

# Heaven-30 (The Eternal Perspective: the 100% Goodness of God and the EP on Suffering)

## Bible Doctrines (The True-Good-Beautiful )

### T/G/B

Eschatology  
Thanatology  
Ecclesiology  
Israelology  
Dispensationalism  
Doxology  
Hodology  
Soteriology  
Hamartiology  
Natural Law  
Anthropology  
Angelology  
Pneumatology  
Christology  
Paterology  
Trinitarianism  
Cosmology  
Theology Proper  
Bibliology  
Natural Theology

**Psalm 73:24 outlines two privileges. Consider the goodness of God: Jer. 29:11; Lam. 3:22-25.**

**Preparation: Concurrentism of 1 John 1:7 for true fellowship with God.**

1. Spiritual foundations: More on the nature of the human will, volition, and the fallen nature.
2. Philosophy of language-35 (1 slide): Overview of realism and non-realism.
3. Heaven-30:— Heaven: Eternal perspective: The 100% goodness of God and the EP on suffering.

**Spiritual foundations: history of conduitism and more on the wills and volition.**

1. While an informed conduitist would be right to point out that the important thing is application of doctrine, the problem is that his conduit system makes application difficult or impossible unless he is in a confessed up state. In other words, his system does not allow for application of doctrine at any time and in any place. It is all dependent upon the state of the conduit, which is connected to unconfessed known and unknown sins.
2. Moreover, under the conduit system, if one is sad or depressed then all he would need to do would be to confess sins and the conduit system is quickly restored. Is this what we find in reality, namely, that upon confession one is taken from sadness/depression to joy in a conduit fashion?
3. The attitude of the conduitist toward sin is generally much different than the concurrentist. Conduitist tends to focus on not sinning in fear of breaking fellowship whereas the concurrentist focuses on walking in the light, which would include confession, but not with same focus.
4. The concurrentist would view divine discipline for sins within a corrective or training framework of character and virtue with the goal of sharing in the holiness of God (Heb. 12:4-11; Psa. 32, 51). The conduitist tends to focus on function/conduit. The concurrentist understands that it is an issue of virtue. The conduitist sees the issue as being functional or operational.
5. The conduitist tends to think of sin as something foreign in his body that his pure soul really does not desire whereas the concurrentist seeks understanding. The concurrentist asks “why do I see that as a good?” The conduitist says, “my problem is a distinct sin nature in my body.”
6. Review of flow chart on the next page and overview of the distinction between hylomorphism and Platonic/Cartesian dualism regarding the soul and the body and the implications for man’s appetites, sin nature, virtue, and the role of the Holy Spirit in human anthropology.

