

Title: The Faithfulness and Goodness of God

Text: Lamentations 3:19-25

Preached by Pastor Phil Layton at Gold Country Baptist Church on April 15, 2007

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A brother in the Lord has shared that the first prayer he learned as a child was the simple table grace: “God is great; God is good. And we thank Him for this food.” I guess that prayer is supposed to rhyme. He said it did when his grandmother said it because she pronounced *food* as if it rhymed with *good* or *hood*. That’s a pretty simple if not simplistic prayer, but I think sometimes we need simple truths to impact us more deeply.

The big idea of this section of Lamentations is that no matter what good or bad times we go through, God is great in His faithfulness, and God is good. God is good all the time, and even at the times we are faithless, He remains faithful.

If we were to summarize the passage we’re going to look at today, it would be God is *faithful*, God is good.

OUTLINE:

- I. God is faithful (3:19-23)
- II. God is good (3:24-25)

Where is the goodness of God when we lose a loved one? How can a good God _____ (you fill in the blank)? One of Jaime’s friends last year suffered the heart-wrenching pain of losing her unborn baby – how is God’s goodness and faithfulness demonstrated in death of a dear little one? I’ll come back to that story later, but I want you to know that the *how* questions are part of the book of Lamentations. In fact, the Hebrew name of this book is their word for “How” (*ekah*) an exclamation of dismay. It is the first word in the book as well as the 2nd and 4th chapter and Rabbis later began to call the book “loud cries” or “lamentations.”

19 Remember my affliction and my wanderings, the wormwood and the gall!

20 My soul continually remembers it and is bowed down within me.

21 But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope:

Now, as I read the next verse, if any of you doubt the sovereignty and providence of God that we studied in past weeks I just want you to know that when Jerry put that praise song in the bulletin (“the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases”), he had no idea what I was going to preach on or that the words of that song are exactly the text I decided to preach on this Sunday a while ago, about which I told no one but God.

22 The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end;

23 they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

When God’s sovereignty works like that (independently of me choosing a song that has the words of our text), to me it’s just another evidence of God’s amazing goodness, which continually overwhelms me here, how kind and thoughtful and gracious and merciful He has been to me as pastor here, and I thank Him so much for the big and little things He does and for you all who are such a blessing and joy of my heart.

And of course, just 2 weeks ago we thought it would be quite a long time before we got occupancy of the first floor of our new building, and God's great faithfulness and goodness are perfect timing and a fresh and new reminder this morning of His mercies which never come to an end.

CONTEXT / BACKGROUND OF LAMENTATIONS

Many of us know verses 22-23 well and probably quote them during times of blessing in our life, we sing "Great is Thy Faithfulness" as we will at the end of this service and usually reflect on the positive things He has done for us. What's interesting if you study the context of Lamentations, is that there's virtually nothing positive at all going on. This wasn't a time of rejoicing when getting into a new building or temple, this was a time when Solomon's temple was being torn down, and Jerusalem was being destroyed and the Jews were being killed or captured by King Nebuchanezzar. We are introduced to this in chapter 1.

1 How lonely sits the city That was full of people! How like a widow is she, Who was great among the nations! The princess among the provinces Has become a slave!

2 She weeps bitterly in the night, Her tears are on her cheeks; Among all her lovers She has none to comfort her. All her friends have dealt treacherously with her; They have become her enemies.

3 Judah has gone into captivity, Under affliction and hard servitude; She dwells among the nations, She finds no rest; All her persecutors overtake her in dire straits.

The suffering was not unjust but was due to their sin:

Lam. 1:8 (NKJV) "Jerusalem has sinned gravely, Therefore she has become vile. All who honored her despise her Because they have seen her nakedness; Yes, she sighs and turns away."

18 "The Lord is righteous, For I rebelled against His commandment. Hear now, all peoples, And behold my sorrow; My virgins and my young men Have gone into captivity.

The psalms contains some laments, but this is the only book that is entirely a lament. Tradition says Jeremiah wrote Lamentations, and he did so as an eyewitness of Jerusalem's destruction, apparently writing while the tragedy in 586 B.C. was fresh in his mind.

