

CAN OF WORMS

“Is God Good?”

Part 1 (7-10 minutes)

In this series we will be tackling hard questions about God and answering them in small group. Disclaimer, In our faith there will be times of doubt, there will be time when we question God character. But it's important to know that there is a God who is near.

This week we will be looking at the question. “Is God good?” Hard question, obviously we are in church and the church answer is yes, but if we're really honest we either don't think God is good or we don't know why God is good. But this is important question to answer, because if God is good then: I can trust Him with my life. My life has purpose. His love is legitimate. But if God isn't Good then: It's hard to believe His love is legitimate. My life has less purpose. I don't know if I can actually trust Him.

But it's important to know what your definition of Good is.

Is it... That he won't let anything bad happen to you. Is it that justice in the world will be served, Maybe it's if He will help you pass that test you forgot about and didn't study for.

Illustration

Tell a story of thinking something is tastes good that others don't. (examples - black coffee or Lacroix)

- The thing is, just like with taste, many times everyone has a different definition of what it means to be good. Ask yourself this question, what is your definition of Good? This is important to know.

There is story in the Bible that looks at this. (You can paraphrase most of this if you want to)

John 11: 1-6

A man named Lazarus was sick. He lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha. 2 This is the Mary who later poured the expensive perfume on the Lord's feet and wiped them with her hair.[a] Her brother, Lazarus, was sick. 3 So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, “Lord, your dear friend is very sick.”

4 But when Jesus heard about it he said, “Lazarus's sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this.” 5 **So although Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, 6 he stayed where he was for the next two days.**

. 20 When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed in the house. 21 Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask."

23 Jesus told her, "Your brother will rise again."

24 "Yes," Martha said, "he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day."

25 Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life.[e] Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. 26 Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?"

27 "Yes, Lord," she told him. "I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God." 28 Then she returned to Mary. She called Mary aside from the mourners and told her, "The Teacher is here and wants to see you." 29 So Mary immediately went to him.

32- 44

. 32 When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died."

33 When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him,[f] and he was deeply troubled. 34 "Where have you put him?" he asked them.

They told him, "Lord, come and see." 35 **Then Jesus wept.** 36 The people who were standing nearby said, "See how much he loved him!" 37 But some said, "This man healed a blind man. Couldn't he have kept Lazarus from dying?"

38 Jesus was still angry as he arrived at the tomb, a cave with a stone rolled across its entrance. 39 "Roll the stone aside," Jesus told them.

But Martha, the dead man's sister, protested, "Lord, he has been dead for four days. The smell will be terrible."

40 Jesus responded, "Didn't I tell you that you would see God's glory if you believe?" 41 So they rolled the stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, "Father, thank you for hearing me. 42 You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me." 43 Then Jesus shouted, "Lazarus, come out!" 44 And the dead man came out, his hands and feet bound in graveclothes, his face wrapped in a headcloth. Jesus told them, "Unwrap him and let him go!"

Pray

Explain story

- Jesus heard he was dying, but waited
- When he decides to leave Lazarus is already gone
- Jesus weeps with the family
- Then he heals Lazarus.

TENSION: IS GOD GOOD?

Observation

- These people had an expectation that God was good, but His goodness was displayed in a different way than expected.

- He did heal Lazarus - it just wasn't in the way or time frame they thought
- Martha gives a hint of eternal goodness, how God is good because He made a way us to be with Him for eternity. So there if not physically , spiritual there was healing
- Jesus felt what it was like to hurt just like we hurt...even though He knew He would heal. Jesus suffers with us.
- The thing is , often times, circumstance influence our thoughts on whether or not God is good.

So is God good?

- We're going to talk about this for a couple of minutes in small group.

Group Time (7-10 minutes)

1. Do you have anything you think taste great that others think is disgusting?
2. Have you ever questioned whether or not God is good?
3. Can a Good God allow pain?
 - If yes, why? (for what purpose?)
4. If God is good, how do you think that affects us?

Part 2 (7-10 minutes)

Here is what matters. Who determines whether God is good, us or God? You have to know that God is Sovereign , He is a Good Father- one that walks with us , feels with us, suffers with us. But He is also a Good King, one that challenges us to grow, one that allows certain things to happen to strengthen our dependance on Him. One that is fighting our battles even when we can't see it, one who leads us.

Here is the thing you need to know....

Main Point: Good is who God is , not what he does.

Key: Know why God is good

1. Biblically (what the Bible says)

How is He Good in the Bible?

Observation

We think we see a hint of why God is Good in this story.

24 "Yes," Martha said, "he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day."

One of the reasons God is good is the eternal life that we have through accepting Him. That means no pain is final, no hurt is final, none of that is final.

Psalm 34:8

"O taste and see that the LORD is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!"

Psalm 107:1

"Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever."

Good is who God is...

Application

- One of the best ways to discover His goodness is by reading and meditating on His word.

2. Personally

How has He been good to you?

Observation

There are certain things that don't look good, but ultimately work out for the good.

Romans 8:28

And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.

A painful breakup that was actually toxic. An unwanted circumstance that led to coming to church. Things like this lead us to God and work out for the good.

Application

But we also have to remember how God has been good to us. Maybe it was reminding you of your value when you didn't think you had any. Maybe it was putting someone in your life at the just the right time. Maybe it was bringing you to the right place at the right time. **God's goodness is a part of your testimony.** So we have to remember how God has been Good to us.

So is God good? We can know that God is Good. We can experience his goodness.

Response

1. Table (have them write down a time where they saw God's goodness.)
- "God is good because _____"

2. Prayer

3. Altars