5: Hermeneutics

4: Language-35

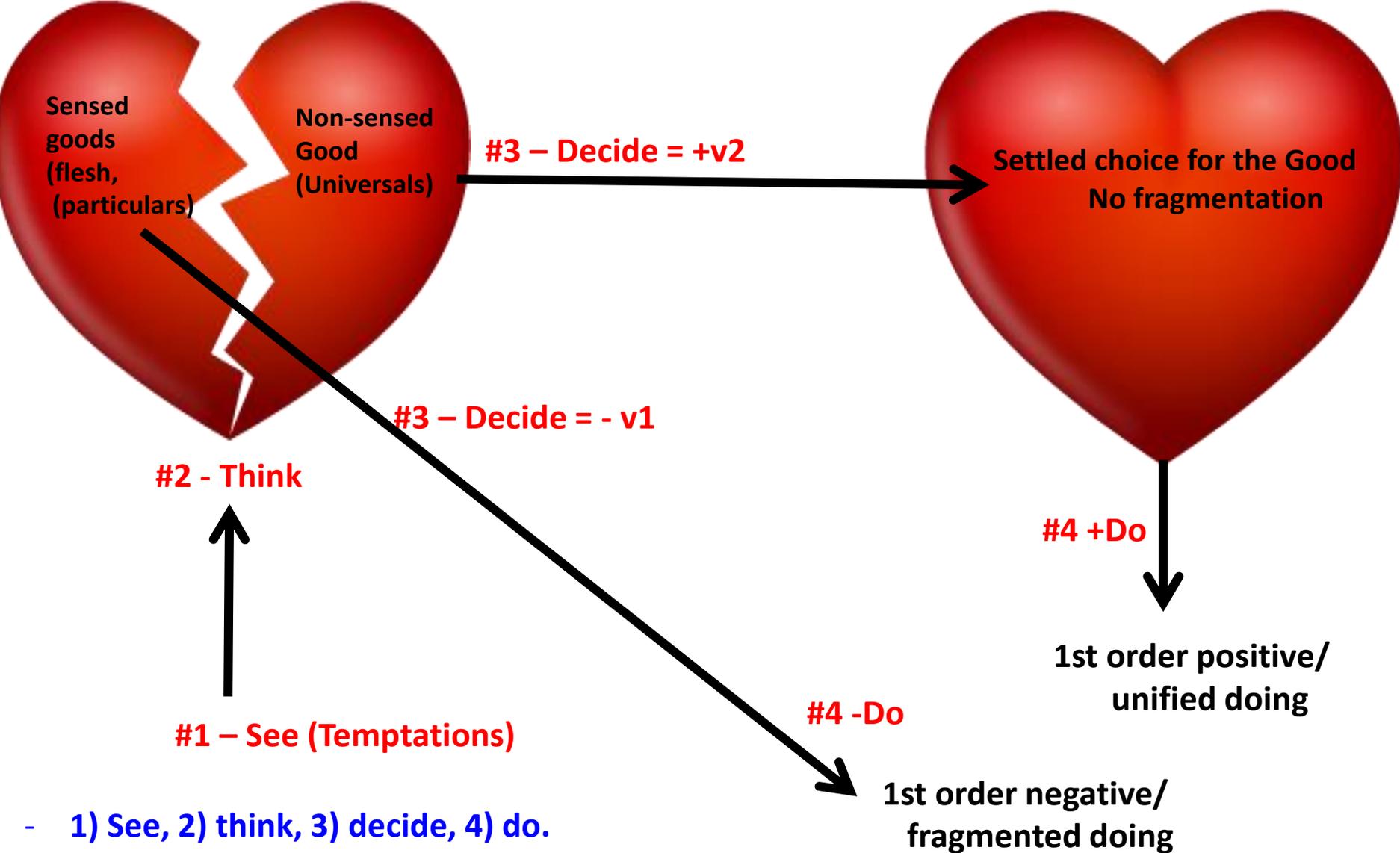
3: Epistemology 32  
- Existence 50  
- History 50

2: Metaphysics 32  
- Trans. 50

1: Reality  
- Logic 32,  
- Truth 32

**Divided heart: 2<sup>ND</sup> order battling wills**

**2<sup>ND</sup> order unified volition (+V)**



Sensed goods  
(flesh,  
(particulars)

Non-sensed  
Good  
(Universals)

#3 - Decide = +v2

Settled choice for the Good  
No fragmentation

#3 - Decide = - v1

#2 - Think

#4 +Do

1st order positive/  
unified doing

#1 - See (Temptations)