The MacArthur Study Bible gives a helpful intro: 'This book keeps alive the memory of that fall and teaches all believers how to deal with suffering ... In the first 4 chapters, each verse begins in an acrostic pattern, i.e., using the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet in sequence. Chapters 1, 2, and 4 have 22 verses corresponding to 22 letters, while chap. 3 employs each letter for 3 consecutive verses until there are 22 trios, or 66 verses [pinnacle of the book] ... An acrostic order, such as in Ps. 119 (where all 22 Hebrew letters are used in series of 8 verses each), was used to aid memorization [or here perhaps to show the completeness – the "A-to-Z" of suffering]. The structure of the book ascends and descends from the great confession in 3:22–24, "Great is His faithfulness," which is the literal center of the book.'

It is a funeral dirge, a book of grieving over the loss not only of the temple, but of people. Job is the classic book dealing with personal suffering, Lamentations is a book of *national* suffering.

Tisha b' Av (9th of the month Ab) is a Jewish holy day that commemorates by grieving the fall of Jerusalem that occurred in Jeremiah's day in 586 B.C. (the 70 A.D. fall also happened to be on this anniversary). At sunrise, thousands of faithful Jews gather together to read the book of Lamentations over and over at what they call the Western Wall (non-Jews call it the Wailing Wall, because of times of mourning and grieving like this, mourning over the destruction of the temple, wailing at it). This wall is one of the last remnants of structures around the temple in Jesus day, which would also be destroyed on the same day in 70 A.D.

Someone has written (quoted by Will Varner of GCC/TMC):

“After our great national trauma of Sept. 11, 2001 when the towers fell, so many died and the goodness of the future was called into question, many Christian communities in their hurt, harrow, and despair turned for solace and guidance to an ancient and rather obscure book of the Bible Lamentations. In this book we journey into the dark, dusty, and despairing corners of human hearts, into those times in our collective experience that we would rather forget or avoid. Yet as a people of faith we believe that our God gives us the resources to help us refrain from avoiding or denying the pain and the tragedy. We can grieve, we can cry out. Sometimes we may even clench our fists and cry out *why* under the conviction that our God cares for us and loves us enough to speak to us even in tragedy. How is it possible for people like us, so skilled in putting a happy face on even the worst of circumstances, so desirous of cheap consolation, how is it possible that we can stare tragedy in the face and tell the truth about it? It is because Christians believe that on the cross Jesus gave a powerful answer to the questions proposed by this book of the Bible. In the midst of the most desperate lamentation, mourning the worst tragedy, our God is there, He is with us.”

GOD IS FAITHFUL

1. He is faithful in suffering

In verse 19, Jeremiah speaks of wormwood which was a bitter plant, and gall - the idea is a horrible taste in one's mouth that is hard to swallow

But just as a father may give his child medicine that tastes horribly bitter, our Heavenly Father gives doses of pain as His medicine because the end result will be healing in God's faithfulness.

Thomas Watson writes that “Several poisonous ingredients put together, being tempered by the skill of the [pharmaceutical doctor], make a sovereign medicine, and work together for the good of the patient. So all God's providences, being divinely tempered and sanctified, work together for the best of the saints.” (*All Things for Good*, p. 11)

We need to trust the Great Physician that He knows what He's doing, and that He will give us the right dose and will not give us more than we can handle.

VERSE 20 - *My soul remembers* (ESV adds “continually”)

My soul ... is bowed down within me (NASB, ESV)

Sinks within me (NKJV) or “is downcast” (NIV) or “depressed” (HCSB)

Jeremiah feels crushed “and confused, hunted and haunted, bitter and bewildered, hopeless and humiliated. But then his mood changes radically...” (Courson, 2:593)

READ VERSE 21

It is at the darkest hour that the light can shine most brightly. This section in Lamentations moves from the lowest valley to the highest mountain. The more he looked at himself, the more hopeless it got – the more he looked around him, the more he despaired, but now he looks to God and that gives him great hope

Notice that even as we pray, a transformation takes place within us. Prayer doesn't change God so much as it changes us. We see this a lot in the psalms that are laments as well, they pour out their heart and emotions to God, and then they come back to what God has said about Himself, and what is true about God, and they praise and uplift the attributes of God. So if you've ever experienced some of the same anguish and feelings you see in the scriptures, take heart, but don't stop there, you always need to keep reading. Don't just be comforted by the fact that Bible writers experienced some of the same struggles and emotions that you do, *keep reading* so that you see how they dealt with them by God's grace, that's where the greater comfort is.

