holy Spirit with saving faith, not by works. Once God has made you good, then you are to DO good, living out His life through yours. Ephesians 2:8-10 "*for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*" Good works are the fruit of faith, the result of being saved. And as you are then transformed by God to be more like Christ (Romans 12:1-2) you are to discern and to do the good and perfect will of God. All because GOD IS GOOD!