#4 -Do

1st order negative/  
fragmented doing

- 1) See, 2) think, 3) decide, 4) do.
- Volition is an effective will/desire

## Outline

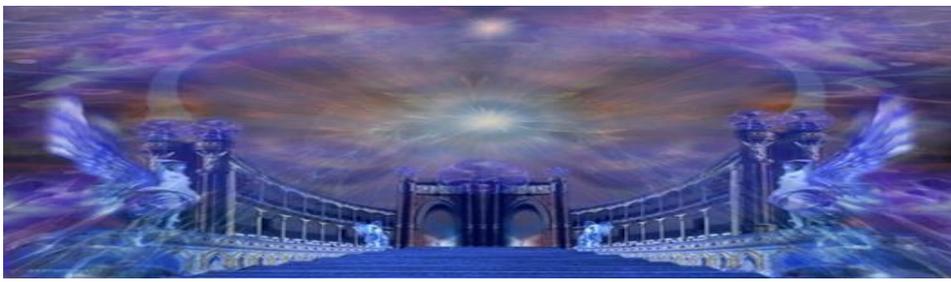
- ✓ Introduction
- ✓ What is philosophy of language?
- ✓ Theories of meaning
- ✓ Plato (428-348 BC)
- ✓ Aristotle (384-322 BC)
- Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913)
- Gottlob Frege (1848-1925)
- Bertrand Russell (1872-1970)
- Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951).
- Martin Heidegger (1889-1976).
- W. V. O. Quine (1908-2000).
- Noam Chomsky (1928-)
- Realist view of meaning.
- Foundation of meaning.
- Communication of meaning.
- Elements of language.
- Function of language
- Meaningful God-talk.
- Analytic Philosophy
- Conclusion.
- Analogy.
- Metaphysical analogy.

## Philosophy of Language-35 Aristotle

### Aristotle—the Realist

1. There are only two views regarding language and reality: non-realism and realism.
  - a. Non-realists do not accept the metaphysical constituents of reality known as natures. There are no true species for the non-realist. For example, they say that all a tree, or a rabbit, or a person is is a conglomeration of atoms with a particular physical shape that we “name” by their shapes. This is natural reductionism and untenable. If there is no metaphysical structure, there are not only no essences of any kind, human or otherwise. Likewise, there is no such *thing* as universals or any non-physical entity like love, justice, property. The non-realist approach is nominalistic and in biblical movements it translates to knowledge and understanding limited to words and definitions rather than directly exploring essences.
  - b. Realism posits metaphysical principles of reality that in accordance with the biblical view of reality and the undeniable reality that all human beings acknowledge. Realists are the minority in philosophy of language/meaning. Notable realists include Aristotle, Aquinas, Adler, Geisler, Howe. Only realism provides the epistemological basis for there to be an isomorphic relationship between the mind and the thing in the world. Moreover, only the Realist can account for universals and how the universal comes to exist in the mind (e.g., by the interpenetration by the senses in particulars & abstraction by the mind.
2. The big distinction between non-realism and realism is that the former views the external world as only physical things extended in space whereas classical realism views the external world made up of existence and essence. It is not hard to see how non-realism opens the door to deism and lack of appreciation of Esse-esse contingency. Only by recognizing that the world is made up of essence and existence can there be unity between the mind and the world.
3. Aristotle’s key passage: *De Interpretatione* 1, 16a3-8: *Spoken words then are symbols of passions of the soul and written words are symbols of spoken words. And just as written letters are not the same for all humans neither are spoken words But what these primarily are signs of, the passions of the soul, are the same for all, as also are those things of which our passions are likenesses.*

**Warnings:**  
**Matt 6:19-34**  
**Rev. 14:13**  
**2 Cor 5:10**  
**Rev. 19:8**



**Christ and the believer:**

Matthew 6:23, *"if then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness."*

How great the darkness:

1. Inability to live the CWL, Matt. 5:1-12; Col. 3:1-2; 1 Jn 3:3; Philip. 3:18-19.
2. A dark mind: agnosticism, fideism, and skepticism.
3. Fear of death rather than Heb. 2:15.
4. Lack of spiritual virtue, which can only be developed by EP, 2 Pet. 1:5-11
5. Life like an unbeliever—no desire for Heaven.
6. Lacks confidence that God is 100% good 100% of the time.

**Temporary Heaven**  
**John 17:24; Philip 1:21-23; 2 Cor. 5:8; Rev. 1-19**



**Temporary Hell**  
**Luke 16:19-31**



**Eternal Heaven/Earth**  
**Rev. 21-22**

**Christ and the unbeliever:**

**Mark 8:36** "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul?"

**Matthew 7:13** "Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. <sup>14</sup> "For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it."

No innocent person ever goes to Hell. Moreover, there is nothing evil about Hell. People go there because of rejection of God's grace.

