

In The Beginning God . . .

*An In-Depth Study of the
First Three Chapters of Genesis*

All Truth Begins Here



The Character of God: Part Three

INTRO: In our study today we will focus primarily on a single attribute of God: His goodness. We will also discover that there are at least three parallel attributes that are expressive of His goodness: patience, mercy, and grace. All of these characteristics of God's nature are clearly seen in the first three chapters of Genesis.

The goodness of God is His attribute most questioned by friend and foe alike. Opponents of Biblical faith often base their hostility or agnosticism on the presence of evil in the world, "If there is a God Who is good, why is there evil and why does He allow suffering?" Those who believe in God become disappointed, and occasionally embittered, when life goes badly for them or tragedy strikes. What is the testimony of Scripture in this regard?

I. Observations from the Text (Genesis 1-3):

- A. Chapter 1: God's goodness is portrayed in His pronouncements on all that He has made.
- B. Chapter 1:28-31: God's goodness is seen in the blessings and provision for all He has made
 - 1. it is amplified in the variety of things He made for provision and beauty
 - 2. it is amplified in the fact that violence and death were not required to sustain life
- C. Chapter 2: God's goodness is revealed
 - 1. in noting and completing one things that was "not good"
 - 2. in providing a perfect environment: order, harmony, peace, beauty
- D. Chapter 3: God's goodness seen in His response to the rebellion and fall of Adam
 - 1. although they did die spiritually, they did not immediately die physically
 - 2. He came looking for them
 - 3. He provided a covering for their sin and shame
 - 4. we see in His response His patience, His mercy, and His grace
 - 5. He gave them hope and a promise of future restoration

II. Deductions from the Text in the Affirmative (What we can reason about God's character):

- A. God is GOOD. It is an intrinsic part of His essential nature. This is supported by the rest of Scripture.
- B. Everything He made was good, without flaw or defect
- C. The potential for rebellion or evil is not necessarily bad in itself, but a necessary part of true freedom
- D. It is God's nature to bless and to provide good things

(see the supplemental Scripture texts on the back)

III. Deductions from the Text in the Negative (What is NOT true about God's character):

- A. Everything that we see today that is not good was not originally made that way, something has happened.
- B. Nothing that is evil or bad was made by God, past or present, He is not the Author of evil

CONC: The character of God is often maligned by His friends and His foes because of the presence of evil in the world. However, by faith in the revelation of His character through the Bible, we can affirm that God is intrinsically, infinitely good all the time. Therefore, when we see the evil and suffering around us we recognize that something terrible has happened to the perfect environment and the perfect people God created. Furthermore, on the basis of His goodness we can expect Him to do something about the problem, to provide a way out, a way back to restoration. That "something" is a "SomeOne" in the person of Jesus Christ Who came to destroy the works of the devil and to rescue those who are dead in trespasses and sins.

