

Study Guide 9 Answers

1. Is it possible for persons who have never read the Bible to know that God is good?

Yes. **Please explain your answer.**

His invisible attributes and His divine nature are clearly seen in what He has created (Romans 1:20).

All creation is filled with wonders and delights that cannot exist apart from a wise and good Creator.

2. Is it natural for humans to value good? Yes. Please defend your answer.

- Created in His image, men have a witness to what is good within them (Romans 1:19).

- Every individual loves life and is naturally attracted to those who are kind and to what is good and pleasant.

3. What are the first ways in Genesis 1 that we see how good God is?

- He creates a universe that is harmonious, that provides a secure environment for each creature, and that is filled with good and pleasant things.

- He takes personal interest and delight in the fact that each thing He does is good.

4. What must we recognize about God before we can conclude that everything He finds worthy of approval is good?

We must recognize that He Himself is thoroughly and constantly good.

5a. Look again at #1 in the lecture *God is Good*. What important realization about good does it present?

Good is what God approves. There is no other basis or standard for good.

5b. What implication does this have for our perception of what is good and what is bad? It is only valid and correct if it conforms to what He indicates is worthy of approval.

6. How does evil exist? Evil did not and could not exist except as disagreeing with God's values and resisting and opposing His goodness.

7. What does the Bible mean in its proclamation that God is good?

- All that He does is beneficial, pleasing, right, and perfect.
- No evil is tolerated in His presence.
- It is His nature to be and to act this way.
- All that God is and does is perfectly worthy of His Own approval.

His creatures will not be able to find fault with Him, His words, His decisions, or His actions. The longing He has placed in His creatures to be glad, pleased, and secure, and for things to be right will never be disappointed in Him or in what He does.

8. What is "good"? Good exists because God exists. Because God is, good is. It is found in God and all good in the universe has God as its source. Good is not some ideal existing independently outside of Himself by which He is measured or to which He must answer or conform. What He is determines what good is.

9. What is the difference between mercy and grace?

- Mercy is God's compassionate response to those in misery and distress.
- Grace is God's goodness toward us who deserve His punishment and wrath. Instead we receive what we have not earned or deserved and what we have no right to claim for ourselves. His forgiveness and His righteousness are free, undeserved gifts.

10. What does it mean to be "a law unto oneself"? This refers to a person who has decided what he is and isn't going to require of himself. A person usually does this by behaving in a way that is selective in the way he observes or casually dismisses laws of God and laws of society.

11. Is it okay for a man to be a law unto himself? No. Why or why not?

- because to disregard any of God's laws or any civil laws is to be a lawbreaker
- because God's Law is perfect

12. What do we mean when we say that God is a law unto Himself?

God's words, thoughts, and actions are always consistent with His character.

13. Why is it a necessity that God is a Law unto Himself? If God were subject to some law or standard outside of Himself He would not be Self-determining or the Most High. The standard would be higher than He and could exist only as the characteristic or requirement of some other personal being who preceded Him or who always has been superior to Him.

14. Look at *God is Good*, #5. What perspective does this bring to Paul's words in Romans 13:10: "Love is the fulfilling of the Law"?

- The command to do good is satisfied in loving with God's love.
- God's love sets the standard for our living (1 John 3:16; 4:10-12).
- Christ's life within us pours out this love of God in our living.
- In seeking His loving we seek, gain, and experience God Himself (1 John 4:12).

15. Write down each word or phrase in Exodus 34:6-7 that points to the Lord being good and indicate how it does so.

- compassionate: God cares continually and deeply about the hurts and difficulties people experience and He acts accordingly.
- gracious: God's delight in blessing generously is not diminished or adjusted in dealing with a rebellious race.
- slow to anger: Even as Absolute Sovereign, God does not yield to personal rage at indignities against His person, but with measured patience in keeping with His perfect righteousness and His great mercy.
- abounding in lovingkindness: God's attitude toward each person overflows with desire for them and for their good.
- abounding in truth: God is genuine and sincere in His character and in His care to clearly and accurately reveal all that man needs to know to make his existence in God's universe secure and wonderful.
He is also certain to deal with all that is false in His universe.
- He keeps lovingkindness for thousands: God's love is secured to thousands in a covenant that vows His faithfulness to keep them as His Own.
- Who forgives iniquity, transgression, and sin: God satisfies justice completely in exercising mercy that removes man's sin.
- Who by no means will leave the guilty unpunished: God is the just Judge, addressing and punishing every evil in His universe.
- visiting the iniquity of fathers on children and grandchildren: God allows and uses men's sinful ways and their consequences to bring regrets that lead to repentance.

16. What do the words in Psalm 25:8 emphasize about God's goodness?

He reaches out to sinners with the knowledge of His ways so that their lives can be good.

17. Why does David go on to specify (in v. 9) that the Lord does this with the humble?

It is another evidence of His goodness that hates evil and resists pride in men.

18. How can we truly see "all things" (Rom 8:28) that happen in our lives (even the things we feel are "bad") as promoting "good"? It is because of the conviction that the Scriptures' witness to God's absolute goodness is true. Because God has determined eternally to join us to Himself with love and called us to take part in His purposes, it is not possible that anything in our lives can elude His determination to achieve His highest good. Because He constantly rules everything everywhere with unlimited, intimate knowledge and wisdom, His ability to overcome evil with good or to steer it to achieve His good purposes is absolute.

19. Please read Romans 8:32. In what two ways is it good for us to respond to what these words are declaring?

- We can ask Him for anything we need.
- We can be assured that God will give us whatever we need, even if we don't know what it is that we need.

20a. What does James specify about God's goodness in 1:13?

James writes that God cannot even be tempted with evil.

20b. What does he write about good in our lives in 1:17?

He indicates that any good in us is God's gift to us and His work in us.

20c. Why does he introduce these words with the words, "Do not be deceived," in verse 16? because we may think that we ourselves have contributed something or that we are partially responsible for the good we find in our lives

20d. When James writes "with Whom there is no variation" about the Father (1:17), with what is he drawing a contrast? See 1:14-15. He is contrasting God's unfailing goodness with our being carried away by temptation. The very fact that our own desires make us susceptible to temptation is James' proof that the good in us cannot be from us.

21. James draws our attention to one way in which God has exercised His will to realize the good in which He delights. What did He bring forth for Himself (James 1:18)? He brought us forth as the first fruits among His creatures.

For personal reflection:

Do the words "worthy of approval" set a different standard than the one you usually use when you decide something is good?