

2. Is God good?

God is good because he always is and does the absolute best. His word reveals his goodness over all time and eternity. Jesus stated, "No one is good except God alone." (Mark 10:18) God always has purpose, design, beauty, and quality in all that he does. This goodness is always consistent with his righteousness. This is what makes God so incredibly beautiful for those who trust him. "Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in the way." (Psalm 25:8) Because God alone is good, he defines what is good and what is evil. He is the basis of all philosophical goodness. God reveals in his word what is the highest good. If goodness is left to be defined by the will of men, it can be turned into evil. For example, Hitler believed it was good to murder thousands of Jews. "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes." (Isaiah 5:20-21) There are universal standards of goodness because God is good. If God does not define what is good and evil, then goodness becomes redefined to reflect that which is rotten and evil. Paul stated, "I agree with the law, that it is good." (Romans 7:16) God defines what is good in his word. Because God is good, we can always rest, knowing his goodness and all-wise council is best. The problem men have with God and his law is that men are not good. That is why after Paul affirmed that God's law was good, he stated his problem, "For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh." (Romans 7:16, 18) Man's problem is that he is not good. "As it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one." (Romans 3:10-12) "Let God be true though everyone were a liar" (Romans 3:4) God is good, but man is not. Because God is good, he must judge evil. Some wrongly believe that because God is good he will not bring judgment. They forget that God's judgments are good. Psalm 119:39 states, "Your rules (judgments) are good." His judgment is the absolute best course of action. "Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off." (NKJ Romans 11:22) Those who trust in the Lord will experience every dimension of his great goodness. "I say to the LORD, "You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you." (Psalm 16:2) "Praise the LORD! Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!" (Psalm 106:1)

Bible passage to read: Psalm 119

Questions to ponder:

1. Who should determine good and evil? Why is this so important?
2. What does it mean that God's word is always good? Do you believe this?
3. Why is God's goodness a problem for man?
4. Is God good when he judges sin?
5. How does your understanding of what is good differ from God's?