

Taste and See: The Goodness of God in Psalm 34

What do we actually mean when we say, “God is good” and “take refuge in Christ”—and how do we live that out every day?

I. THE GOODNESS OF GOD: THE MAIN THEME OF SCRIPTURE

Key Scripture: Psalm 34; Psalm 145:9 – “The LORD is good to all...”

Supporting Scriptures: Matthew 5:45; James 1:17; Romans 8:28

A. GOD’S GOODNESS BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER THE GARDEN

- God was good before Eden, He is good now, and He will still be good after everything passes away
- His character cannot change—He *is* good, so He cannot be anything else
- Even in a “wild and crazy” generation, God’s goodness has not diminished

B. GOD’S GOODNESS TO ALL PEOPLE

- “The LORD is good to all... even to those who hate Him and curse His name”
- Sun and rain fall on the just and the unjust – common grace for everyone
- Every good and perfect gift comes from the Father above (James 1:17)

C. GOD’S GOODNESS WORKING IN OUR TROUBLES

- God works all things together for good to those who love Him and are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28)
 - Even when a situation itself is not good, God can bring good out of it
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II. DAVID’S STORY: PRAISE IN THE MIDDLE OF DANGER

Key Scripture: Psalm 34 superscription; 1 Samuel 21

A. DAVID’S CONTEXT: RUNNING FROM ONE ENEMY INTO ANOTHER

- David is fleeing Saul—hunted, betrayed, with soldiers and bounty on his head
- He runs into another king who also wants him dead (Achish/Abimelech)

- David pretends to be insane: drooling, scratching on doors
- The king dismisses him: “Why bring this madman to me?”—and David escapes

B. DAVID’S RESPONSE: “I WILL BLESS THE LORD AT ALL TIMES”

Psalm 34:1 – “I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.”

- After near death, David’s first response is praise, not complaint
- Application: Has the Lord ever brought you out of something?
 - Running from one problem and fell into another?
 - Did He deliver you out of *both*?
- The right response: continual praise, not occasional thanks

C. PRAISE, WORSHIP, AND HOLY BOASTING

- Praise: telling of God’s goodness and what He has done
- Worship: pouring out the heart in honest relationship and surrender
- “My soul makes its boast in the LORD”—I will brag only on Christ and the goodness of God
- We have nothing to boast in apart from Him—without Christ, we are nothing

D. THE POWER OF TESTIMONY

- “The humble will hear it and rejoice” – others in similar situations gain faith
- When we testify, discouraged people are strengthened and learn to trust the Lord

III. “OH, MAGNIFY THE LORD”: WHAT WE LIFT UP GROWS IN OUR SIGHT

Key Scripture: Psalm 34:3 – “Oh, magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together.”

A. MAGNIFYING CHRIST, NOT THE ENEMY

- The world (including Hollywood) often magnifies the devil and darkness
- One day we will look at Satan in judgment and say, “Is this the one who caused all this trouble?”
- We are called to magnify the One who is truly worthy—Christ Jesus

B. SEEKING THE LORD AND FREEDOM FROM FEAR

Psalm 34:4 – “I sought the LORD, and He answered me, and delivered me from all my fears.”

- Personal testimony: once afraid of everything—darkness, water, hell—but no longer bound by fear
- Promise: those who truly seek Him will find Him, and He delivers from fear

C. FAITH THAT CLINGS LIKE GLUE

- “Whoever believes in Him will not be put to shame” – trusting, relying, *adhering* to Christ
- Picture: Christ as a life preserver in the middle of a vast ocean—hold on and don’t let go
- Our only hope is Christ Jesus—no backup plan, no other refuge

D. ANGELIC PROTECTION AND GOD’S SOVEREIGN CARE

Psalm 34:7 – “The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him, and delivers them.”