Jeremiah 'did not allow himself to get stuck in its mire. Just as he was pulled out of the miry cistern, so also was he gradually pulled out of this sense of total despair. The man who at one time said that God had shut out his prayer was once again praying to be remembered.'
(*Preacher's Commentary*, 19:356)

We as human beings may have time of great discouragement, or even depression – it is then that we must remember and trust and cling to God's attributes and character.

Our hope is not based on our circumstances or what we can see or our feelings, it is based on what we recall and know about God. We dwell on His attributes and what we know to be true about him, and that is what the author does in the following verses.

Psalm 77:7-11 (NASB95) 7 Will the Lord reject forever? And will He never be favorable again?
8 Has His lovingkindness ceased forever? Has His promise come to an end forever?
9 Has God forgotten to be gracious, Or has He in anger withdrawn His compassion? Selah ...
11 **I shall remember** the deeds of the Lord; Surely **I will remember** Your wonders of old.

We need to remember the deeds of the Lord and His wonders of old. So often in the Psalms they rehearse God's dealings because we are prone to forget and only focus on the present

So we saw that God is faithful in trials, now secondly,

2. God is faithful in steadfast love.

In v. 22 we have "steadfast love" in the ESV. Hebrew *Hesed* – "lovingkindness" (NASB) or "great love" (NIV) or "mercies" (NKJV) or "**faithful love**" (HCSB, which fits in this context)

God is faithful in His steadfast lovingkindnesses. The plural form, used here, recalls many acts or perhaps the riches of divine love

‘Not merely love, but loyal love; not merely kindness, but dependable kindness; not merely affection, but affection that has committed itself ... love gives itself in covenant and gladly promises devoted love in that covenant; the covenant partner then rests in the security of that promise and may appeal to it’ (Dale Ralph Davis, *I Samuel*, p. 207)

This Hebrew word appears 26 times in 26 verses in Psalm 136, with the repeated refrain: “His mercy endures forever” (NKJV) or “His lovingkindness is everlasting” (NAS)

Psalm 136:1-26 (NKJV)

- 1 Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.
- 2 Oh, give thanks to the God of gods! For His mercy endures forever.
- 3 Oh, give thanks to the Lord of lords! For His mercy endures forever:
- 4 To Him who alone does great wonders, For His mercy endures forever;
- 5 To Him who by wisdom made the heavens, For His mercy endures forever;
- 6 To Him who laid out the earth above the waters, For His mercy endures forever;
- 7 To Him who made great lights, For His mercy endures forever—
- 8 The sun to rule by day, For His mercy endures forever;
- 9 The moon and stars to rule by night, For His mercy endures forever.
- 10 To Him who struck Egypt in their firstborn, For His mercy endures forever;
- 11 And brought out Israel from among them, For His mercy endures forever;
- 12 With a strong hand, and with an outstretched arm, For His mercy endures forever;
- 13 To Him who divided the Red Sea in two, For His mercy endures forever;
- 14 And made Israel pass through the midst of it, For His mercy endures forever;
- 15 But overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea, For His mercy endures forever;
- 16 To Him who led His people through the wilderness, For His mercy endures forever;
- 17 To Him who struck down great kings, For His mercy endures forever;
- 18 And slew famous kings, For His mercy endures forever—
- 19 Sihon king of the Amorites, For His mercy endures forever;
- 20 And Og king of Bashan, For His mercy endures forever—
- 21 And gave their land as a heritage, For His mercy endures forever;
- 22 A heritage to Israel His servant, For His mercy endures forever.
- 23 Who remembered us in our lowly state, For His mercy endures forever;
- 24 And rescued us from our enemies, For His mercy endures forever;
- 25 Who gives food to all flesh, For His mercy endures forever.
- 26 Oh, give thanks to the God of heaven! For His mercy endures forever.

So God is faithful in suffering, in His steadfast love, now thirdly:

3. God is faithful in His sustaining mercy

Again not just mercy, but plural *mercies*, the plural emphasizing God’s manifold or abundant multifaceted and undeserved and unearned graciousnesses toward us.

