

No Matter What Comes, God Is Good

When the storms of life come, there is nothing more important than what we truly believe.

It is one thing to accept a propositional truth in our minds. It is quite another to live from that place when trials and difficulties test the bedrock of those beliefs. These are our true core values. In my journey of *Finding Hope—Rediscovering Life After Tragedy* there are three foundational truths that have been weathered and found to be unshakable—and all of them surround the goodness of God. He is good!

God Is Good—Period

No matter what comes, God is good. He doesn't stop being good when my life falls apart. He didn't stop being good when I went through nine years of battling cancer. He doesn't stop being good when I forget He is good, or if I never understand in the first place that He is good. God did not stop being good when my dear wife of 32 years graduated to heaven. I had to settle a major issue in my journey. God is good, period.

Each one of us needs to ask the Holy Spirit to graft that truth into our souls, because otherwise we will continue to wobble in our faith. We do not yet know God anywhere near as well as He knows us, but He would like us to come closer to knowing Him well. To know Him is to love Him and to believe that He cares.

To help myself remember this truth, I long ago adopted as one of my "life verses" Ephesians 1:18-19 (MEV), "... that the eyes of your understanding may be enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance among the saints, and what is the

surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power.” I pray this for myself on a daily basis, because I know that unless God enlightens the eyes of my heart, I will never arrive at the hope of His calling, nor will I have any comprehension of the riches of His goodness toward me and toward anyone who believes in Him.

Seeing with the Eyes of Your Heart

This Scripture (Ephesians 1:18-19) has been a very real guiding light for me on my journey through some dark territory. Many times I can only glimpse its light at the end of the tunnel I’m walking (or crawling) in, but it is God’s light and I know it. The more I pray those verses, the more sure my steps become and the brighter the light gets.

Sometimes I have felt I was walking in a trackless wasteland, as if I have not only lost my roadmap, but also run off the road—quite a long way back. It’s as if my difficulties have almost started defining me, giving me an unwanted new (and crummy-looking) map to work from.

I know, I know ... the difficulties don’t really alter my God-given roadmap. But they were so unexpected. Now I’m seeing all sorts of hidden side alleys, unforeseen obstacles, and invisible construction zones that never showed up on that old map.

This gives me all the more reason to learn to see with the eyes of my heart. When I view my life from God’s perspective and let Him shine His glorious light on it, all of the detours and potholes start to make sense.

The verses at the beginning of this chapter have kept me moving toward God’s guiding light. Even in the midst of the worst storms, they have helped me catch sight of the light in the distance so that I can turn in the right direction. For over ten years, I prayed those verses several times a day for

myself, and I still pray them at least weekly. I use those words to invite God to open the eyes of my heart.

The “eyes of my heart” give me special sight so that I can see behind the sometimes-dire things that my natural eyes show me. I want the eyes of my heart to keep functioning well even if the rest of me gets sick, because the eyes of my heart help me see the riches of the glory of God and they help me recall how good He is. With the eyes of my heart “enlightened,” I can see with hope. When they are darkened or blindfolded—which can happen just as easily as it can with my natural eyes—I lose my way.

I want the eyes of my heart—my spirit-eyes—to be clearly focused and “single,” as the King James Bible puts it (Luke 11:34). To paraphrase Paul’s prayer for the Ephesians, “I pray that the eyes of my heart will be opened so that great light can come in and so that a picture, a vision for the future, can develop within the hope, the positive expectation of good. Amen.”

Take my advice—whenever you go through difficult times, pray the Bible. It works. It opens the eyes of your heart. Don’t ask me how it works, but somehow two plus two equals five. With God, all things are possible (Matthew 19:26; Mark 10:27), and He easily factors in our human weaknesses. He is both sovereign and providential—and He providentially chose to give us human beings a free will, risking our likely revolt. He knows what the devil does to us. He’s still God, and He loves us. He takes the hands of those who ask Him to guide them and He will restore to them the years that seemed to have been lost forever.

Ask Real Big

When you pray to God to know more about the “riches of the glory of His inheritance,” you aren’t just asking for an open parking space downtown. You are asking for something so big

you may not be able to grasp it. Don't let the majesty and mystery of it cause you to draw back with hesitation. Just pray. That's what Moses did:

"Then Moses said, "I pray, show me Your glory."

"Then He said, 'I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy'" (Exod. 33:18–19, MEV).

God had just told Moses that He knew him by name and that he had found favor, which so increased Moses' confidence in his relationship with God that he dared to ask the impossible. God reminded him that no one could see His face and live (Exodus 33:20), but Moses upheld his request anyway. He did not feel that anyone needed to ask on his behalf, and he did not ask for a vicarious experience of God's glory ("Show my brother Aaron your glory and let me just watch—in case he gets fried").

Moses asked for something that he might not survive, not because he was into extreme sports, but simply because he was so buoyed up by God's affirmation. His hope got translated into full faith.

I see great significance in God's response to Moses: "I will cause all My goodness to pass in front of you." In front, where his eyes could see, God's glorious *goodness* would pass. And it did. Where? Right in front of him.

I believe that we can pray for big things like that, too. We can pray for displays of the goodness of God to pass in front of the eyes of our hearts. We can pray for demonstrations of the goodness of God to flood our soul and minds. We can get excited to think of what He might do in response to our prayers. Remember, hope is a confident anticipation of good. To find hope is to discover a major aspect of God's nature—His goodness.

Looking for Goodness

The story of God's goodness passing in front of Moses is in the Old Testament. To bring it over into the New Testament, we need to look no farther than Peter's description of Jesus of Nazareth:

"... how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him" (Acts 10:38, MEV).

To this day, Jesus is going about doing good, although we may question that fact when something bad happens. Sometimes I have wondered if He is off on vacation, or sitting regally on His throne instead of helping me here with my messed up life on this messed-up earth. But when I go back to the written Word of God, my misconceptions clear up.

Jesus is always going about doing good, because He said that He would never leave us or forsake us (Heb. 13:5). He sent His Holy Spirit not to touch our lives only from time to time, but to dwell within us (1 Cor. 3:16; Rom. 8:11). Right where we are, Jesus is always doing good and doing it well.

Keeping Your Core Values

In my intentional journey of *Finding Hope—Rediscovering Life After Tragedy*—I have had to make sure my core values were firmly in place. No matter what fierce wind or thundering storm came against my house, and they did, I had to make sure these truths were unwavering in my life. I had to nail them down: 1) God is good all the time; 2) All things work together for good; and 3) Something good is just about to happen.

I never said that everything that happens in your life is good or that God caused everything to happen. But in the mystery and majesty of Christ, when we bring Him our questions, our traumas, hurts and fears, our messes – and we worship God – He

causes all things to work together for good. Yes, let's put on our helmets of hope of salvation (1 Thess. 5:8) and declare, "No matter what; God is good—period!"

Closing Invitational Prayer

"Father, I declare that no matter what comes, your character and nature remain constant and You are good all the time. Indeed, Your mercies endure forever. I cast my cares upon You because I believe that You care for me. I enter into Your presence with thanksgiving and praise, and I cry out to you like Moses of old, "Show me Your glory! Let Your goodness pass in front of us." In Jesus Christ's great name, Amen and Amen!

This article has been adapted from the book Finding Hope—Rediscovering Life After Tragedy by James W. Goll. Deeply personal and intensely practical, Finding Hope will help you or someone you love find fullness of life even in difficulty.

For the original article, visit .