

God Is Good

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“For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations” (Psalm 100:5)

You have probably noticed, as I have, that people sometimes share a bit of good news and then say, “God is good!” I landed that great new job I applied for — God is good! The new baby arrived, and mother and baby are fine — God is good! The medical tests produced favorable results — God is good!

There is nothing wrong with being thankful and giving God praise for our blessings. However, I fear that we may slip into a pattern of thinking that God is good based only on what I consider to be favorable circumstances in life. What if circumstances aren't so pleasant? Examples:

I got up on the wrong side of the bed this morning and I'm having a terrible day . . . but God is still good.

The crops got hailed out this afternoon. God is good.

My car was totaled in the wreck. God is good.

Mom's best friend died last night. God is good.

An earthquake leveled the city. Hundreds are dead. God is good.

When David's life was threatened by His own son, Absalom, what did David do? At night he lay down and slept (Psalm 3:5). David understood that God is good in times of favorable circumstances, but also in periods of trial, danger, and sorrow. God doesn't always give us what we want, or even what we think we need. He doesn't always tell us why trials confront us or events occur that make us sad. Regardless, God is good — always!

“Though the fig tree may not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines; though the labor of the olive may fail, and the fields yield no food; though the flock may be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls — Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation” (Habakkuk 3:17-18).

Promises Kept, Promises Broken

Have you ever made a promise you couldn't keep? I think if we are really honest with ourselves we would have to admit that we've failed to follow through with a promise at one time or another.

Think about all the promises people make and then break. Around 50% of all people who get married make promises they don't keep. They promise to love, honor, and cherish each other for the rest of their lives; yet so many abuse, cheat, and divorce the spouse to whom they made these promises.

Politicians make many campaign promises that are never fulfilled. People make promises to pay back loans from the bank, but then default, thus breaking the agreement with the financial institution. Then there are those promises we make to ourselves but never seem to keep. We promise ourselves we'll break that bad habit, get to work on time, make better grades, clean the house more, floss, or countless other self-improvement promises.

When we obey the gospel, being baptized into Christ, we make a promise, a commitment to God to faithfully serve Him for the rest of our lives. Sadly, many will break those promises and return to the wallow of sin from whence they came. (2 Peter 2:20-22)

Even though people make and break promises every day, there is one source of promises on which we can always depend. God promised to provide a way to save us from spiritual destruction. He can be depended on to fulfill all the promises made to us that are revealed through His word. Nothing can be more comforting than knowing that these sweet and precious promises (2 Peter 1:4) made by God through Christ are the sure thing and can never be broken!

--Jay Launius (Maud, TX) revised

You Can Teach The Easy Stuff

As we think about teaching others, regardless of our age, or the age of the one we plan to teach, we can convince ourselves that it is just too difficult, or the message is too hard to understand. As you think about this, consider the following.

Mark 15:16 - "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; he who has disbelieved shall be condemned". Grade Level 7.7 Just the phrase "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved," as a stand-alone thought is grade level 2.3.

Acts 2:38 - "Repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Grade 10.

Acts 22:16 - "Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins." Grade 8.

Acts 20:7 - "And on the first day of the week we came together to break bread." Grade 6.1

Revelation 2:10 - "Remain faithful unto death and I will give you a crown of life." Grade 4.1

Mark 16:15 - "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation." Grade 7.5

As we look at the subject matter above written on a second grade, seventh grade, even tenth grade level, I think we must agree it is not beyond our ability or educational level. Don't sell yourself short, you can be a teacher to the ones seeking the truth.

Let me also note, that on the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Scale the total of Mark 16 is grade level 6.5. So now, don't let one person's rejection of God's word prevent you from sharing the message with others.

--via Athens, AL

Christianity should feel like “My chains fell off!” Not like “I'd better not mess up!”