Some translations have “compassions” in Lamentations 3:22 – the word used of a mother and her baby (*raḥāmîm*; from a word related to the womb, it describes the tender, caring love of a mother). In fact it’s used in the familiar story of Solomon and the two women who were claiming a particular baby as their own (1 Kings 3:26 “she yearned with compassion for her son” and that is how Solomon knew she was the true mother, because of this natural maternal compassion)

Lamentations 3:23 says of God’s compassions “They are new every morning”

Jeremiah himself new how morning itself (sunrise, fixed order) evidences God’s faithfulness

Jeremiah 31:35-38 (NASB95)

35 Thus says the Lord, Who gives the sun for light by day And the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, Who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar; The Lord of hosts is His name:

36 “If this fixed order departs From before Me,” declares the Lord, “Then the offspring of Israel also will cease From being a nation before Me forever.”

37 Thus says the Lord, “If the heavens above can be measured And the foundations of the earth searched out below, Then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel For all that they have done,” declares the Lord.

38 “Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when the city will be rebuilt for the Lord from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate.

The very fact that the sun still comes up and the moon and the stars are still in place and the fixed order of sunrises every morning is a reminder of God’s faithfulness to Israel, and there’s a new reminder every morning.

The Israelites in Moses’ day had an especially vivid illustration of this principle every morning, new manna was provided every morning as evidence of God’s mercy and lovingkindness. God was faithful to give them each day their daily bread from heaven, fresh and new every morning

Psalms 92:1-2 (NASB95)

1 It is good to give thanks to the Lord And to sing praises to Your name, O Most High;

2 To declare Your lovingkindness in the morning And Your faithfulness by night

Part of the way God’s mercy is seen every morning is the very fact that we wake up alive – what an amazing astonishing thing it is that God allows us to live another day! And Psalm 92 says we should thank Him for that and sing praises to Him for things like that.

The very fact that there still exists a remnant of His people proves the steadfastness of God’s mercy. Bad as things are, it is owing to the mercy of God that they are not worse.

Many of you have undergone difficult things, some in a past church or a past relationship or with a family member or a friend or employment or physical ailments – and you are tempted to ask “why did this have to happen to me?” And we can just as legitimately ask “why hasn’t more of this type of stuff happened to me? Why has God been so kind to me in my life?”

Great is thy faithfulness

When I graduated from College, they sang this song at the start of the service and I could barely get the words out, it was one of the most moving moments of my life, as I reflected on how God’s faithfulness had guided my life

But note that in the context here, God’s faithfulness is displayed in the fact that He has done exactly what He promised, including judging unrepentant Israel.

The covenant made with Israel in Deuteronomy 28 ... had not been abrogated. In fact God’s loyal love could be seen in His faithfulness in carrying out the curses He had promised while at the same time preserving a remnant. The judgment itself was a witness to the fact that God had not abandoned His people. (*Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 1:217)

We do not have national promises of restoration or preservation like Israel did, but we do have the promise in Hebrews 12 that individually if we are true children of our Heavenly Father He will be faithful to discipline those He loves, so even when we undergo His discipline we should take comfort in the reminder that He is faithful in all He says (not just in the things we like or just in the good things)

Jesus promised “in this world you will have trouble” so when we have trouble, it is evidence that Jesus is faithful to His promises. But He also finished that sentence with “take heart, I have overcome the world.” Our focus is not to be on this world, but on heavenly and spiritual things and the Christ who has overcome all. Is He your focus?

GREAT – Psalm 36:5 “Your love O Lord reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness reaches to the skies”

1 John 1:9 *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

1 Corinthians 10:13 *No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it*

So we’ve seen that God is Faithful, now in closing GOD IS GOOD

v. 24 The Lord is my portion

Notice already you see the change in Jeremiah as he has reoriented his thinking to God’s attributes and character. God is, not will be, is now my portion – He is my inheritance, He is all I need, I find satisfaction in Him and Him alone, not in my circumstances.

Therefore I have hope in him

Hope here is a confident expectation based on God’s goodness and sufficiency, we find all our happiness in our good and faithful God

v. 25 The Lord is good

In the Hebrew, the word “good” comes first in verse 25, 26 & 27 for emphasis. This is all about God’s goodness

This word “good” is the same used in Gen 1:1–2:4, where the creation is described as being “good.”