- Example: Elisha and the servant—“There are more with us than with them”
- Jesus had legions of angels at His disposal—and that same Christ lives in believers
- Paul’s enemies vowed not to eat until they killed him, and they failed—God’s purpose overruled their plans

IV. CRYING OUT FROM THE EDGE: GOD HEARS AND RESCUES

Key Scripture: Psalm 34:6; Psalm 116:1–6

A. THE CRY OF THE POOR MAN

Psalm 34:6 – “This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him and saved him out of all his troubles.”

- Testimony: “I was poor, broke, busted, and disgusted—and He delivered me from *all* of it”
- God doesn’t just fix small pieces—He makes us whole

B. NEAR DEATH, NEAR HELL, YET GOD HEARD

Psalm 116 snapshot:

- Surrounded by the cords of death and the terrors of hell
- In distress and sorrow—but called on the name of the Lord
- God proved gracious and compassionate, full of mercy

C. GOD WHO HEARS AND LISTENS

- The One who created ears can hear—clearly and perfectly
- More than hearing noise, God listens to details (even small personal things)

- Encouragement: whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved—right here, right now
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V. “OH, TASTE AND SEE”: INVITING OTHERS INTO GOD’S GOODNESS

Key Scripture: Psalm 34:8 – “Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good!”

A. THE “FOOD COURT SAMPLE” ILLUSTRATION

- Picture: a man at the mall offering small samples—“Taste and see if you want more”
- We who know God’s goodness are like that worker—we offer samples of His grace to others
- Our stories, kindness, and witness say: “Here—taste and see how good He is.”

B. CHRIST AS OUR REFUGE

- “How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him.”
- All Scripture points to Jesus—Old and New Testament through “Jesus glasses”
- Christ is our ark, our shelter from danger and judgment (Nahum 1:7)

C. WISE VS. FOOLISH RESPONSE TO COMING WRATH

- Proverbs: A wise person sees disaster coming and takes refuge; a fool keeps going and suffers harm
- The wrath of God and judgment are coming—our only safe place is in Christ

D. HOLY FEAR VS. CHILDISH FEAR

- “Fear the LORD” does not mean being scared like of a monster or the boogeyman
 - It’s reverent, respectful fear—like a wise child who respects a loving but firm father
 - Judgment begins with the household of God—God disciplines His own children first
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VI. LIVING UNDER GOD’S CARE: LACKING NO GOOD THING

Key Scripture: Psalm 34:9–10; Matthew 6:33

A. NO LACK FOR THOSE WHO SEEK THE LORD

- “Those who fear Him have no lack... those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.”

- Even strong young lions may go hungry before God’s people do
- Testimony: since coming to Christ, not lacking anything truly needed—though God’s timing may differ from ours

B. SEEKING FIRST HIS KINGDOM AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

- Priority: seek the rulership of King Jesus and *His* righteousness (not our own)
- When we put Him first, He adds what we need in His time

C. THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH

- Earthly lions are mighty and fear nothing
- Believers have the Lion of Judah living *in* us and fighting *for* us

D. TEACHING THE NEXT GENERATION TO FEAR THE LORD

Psalm 34:11 – “Come, children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD.”

- We must instruct children and grandchildren to honor God’s Name
- Casual joking with God’s Name shows a lack of holy fear

E. WATCHING OUR WORDS, CHASING PEACE

Psalm 34:12–14 – keep your tongue from evil; seek peace and pursue it

- God hears every word—we will have what we say
- Turn away from evil, do good, pursue peace
- Spurgeon: If Christ can put up with you, you can put up with anybody

VII. GOD’S EYES, GOD’S EARS, GOD’S HEART

Key Scripture: Psalm 34:15–18

A. GOD’S CONSTANT ATTENTION

- “The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous... His ears are open to their cry.”
- God knows each hair on our heads—what number it is and when one falls
- He never sleeps or slumbers—constant, loving watchfulness

B. GOD NEAR TO THE BROKENHEARTED

- “The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.”
- God resists the proud but draws near to the humble
- He is not impressed by names, money, or degrees—He looks at the heart

C. MANY TROUBLES, ONE DELIVERER

Psalm 34:19 – “Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of

them all.”

