

Discerning God's Goodness

[Psalms 31:19-24](#)

Psalm 31:19-24 (NASB)

¹⁹ How great is Your goodness, Which You have stored up for those who fear You, Which You have wrought for those who take refuge in You, Before the sons of men!

²⁰ You hide them in the secret place of Your presence from the conspiracies of man; You keep them secretly in a shelter from the strife of tongues.

²¹ Blessed be the LORD, For He has made marvelous His lovingkindness to me in a besieged city.

²² As for me, I said in my alarm, "I am cut off from before Your eyes"; Nevertheless You heard the voice of my supplications When I cried to You.

²³ O love the LORD, all you His godly ones! The LORD preserves the faithful And fully recompenses the proud doer.

²⁴ Be strong and let your heart take courage, All you who hope in the LORD.

I've often heard folks proclaim, "God is good!" when all is going well but then doubt His benevolence when the blessings they envisioned don't materialize. Because God alone is good, only He can accurately determine what is best for each person. His kindness is expressed in more ways than simply provision of wealth, health, and relationships. Some of His gifts are experiences we would never choose, but the Lord knows we need them in order to grow in faith, obedience, and perseverance. Consider the following expressions of God's goodness toward us:

Loving Discipline. Since God's love is unfailing, He corrects us when we refuse to follow Him and instead go our own way. The process is painful, but the result is "**the peaceful fruit of righteousness**" ([Hebrews 12:11 NASB](#)).

Wise Limitations. Satan offers a world of opportunities and possessions that seem to promise happiness but ultimately draw us away from God. With great wisdom, the Lord lovingly withholds those things that prove detrimental to our spiritual life.

Useful Suffering. God knows which refining experiences we need in order to become fruitful in His kingdom. What appears to us as a valley of weeping is God's place of preparation for godliness and service.

It can be tempting to interpret God's character on the basis of our circumstances. If evidence compels us to doubt His goodness, we must remember that while His gifts come in a variety of wrappings, they are always beneficial. As [Psalm 34:8 NASB](#) says, "**O taste and see that the Lord is good.**"