

St Andrew's Presbyterian Church Penrith

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ENCOURAGEMENT LETTER 25/6/2025

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

How are you today? I am thankful for the training on Pastoral Care last night and the conversations of those who were there about how we care for one another as a church.

Today, our encouragement is "Psalm 119 Teth – God Is Good" before moving onto church matters.

ENCOURAGEMENT: Psalm 119 Teth – God Is Good

What is good in life? We might think of many things that are good: the warm sun on our skin, reading a book in a quiet corner, a tough physical work-out, sitting around a table with family laughing and talking, looking at the stars at night, a hot meal, a letter from someone you love, a holiday on the coast... the list goes on. What would you add to the list? At the heart of the next stanza in Psalm 119 is the goodness of God. The Psalmist writes:

*You are good, and what you do is good;
teach me your decrees.*

Psalm 119:68

God is good in his very character. He is good to his people and everything he does for them is good. He works for their benefit according to his goodness expressed in kindness and compassion. So the Psalm wants to learn God's decrees to grow in his goodness. The verses around this verse at the centre of the stanza shows the ways in which God is good.

First, we see God's discipline is good.
*Before I was afflicted I went astray,
but now I obey your word.*

Psalm 119:67

*It was good for me to be afflicted
so that I might learn your decrees.*

Psalm 119:71

Two verses speak of God's discipline and the good that it brought him. His suffering and affliction when he went astray directed him back to obey the Lord's word and learn his decrees. God works through his difficulties and trials to bring about trust and obedience.

Second, he prays that the Lord might do good to him.

*Do good to your servant
according to your word, LORD.
Teach me knowledge and good judgment,
for I trust your commands.*

Psalm 119:65-66

He prays “Do good to your servant” as he reads in God’s word that he is good and promises good to his people. Specifically, he wants the Lord to teach him wisdom to live well in the way of the Lord’s commands and the work of the Spirit in him.

Third, God’s goodness is contrasted against the lives of the wicked.

*Though the arrogant have smeared me with lies,
I keep your precepts with all my heart.
Their hearts are callous and unfeeling,
but I delight in your law.*

Psalm 119:69-70

The arrogant do no good but instead smear the Psalmist with lies and bring his integrity into doubt. They fail to do good because in their hearts they are not but rather callous and unfeeling. The Psalmist despite the evil of the wicked is committed to keep the Lord’s commands and in his heart finds his joy in God’s word.

Lastly, the word of the Lord is good and of highest value to him.

*The law from your mouth is more precious to me
than thousands of pieces of silver and gold.*

Psalm 119:72

The words and commands and promises that the Lord speaks have the highest value to him and gives him more than anything else that this world offers, so his life is invested in God’s word to trust it and obey it and be transformed by it.

The Lord’s goodness is ultimately seen in Christ and heard in the gospel when we read:

But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy.

Titus 3:4-5

We know and experience the Lord’s goodness in Christ as we trust in him. So fill your life with his word, the gospel of salvation, and take to heart his promises in Christ. See his hand upon your life for your good. Are you trusting in the Lord’s goodness to you in Christ?

FINAL COMMENTS

If you have reached the final comments and are still reading, share with me one way you have seen God’s goodness to you.

For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

Titus 2:11-14

As always, love and prayers,
Steve