Notice the “good” defined here is further explained as including:

- waiting silently (v. 26) [in other words without complaining, v. 39]
- bearing a yoke (v. 27)
- grief (v. 32)
- whatever leads to repentance (v. 40)

Rom 2:4 *“the goodness of God leads you to repentance”* (NKJV)

‘Lamentations 3:25–27 reveals some qualities of genuine faith: (1) belief in God’s goodness to those who trust in him; (2) confidently and without complaint waiting for God’s help; and (3) willingness to accept hardship and testing, knowing that they strengthen faith. Those who truly trust in the Lord do not complain or despair even when in trouble ... Those who learn in youth to bear suffering are better prepared for the hardships that may come in old age. (*New American Commentary*, 16:474)

But verse 25 does not just say the Lord is good, this goodness is for a particular kind of person – who WAITS for and SEEKS God

To wait is one of the hardest things for us to do in our hustle and bustle world, high-speed Internet minded, multitasking, fast-food, drive through, instant gratification mindset, results-oriented society – you mean I have to wait? Isaiah 40:31 says *But those who wait on the Lord Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.*(NKJV)

Perhaps one of the reasons we feel so weary and faint and weak and stressed and worn out and spiritually feeble is that we don’t know what it means to wait for the Lord.

Psalm 37:7 (NASB95)

7 Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who carries out wicked schemes.

Psalm 37:34 (NASB95)

34 Wait for the Lord and keep His way, And He will exalt you

Sometimes people will see “the Lord is good” like it says in Lamentations 3:25 and they’ll say “well, how could a good God allow _____ to happen to me.”

Harold Kushner wrote a book about 30 years ago called *When Bad Things Happen to Good people* where he argued that God cannot be both good and totally sovereign, so he concluded that God is in fact not in control and that many things happen for no reason at all

But the Bible refutes his presupposition that we are good people, and also affirms God’s goodness AND sovereignty over all things

³⁷ *Who is there who speaks and it comes to pass, Unless the Lord has commanded it?* ³⁸ *Is it not from the mouth of the Most High That both good and ill go forth?*

We are all sinners and live in a sinful world, so verse 39 says why should any of us complain when we suffer these effects. Verse 40 says we need to examine our ways and return to the Lord Notice also at the end of v. 36 it says there are things God does not approve of (ex: human injustice / cruelty), but then it says in the next verse nothing can come to pass that the Lord has not decreed.

So we don't want to answer the question about God's character and goodness in suffering superficially or without compassion, but notice in Lamentations 3:25, it does NOT say the Lord is good to everyone – it those who wait for Him, AND those who seek Him

A good place to start is do you seek the Lord? And in counseling with people, if you start first by talking about their relationship with Christ, sometimes it seems the deeper problem is that they've never truly sought the Lord, they're not saved.

Isaiah 55:6-7 (NASB95)

6 Seek the Lord while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near.

7 Let the wicked forsake his way And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the Lord, And He will have compassion on him, And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.

In Romans 8:28, the promise of all things working together for good is also qualified and limited to those who love God, to those who are saved / called. God sovereignly works all things but does so without being the author of evil, or the direct agent of sin, man is responsible for his actions but God is absolutely in control.

Thomas Watson published *All Things for Good* in 1663, one year after he and about 2,000 other pastors were ejected from their churches by the Church of England and suffered great hardship and persecution. He speaks from personal experience, but more importantly from deep understanding, love of God and Scripture. In the great Puritan tradition, the entire work is a series of sermons on Romans 8:28 and its related themes. This truth was not only theoretical but his heart confidence was in the good God who works all things, including sinful actions and suffering, for His glory and our ultimate good. Part of how God worked all things for good in Watson's time was by preserving through his suffering, this God-centered book that can richly benefit us hundreds of years later. Here's some samples just from the first couple chapters alone.

“No vessel can be made of gold without fire; so it is impossible that we should be made vessels of honour, unless we are melted and refined in the furnace of affliction ... As the painter intermixes bright colours with dark shadows, so the wise God mixes mercy with judgment” (p. 26)

“Luther said that he could never rightly understand some of the Psalms, till he was in affliction ... A sick-bed often teaches more than a sermon. We can best see the [ugliness of our] sin in the glass of affliction. Affliction teaches us to know ourselves. In prosperity we are for the most part strangers to ourselves. God makes us know affliction, that we may better know ourselves” (p. 27)

“Afflictions work for good, as they are the means of loosening our hearts from the world. When you dig away the earth from the root of a tree, it is to loosen the tree from the earth; so God digs away our earthly comforts to loosen our hearts from the earth.” (p. 29)

“Do not mistake me; I do not say that of their own nature the worst things are good, for they are a fruit of the curse, but though they are naturally evil, yet the wise overruling hand of God dispose[s] and sanctif[ies] them ... It is one heart-quieting consideration in all the afflictions that befall us, that God has a special hand in them: *'The Almighty hath afflicted me'* (Ruth 1.21) ...