**Eternal Hell**  
**Rev. 20:11-15; Matt 10:28-30**



## **Heaven 30: Eternal Perspective: The 100% Goodness of God and the EP on Suffering**

1. The need for a perspective adjustment: It is essential that every believer develop an eternal perspective (EP) possible only by the WOG. For only through the EP can the believer live the supernatural CWL, which requires putting God, His absolute goodness, whole truth, and all of life in its proper place.
  
2. The need for grace and concurrence: Overview of the three concurrent causes that are required to gain the EP: The human will (+w2, +v2, +v1), God the Holy Spirit, and the Word of God. All three concurrent causes are required before the potential of EP can be actualized.

3. Romans 8:18 *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.*
- a. Paul's one-word answer to the question, "Why suffering?" is "glory." This, of course, refers to eternal glory.
  - b. Any teaching on suffering that is not oriented to the EP of Heaven is critically deficient regarding God's will in suffering. Moreover, no solution to the problem of pain which does not make Heaven the center focus can be called biblical or Christian.
  - c. Every believer has the potential to live in the blessedness of the EP. However, it takes God the Holy Spirit as the efficient cause and the Word of God as the material cause to make that potential an actuality. In short, we need God's help to know, to believe, and to live in its realities.
  - d. There will come a time when all believers will agree with Paul's statement.

4. 2 Corinthians 4:17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, 18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.
  - a. For Paul's "light affliction," see 2 Cor. 11:23-38. He was no naïve idealist insulated from evil and suffering.
  - b. "Light" is a relative term. To us they may feel heavy. But when they are compared to the EP, then they are light by comparison.
  - c. "Momentary": although a lengthy period of great suffering may not seem "momentary." The fact/truth is that it is. In eternity, you and everyone else will agree that the afflictions here are momentary, light, and not worthy of comparison with the glory that we will enjoy for billions of years.

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- d. “Eternal weight of glory”: Glory is the state of high honor, involving a brilliant, radiant beauty. Our glory is always secondary, not primary. God is always the Source who bestows an eternal glory rooted in Himself. God will be glorified by imparting His honor to us and sharing it with us.
- e. Paul is making the point that our sufferings will result in our greater good because we will be better off *eternally* because the temporal sufferings in this life.

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- e. From Paul's perspective (EP), this eternal trade-off will prove to be the greatest of bargains. Even if someone lived to 114 years old and suffered every moment of his life, that is still nothing compared to the more than billions and billions of years in glory.
- f. Suffering is one of the most powerful catalysts in getting us to stop taking life for granted and to contemplate the big picture of God and the EP.

5. Luke 6:18 “ He was healing them all. . . .20, And turning His gaze on His disciples, He began to say, "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. 21 "Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh. 22 "Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize you, and cast insults at you, and spurn your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man. 23 "Be glad in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for in the same way their fathers used to treat the prophets
- a. The hope that Christ offers is heavenly. Even those He healed would one day grow old, likely suffer from disease, and die.
  - b. Jesus promises that the hungry will find satisfaction. He assures those with tears that they will laugh in Heaven. He tells the persecuted to leap for joy *now* because of their great reward *then*.
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The Book of Job teaches many things about the goodness of God and suffering

1. It teaches us that insisting on having all of the answers for pain and suffering dooms the believer to a life of frustration and resentment toward God.
2. Note that God never becomes defensive about the problem of evil. He never even tells Job why. Rather, He concludes with something like, 'You are unhappy with Me, Job. You have questioned me. You assume you know far more than you do. Now it's my turn to ask you some questions.' It should be remembered that God does not owe us an explanation of anything. God did not even need to tell Job to shut up.

3. Job illustrates the absurdity of making ourselves God's judge. To judge God is absurd because we lack God's omniscience, omnipotence, wisdom, holiness, justice, and goodness. He is infinite and we are finite. Our inability to understand all God's purposes in evil and suffering should not surprise us.
4. God never faults Job for being finite, only for failing to recognize that he has no right to pass judgment on the wisdom and goodness of an infinite *Esse*.