- Following Jesus does not remove trials—but it brings a faithful Deliverer into them
 - The world’s solutions only numb pain; Jesus rescues us through it
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VIII. JESUS IN PSALM 34: THE UNBROKEN LAMB AND PERFECT REFUGE

Key Scripture: Psalm 34:20; Exodus 12; John 19:36

A. NOT ONE BONE BROKEN

- “He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken.”
- Ultimately fulfilled in Christ on the cross—His bones were not broken
- Jesus is the Passover Lamb—God commanded Israel not to break a bone of the lamb
- Like Noah’s ark, a broken ship does not float—our Savior is a perfect, unbroken refuge

B. THE END OF THE WICKED AND THE HOPE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

Psalm 34:21–22

- Evil leads to destruction—people reap what they sow
 - Those who hate the righteous will be held guilty and condemned
 - But “the LORD redeems the soul of His servants, and none of those who take refuge in Him will be condemned.”
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IX. ETERNITY AND URGENCY: THE GREAT WHITE THRONE AND THE BOOK OF LIFE

Key Scripture: Revelation 20:11–15

A. THE FINAL JUDGMENT

- A great white throne, and God seated on it
- The dead, great and small, stand before Him
- Books are opened—records of what was done on earth
- Another book is opened: the Book of Life

B. THE SECOND DEATH

- Death and Hades thrown into the lake of fire—eternal separation from God
- Anyone not found written in the Book of Life is cast into the lake of fire

C. RUNNING TO CHRIST BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE

- A wise person sees destruction coming and takes refuge
 - Our only refuge from God's wrath is Christ Jesus and His finished work
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X. DAILY SURRENDER AND READY HEARTS

Key Scriptures: 2 Corinthians 6:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17 (implied)

A. ARE YOU IN CHRIST JESUS?

- Do you cling to Him like your life depends on it? (Because it does.)
- Without Christ, we do not have life—the wrath of God already rests on us

B. A LIFE OF DAILY SURRENDER

- “Daily, I surrender: Lord, here I am, I’m Yours. I don’t want to do this on my own.”
- Refusal to live independently of Christ—total dependence on Him

C. THE SOON RETURN OF CHRIST

- Jesus is coming back sooner than we think
- It will happen “in the twinkling of an eye”—no time to get ready, only to *be* ready
- Today is the day of salvation—don’t harden your heart

D. INVITATION TO RUN TO THE GOOD, GOOD FATHER

- Come to the altar, cry out to Jesus, run to Him
 - He knows everything about you and loves you more than anyone ever could
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KEY TAKEAWAY:

Psalm 34 shows us that:

- God is good—all the time, in every generation, in every circumstance
 - Those who seek, fear, and take refuge in Him lack no good thing
 - Christ Jesus is our perfect refuge—from fear, from judgment, and from eternal separation
 - Now is the time to taste and see that the Lord is good and to live ready for His return
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FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:

- Where have you seen the goodness of God in your own story, like David and the “poor man” who cried out?
- In what areas are you still living in fear, and how might Psalm 34:4 reshape your trust in God?
- How can you “offer samples” of God’s goodness to others this week—through your words, actions, and testimony?
- What does it look like for *you* to take active refuge in Christ—in temptation, in trouble, in anxiety about the future?
- Are you living as if Christ could return at any moment? What would change if you truly believed that?

Scripture References for Further Study:

Psalm 34 (entire chapter) | Psalm 145:9 | Matthew 5:45 | James 1:17 | Romans 8:28 |
Psalm 116:1–6 | Nahum 1:7 | Proverbs 22:3; 30:30 | John 19:36 | Exodus 12:43–46 |
Revelation 20:11–15 | 1 Peter 4:17 | 2 Corinthians 6:2