

Good to be Alive

Deep End Faith | James 1:16-18 | April 17, 2022 | Pastor Mike Foster

- We are prone to wonder about God's goodness (v. 16)

Especially when it seems...

1. God is withholding something I need (Adam & Eve)
2. God is allowing bad things to happen to good people (Habakkuk)
3. God is allowing too much pain for me personally (Job)

- God is good (v. 17)

-He is the source of all good

-He is always good

- God proves He is good (v. 18)

-Through our new birth – it is GOOD TO BE ALIVE!

Jesus, and specifically Jesus crucified and risen again, is the answer that is bigger than my questions about God.

“The gospel cures me of my suspicion of God.” -Milton Vincent

-Through a whole new creation

Group Discussion Questions:

1. How did you celebrate Easter this year? What does Easter mean to you?
2. What stood out to you most from the message?
3. Read James 1:1-18. What do you see God wanting to give His people in these verses? How many things can you identify that the Lord wants to give to His people? What does this suggest about the goodness of God?
4. Have you ever been suspicious of God's goodness? Explain.
5. How has God convinced you of His goodness and led you to trust in His goodness? (Consider Psalm 34:8-10)
6. Read James 1:17. What does God want us to know in these verses? What difference does it make to know these things about God?
7. Read James 1:18. In your own words, describe the new birth that God wants to give to us. (Consider John 3:1-18 and 1:11-13, along with 1 Peter 1:22-24.)
8. How sure are you that you have received new life through Jesus and will have eternal life with Him?
9. Read Romans 8:32. What does God promise in this verse? Have you experienced this promise of God in your life? Explain.
10. What does it mean to look at God, or even to look at life, through a “gospel lens”? How does remembering the cross and resurrection of Jesus help us to remember God's goodness?

For Further Reflection:

Read John 20, John 3:1-18, Psalm 34:8-10, 1 Peter 1:22-24, 1 Corinthians 15:20-23

Read “Evidence for the Resurrection” - <https://bit.ly/evidencefortheresurrection>

Read “A Cure for our Suspicion of God” - <https://bit.ly/curesuspicion>

Read about the “firstfruits” and the Jewish roots of Easter and Pentecost –

https://bit.ly/firstfruits_pentecost

Listen to “King of Kings” - https://bit.ly/kingofkings_song

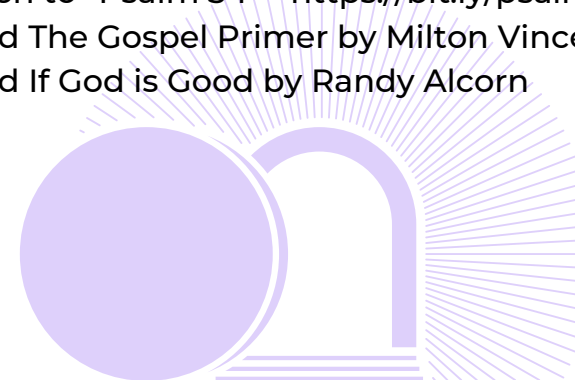
Listen to “Psalm 34” - https://bit.ly/psalm34_brooktab

Read The Gospel Primer by Milton Vincent

Read If God is Good by Randy Alcorn

Connect with the book of James:

- Memorize using Scripture Memory App
- Pray on your knees
- Read the Scriptures
- Get connected to a group!



The Resurrection—Importance & Evidence

1 Corinthians 15

Is the resurrection a big deal? The Bible says YES! According to 1 Corinthians 15, if there was no resurrection...

- Ministry is pointless (v. 14)
- Faith is useless (v. 14)
- The apostles are liars (v. 15)
- We are still in our sins (v. 17)
- Everyone who has died before us has been lost (v. 18)
- We have no hope beyond death (v. 19)

But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead! (v. 20)

The evidence for the resurrection of Jesus is overwhelming

- Jesus was unmistakably dead
 - Suffered sleepless night of trials and beatings
 - Suffered Roman scourging which often killed a man
 - Suffered Roman crucifixion—the Romans were experts in execution
 - Pierced in side by spear and blood and water flowed, proving Jesus had died because a sac of water had formed around heart
 - Four Roman executioners would have signed His death certificate
 - If Jesus only swooned (never really died but regained his strength after being buried) and appeared to his disciples a beaten, bloody mess, would they have followed Him?
- Jesus was unmistakably buried
 - Joseph of Arimathea volunteered his tomb for Jesus. Joseph was wealthy and his tomb would have been in a public, well-known place
 - Jewish burial customs would have had Jesus wrapped in over 100 pounds of linens and spices
 - A 2 ton stone was rolled in front of His tomb, probably by lever system
 - The tomb was sealed with a Roman seal, meaning anyone who messed with the tomb would be killed

- The tomb was guarded by a team of Roman guards—most likely, a team of at least 16 guards
- The Romans and Jews were suspicious that the disciples might steal the body so they took every precaution possible (Matthew 27:62–66)

- Jesus unmistakably rose
 - The tomb was empty
 - If the Romans or Jews had the body, they would have shown it right away and ended the movement
 - The guards were afraid for their lives and went to the chief priests (Matthew 28:11)
 - The chief priests didn't have the body so they paid the guards to say the disciples stole the body (Matthew 28:13–15)
 - If the disciples had the body, they could have never been so bold to live and die for their faith
- Jesus unmistakably appeared
 - =Jesus appeared multiple times to His disciples and to over 500 people at once (1 Corinthians 15:6).
 - =His appearances were not just spiritual or visions but were physical in nature. He invited his disciples to touch his hands and He ate with them to prove He was physically appearing (Luke 24:40–44)
 - Because Jesus really rose and appeared to His disciples, they had the courage to preach His gospel and proclaim His resurrection in the face of persecution and death
 - Jesus appeared to Paul and transformed him from a church terrorist to a church missionary

For further research:

The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus by Habermas

Who Moved the Stone? by Morrison

Raised on the Third Day by Beck & Licona