**Job 38:4** "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell *Me*, if you have understanding

5. It was only after Job saw the greatness of God that he shut his mouth.

**Job 42:1** Then Job answered the LORD, and said, <sup>2</sup> "I know that Thou canst do all things, And that no purpose of Thine can be thwarted. <sup>3</sup> 'Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?' "Therefore I have declared that which I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know." <sup>4</sup> 'Hear, now, and I will speak; I will ask Thee, and do Thou instruct me.' <sup>5</sup> "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; But now my eye sees Thee; <sup>6</sup> Therefore I retract, And I repent in dust and ashes."

6. Despite all appearances, God is 100% sovereign, 100% good, 100% of the time—even in the most terrible situations. God is either in absolute control or we live in a world that is governed by chance, people, and demons.
  - a. God is already restraining an enormous amount of evil and suffering.
    - *2 Thessalonians 2:7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. We should thank Him for this daily.*
    - Why is it that when chaos breaks out, it is consider the exception rather than the rule? Fatal car and airplane accidents are statistically rare.

- Why haven't tyrants already destroyed this planet?
- What has kept infectious diseases and natural disasters from killing 99% of the world's population rather than less than 1%.
- What has kept our organs from failing more often?
- Even on the terrible day when the New York's Twin Towers collapsed 15,000 came out alive.
- If God permitted people to follow their every evil inclination all the time, life on this planet cease to exist.
- Severe suffering is unacceptable to us precisely because we are unaccustomed to it.

- b. Fallen human beings could not survive in a perfectly just world where God punished evil immediately.
- What if every time a person sinned he was judged? Say that the instant a person became selfish, arrogant, idolatrous, gluttonous, lustful, ungrateful, a gossip, or a liar. What if God judged Him with a bolt of lightning to his brain that instant?
  - Do you believe that the world would be a better place if people were immediately judged for their sins?
  - Do you really want nothing but totally effective, instantaneous justice only to be followed by people being sent to Hell? What about Moses, David, Saul of Tarsus?
  - If God had not permitted the evil that I perpetrated as an unbeliever, then I would never have been able to enjoy life with Him now.

7. We are not positioned to know how much suffering is required to accomplish the God's best eternal purposes, nor how much it might hinder those purposes for God to make these purposes obvious.
  
8. The argument that a good and all-powerful God should not permit pointless suffering assumes—without proving—that “pointless suffering” exists. There is no way any finite person can see any suffering as pointless. Only God is in the position to determine what is and isn't pointless. Some of the most meaningful accomplishments of our lives come in the context of our most difficult, seemingly pointless suffering.

9. God's absolute control explicitly declared. We do not live in a world governed by chance or people or Satan or devils.
  - a. Matthew 10:29 "Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And *yet* not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father.
  - b. John 21:18 "Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself, and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go."
  - c. Ephesians 1:11 . . . according to His purpose who works (ἐνεργοῦντος) all things after the counsel of His will,
  - d. Colossians 1:17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together (τὰ πάντα ἐν αὐτῷ συνέστηκεν).
  - e. Eph 3:11 This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord,

10. To recognize God's sovereignty, even over Satan's work, is to advance in the biblical and eternal perspective, the place of true Christian living. Moreover, what God permits is very active and strong: What He permits happens. What He does not permit does not happen. And He has specific purposes in mind in regard to evil.

**Job 42:11** Then all his brothers, and all his sisters, and all who had known him before, came to him, and they ate bread with him in his house; and they consoled him and comforted him for all the evil that the LORD had brought on him. And each one gave him one piece of money, and each a ring of gold.

11. Too many Christians get distracted by assigning their difficulties to Satan or to people or to self. You can have victory by knowing that God works through everything that comes our way. God can make everything good, from human genetics under the Fall, an unreasonable boss, or a surgeon's mishap to a horrible accident involving a small child. All we need to know is that it is all under God's control. And He always desires to fulfill His good purpose in all things, He is 100% good, 100% of the time.

