

We all know that the Bible teaches that God is good.

But what about the times when that statement is tested, and we struggle to believe that God is good?

The Bible is full of accounts of real people going through extremely challenging times. The book of Job is a classic example of faithfulness in times of suffering.

David also had many challenging times. In 1 Samuel 21, David was fleeing from King Saul; he fled his homeland and sought refuge with the Philistines. After a time, he was recognized and brought before the King Achish – the king of Gath, referred to as Abimelech in Psalm 34. David, fearing for his life, acted like a madman, and as a result the Philistine king let him go thinking he was demon possessed.

The Lord sustained and protected David in one of the worst situations of his life at a time when David could have despaired, even doubted, the goodness of God. It was in this context that David wrote this Psalm 34. David had the promise of God that he would be king; had God forgotten him?

### **Taste and See**

David had a unique way of singing himself through the trials, singing the promises of God. In Psalm 34:8 David declares, *“Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!”*

Taste is an important figure of speech in the Bible. Everywhere it’s used figuratively, taste suggests full participation in or experience of the thing enjoyed. Here, the invitation to “taste and see that the Lord is good” is a call to rely fully on Him and to experience the benefits of a personal relationship with God. It is tasting the things of the Lord through faith. When you are going through the trials, – taste and see by faith that the Lord is good.

### **Only Good Things**

In verse 10 we read, *“The young lions suffer want and hunger; but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.”* Again, David is singing himself into faith – declaring the promises of God. But what does this mean?

The verse does not say, “you will lack nothing”; it says, “you will lack no good thing.” That is a significant distinction. Not every good thing brings us comfort. For example, cough mixture doesn’t always taste good, but it is good for us if we have a bad cold. Discipline and hard work don’t feel comfortable, but they are good. The discipline of the Lord in our lives is

not comfortable—often it is painful, but we cannot deny that it is good for us.

### **Faith Over Feelings**

Looking further to verse 18 we read, *“The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.”* In our current age, we are so driven by feelings, people base decisions on feelings alone in many cases. But the Bible says that faith needs to override feelings in our lives (see Hebrews 11:6). We should be ever mindful to live according to the promises of the Word of God. Do you live life based on feelings or based on the promises of God’s Word?

### **You Will Have Trouble**

It would appear that the modern Prosperity Gospel peddlers have not read Psalm 34:19 which reads, *“Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all.”*

Based on their false teaching, when you become a follower of Jesus, everything goes smoothly; you are never sick, your mortgage is paid off, and you get a promotion at work! But these are lies, the Bible says that many are the afflictions – troubles, of the righteous. Jesus warned us of the same in John 16:33, with a glorious promise included, *“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

### **No One is Spared**

Afflictions come to everyone, righteous and unrighteous, Christian and non-Christian. Verse 21 and 22 read, *“Affliction will slay the wicked, and those who hate the righteous will be condemned. The Lord redeems the life of his servants; none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.”*

Who are the wicked? Anyone who does not have a personal relationship and faith in Jesus Christ. The wicked also suffer afflictions; they are also subject to the brokenness of a fallen world.

These verses contrast the destiny of the righteous and the wicked. The servants of the Lord – those who are covered by the righteousness of Christ—shall be delivered and never come into condemnation (see Romans 8:10). The righteous are those who have a personal relationship with Jesus, those who have believed in his name for salvation.

Our Lord sees every one of our days, good or bad, and He is committed to a long game when it comes to our lives. We may suffer for a day, a year, or a lifetime, but in the end the

Lord is our deliverer, and it is He who is working all things for our good for all eternity (see Romans 8:28).

Suffering is God's crucible, working out the dross in our lives, for His purposes. Those who are called upon to suffer much are deeply loved by our Heavenly Father. He is writing a glorious story, one that will be told in heaven for eternity.

The question is, do we believe that?

***Are you suffering today? Are you doubting the goodness of God?***

The promises of His Word are true: God is good, He cannot change His nature, and He is trustworthy for every situation you are going through or ever will endure in the future.