[Job said] *The Lord hath taken away.* 'Whoever brings an affliction to us, it is God that sends it.' (p. 25)

The great saints of the past believed the reformed doctrine of God's predestining all things, and that everything ultimately was from him. God's sovereignty was not an abstract subject for debate in theological chat rooms, it was means for survival.

C.H. Spurgeon: "It would be a very sharp and trying experience to me to think that I have an affliction which God never sent me, that the bitter cup was never filled by his hand, that my trials were never measured out by him, nor sent to me by his arrangement of their weight and quantity" (Darrel W. Amundsen, "The Anguish and Agonies of Charles Spurgeon," in *Christian History*, Issue 29, Volume X, No. 1, p. 25)

George Muller when his wife died preached her funeral sermon from Psalm 119:68: "Thou art good and doest good."

Sarah Edwards, when she heard that her husband Jonathan had died of a smallpox vaccination at the age of 54, she wrote to her daughter: "What shall I say? A holy and **good** God has covered us with a dark cloud. O that we may kiss the rod and lay our hands on our mouths! The Lord has done it. He has made me adore His **goodness**, that we had him so long. But my God lives; and He has my heart. O what a legacy my husband, and your father, has left us. We are all given to God; and there I am and love to be."

Going back to a dear friend of my wife's who I mentioned in the beginning of the sermon lost her child. How does the truth of this message work itself out in real life in our day and age?

Here is one example (and notice not only a high view of God's sovereignty which was taught at our former church, but notice the affirmations of God's goodness through the trial):

Date: Wed, 13 Sep 2006 16:47:51 -0700 (PDT)
 From: <Name withheld>
 Subject: "The blow of His hand"

Dear Friends,

The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. There is nothing outside His care and I am thankful for His **goodness** to me and my family. Two days ago, I started to spot and was able to see the doctor today to check if [our] Baby was still alive. It was obvious to me as the ultrasound magnified my little bundle of joy that my baby was with the Lord. The Lord took His child home ten days ago and my body is now slowly rejecting the baby. It was a sad moment but I thank the Lord for His **goodness** and His love that allowed this to happen from start to finish. My baby's work is done. The world may say "It was not meant to be" but I say yes it was. For the Lord, used this little one to teach me a life lesson in trusting Him. I am thankful that I can say that what Jesus did for me on the cross, that my Heavenly Father is my shepherd, my provider, my protector, my comforter, and my all in all.

The Lord has shown His **goodness** these last two weeks. Not knowing I had lost the baby, He allowed for my heart to be prepared to be comforted by a message written by a woman who almost lost her baby. She writes that no matter what the end result was in the life of her child, that she was to rest in His hand and trust in Him. My thoughts dwelled on God's sovereignty character and that all He allows works together for my **good** and His glory. In His **goodness**, He has allowed for me to slowly lose the baby with no major bleeding or cramping but I am particular in awe that He did not allow for me to lose the baby any other week but this week of which [my husband] has off from his teaching job. What amazes me the most about our Lord is care, love and perfect timing. I started to spot on Monday, of which [my husband] had off from both jobs ... I been able to manage with the boys on Tuesday and today with the Lord grace and [my husband's] help during the day, but tomorrow, he will be off again from both jobs which will be helpful because I am schedule for a DNC. All, that to say, God is so gracious and **good** to care for me and my family during this sad loss in our lives. Praise the Lord.

Thank you for praying for [our] Baby ... God has answered our prayers in more ways than you know.

In Spurgeon's book, *Beside Still Waters*, he writes "Some have learned to trust the smile of His face, but they must also learn to trust the blow of His hand." As we all well know, both are for our **good** and His glory. This quote was written in the woman's article whose message encouraged me and was used to prepare me for this day.

To God be the Glory,

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