12. Satan loves to get believers to think that God is not perfectly good. He knows that if we are not absolutely convinced that God is absolute Good, it will create a host of evil within our souls, beginning with lack of love for Him. Separation from understanding God's goodness creates distance and even rage against God for doing so little for us according to what we think is good. Then, we will choose to write our own scripts of life.

13. God's goodness includes a number of His other attributes:

- a. His mercy, which is His goodness toward those in distress;
- b. His grace, which is His goodness toward those who deserve only punishment;
- c. His patience, which is His goodness toward those who continue to sin over a period of time.

d. God's goodness is linked to His love

Psalm 23:6 Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

e. God's goodness is linked to His holiness

Psalm 65:4 How blessed is the one whom Thou dost choose, and bring near to Thee, To dwell in Thy courts. We will be satisfied with the goodness of Thy house, Thy holy temple.

f. God manifests His goodness to all people,

Psalm 145:9 The LORD is good to all, And His mercies are over all His works.

Acts 14:17 and yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.”

Matthew 5:45 in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

- g. God's goodness is absolute, there is absolutely no evil in Him. All evil is essentially defined by its absence of God (even opposition to God). He will never accommodate evil in any way.

Habakkuk 1:13 You are too just to tolerate evil; you are unable to condone wrongdoing.

Matthew 19:17 And He said to him, "Why are you asking Me about what is good? There is only One who is good; but if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments."

James 1:13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.

James 1:17 Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow.

14. We humans define goodness from our finite and fallen perspective. Then, far too often, we tend to criticize God for failing to be good in our eyes.
  - a. Man's standards compared to God's are much lower and debased, though this does not keep man from saying 'If I were all powerful I would stop A, B, or C.'
  - b. Imagine your child saying 'if I were you I would never discipline me or give me a shot or make me take that awful tasting medicine. Just let me run free in the neighbor and do whatever I want.' As a loving parent you never base your standards on your child, but on your knowledge and integrity and love. A loving parent makes their children eat veggies, clean their rooms, get their shots, and stay at home at nights. This is different from parents who let their kids do anything, including hanging out at the mall, and sleeping over with their sleazy buddies.
  - c. Illustration of a father who is seen slapping his son as he speeds down the road. What appears harsh could be great acts of love.

15. The existence of evil does not contradict God's goodness since God can use evil to bring about a greater good.
  
16. A good God will eliminate evil as far as He can without losing a greater good or bringing about a greater evil. God could eliminate some evil, but the result would be a greater evil. He could have killed Adam and Eve after they sinned, but then there would be no human race.

17. Kindness is not the same as love and goodness. Kindness does not care if the object is good or bad but only if the object escapes suffering. But love cares for the welfare – not just the momentary preferences of the one loved. That is why a kind stranger might offer children ice-cream every afternoon as they bicycle by his house while parents who love them far more would not.

18. Hardships cultivate Christ-likeness in us and prepares us for greatness. What does not cultivate greatness is just feeling good. We do not need God's help with just feeling good about ourselves. We should never mistake God's tolerance and patience with complacency (cf., Rom 2:4).
  
19. In sum, God's goodness does not make Him an endless dispenser of pleasures. Goodness involves holiness and justice. Rather than indulge us with what we think we want, God considers the long term effects of what we actually need and really need and should want (+vol2).

20. We do not like to suffer, but that preference does not establish as fact that our suffering cannot work for our ultimate good. Most of us understand that pain is not inherently evil.
21. God cares most, not about making us comfortable, but about teaching us to grow up spiritually, be better, have a deeper faith, and love Him more purely. He allows us to suffer to make us better on our journey to Heaven—where at last every sorry we taste will prove to be the best possible thing that could have happened.
22. God's superior goodness is the source of all lesser goods, beauties, and pleasures in the universe, cf., Js. 1:17.

23. It is very displeasing to God when we look at evil and suffering and conclude that God is not good.
24. It really is the goodness of God that is behind our afflictions. For God to withhold certain afflictions would be to withhold 100% goodness.

Psalm 119:71 It is good for me that I was afflicted, That I may learn Thy statutes.

Psalm 119:75 I know, O LORD, that Thy judgments are righteous, And that in faithfulness Thou hast afflicted me.

25. God's goodness on this earth is but a small sampling of the goodness of God that we will see in the ultimate Heaven when He will remove all evil, Rev 21:3-5. Then, we will see it all, the beauty of it all. We will be united with Beauty as we are united with God and His restored creation.

26. More on the eternal perspective re: God's evaluation of the church age believer.
- a. The point in the JSJC is accountability. Yes, both the believer and unbeliever are held accountable. The exception is that the believer is never accountable for his personal sins, Rom. 8:1. This is the single greatest blessing! Moreover, the JSJC is only for the bride of Christ.
  - b. The central issue in all evaluations is love for the Lord and things of the God. Love really is the root, hinge, and central factor in all rewards. It is love for the Lord that motivates all activity worthy to be honored, 2 Tim 4:8; 1 Cor. 13; Mat 25:46; John 13:34-35; 1 Jn. 4:7-16.

- c. We will be evaluated by how our lives and ministry followed the Word of God, Jn 14:15. The Scriptures, with their commands and principles, will form the objective standard used by the Lord. He will not reward us based on traditions. It is all about His revealed Word. The study and application of God's Word is a key to our rewarding. How seriously do we take the Master's instructions? There are going to be a lot of surprises, especially in the ranks of liberal churches.
  
- d. We will be evaluated based on the extent to which we have been faithful stewards of all that He has entrusted to us, 1 Cor. 4:2; Matt. 25:14-30; Luke 19:11-27. Believers must always remember that they are held accountable for what has been given to them. Not what has been given to another.

- e. We will be evaluated on the basis of our motives, 1 Cor. 4:5. The Lord is not interested only in what we do but also why we do it (or do not do it). Those who live and serve with a desire to please and honor Christ will receive great reward. Those who live and serve motivated by self-promotion, financial gain, or some other illicit goal will not receive rewards.
  
- f. Negatively speaking, there will be loss of reward and a sense of shame for those who lived self-centered lives instead of Christ-centered lives, 1 Cor 3:15; 1 Jn 2:28.

- g. Positively speaking, rewards will consist of many blessings and privileges such as
- Serving Christ in greater ways in the Kingdom (Mat. 25:19-23; Lk 19:16-19),
  - Enjoying special joy and fellowship (Mat 25:21, 23; 1 Pt 4:12-13).
  - Being recipients of divine commendation, Matt 25:21
  - Receiving a variety of crowns, 1 Cor. 9:25; 1 Thess 2:19; 2 Tim. 4:8; James 1:12; 1 Pt 5:4.
  - Receiving rewards simply for remaining faithful under trials, Js 1:2, 3, 12; Rev. 2:10; 3:11.

27. It will be the bride's exalted privilege to reign WITH the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. There is a sense in which the bride is a co-sharer of the reign whereas others are only subjects of the King.
- a. Both God the Father and God the Son are portrayed as reigning on thrones in Heaven. So, what will the Holy Spirit's role be? He will be involved in restoring the Earth (Gen 1:2; Isa 32:15). He will continue to indwell us (John 14:6) and raise our minds and wills to glorify and worship the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. He will empower us to rule wisely with Christ.

- b. God created Adam and Eve to rule over the earth. Jesus is the second Adam, the church is His queen. As the new head of the human race, Christ with His beloved bride will accomplish what was entrusted to Adam and Eve on the old earth.
  
- c. Church age believers will rule over cities, other saints, and angels, Luke 19:17; 1 Cor. 6:2-3; Rev. 2:26; 3:21; 5:9-10; 7:14-15; 21:24, 26; 22:2, 5.

28. It will be the bride's exalted privilege to spend eternity in Christ's palaces and on His throne. We will be companions and partners with Christ for all of eternity. He is preparing us for that now.
  
29. The challenge for the Bride now is remain pure to Christ alone, 2 Cor. 11:2. We should never be tempted to live for the world as if it were our true lover and standard of value (1 Jn 2:15; Js 4:4; Rom. 12:2; Matt. 6:24).