

GOD IS FOR US!

Psalm 86:1-17

How would you describe a friend?

I know that our lives are littered with examples of people betraying us. But has there ever been a time in your life when someone had your back? When many others have walked away or stayed at a distance, there was that one person or group that had your back.

God can, and desires to be our best friend. He gave His most precious gift He could, to bring us back into fellowship with Him.

Romans 8:31, What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

John 15:13-15, Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. 14 You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. 15 No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.

Read Psalm 86:1-17

I. David Says God is Good (v.5)

- This is not the first attribute (Character) of God that David lists, but I think all the other attributes that are mentioned flow from God's goodness. The rest of my thoughts and points are based on the fact, God is good.
- God is good in that He is holy and righteous and set apart from sin; but in His dealings with us, His goodness means that He always does what is good FOR us. No matter what you face in life; no matter what seemingly bad thing you're going through, in it all, **GOD IS GOOD!**
- He is so good that even when bad things happen to us, He promises that He will somehow turn that bad into good as Paul tell us in

Romans 8:28, And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

- David tells us God's goodness is great! Me-gas! Superior overall.

II. David Says God is Merciful and Gracious. (v.3, 5, 13, 15, 16)

- **Read verses 3, 5, 13, 15, and 16**
- Mercy and grace are two particularly important words in the Christian's vocabulary. The words have similar meanings, but in opposite ways, and that has great significance to us as believers:
- God's **MERCY** is when God does not give us what we deserve.
- What do we deserve? —We deserve judgment, hell and alienation from God because of our sin and rebellion against God. But if we'll trust in Him for our salvation, in His mercy He promises NOT to give us judgment, hell and alienation. He does not give us what we deserve; He's merciful

- God's **GRACE**, on the other hand, is Him giving us what we do NOT deserve. The simplest definition of grace is "*God's unmerited favor*"—that is, His favor and good things He does for us that we do not deserve or merit.
- We don't deserve forgiveness of our sins, an eternal life in heaven or a personal relationship with God, but because God is full of **GRACE**, if we believe on Jesus Christ as our Savior, we're given those things as free gifts.
- God showed His love for us by sending His son to die for our sins, and if we turn to Christ and trust in Him as our Savior, God shows us mercy and grace. In His **MERCY**, He withholds from us the judgment we deserve, and, in His **GRACE**, he gives us many wonderful gifts and privileges.

III. David Shares Two Traits That Flow from God's Grace. (v.15)

- He says **God is FULL OF COMPASSION**, verse 15, "**You, O Lord, are a God full of compassion...**"
- Have you ever thought about the difference between pity and compassion? The two words are similar, but there's one particularly important difference. Pity is only the emotional response to something that makes you sad; **compassion compels you to act on that emotion**.
- Aren't you glad God didn't just have pity on us and look over the portals of heaven and say, "Well, look at those poor, wretched humans? They're living without me and are not fulfilled. They're filled with pain and hurt and emptiness. Too bad," ...and then just go on about His business...doing nothing? No, God looked at our sinful condition and all the pain and suffering that sin wrought and He didn't just have pity on us; He had **COMPASSION**—He DID something about what He saw. Get got involved!
- He sent His Son Jesus to get in the mess that we created and save us from it.
- Not only is God full of compassion, but **God is also LONGSUFFERING**.
- The Greek word translated "longsuffering" means "patient with people." It's hard to be patient with people sometimes, isn't it?
- Aren't you glad that God is longsuffering with us? Some people look at the state of the world and shake their fist at God and say, "How can you let the world go on like this?" They forget that God will not overrule the free will of man. He lets us choose Him or our sin, but there are unintended consequences of choosing sin over God—like selfishness, anger, hatred, immorality, death, war, greed, and on and on the catalog of sin goes.
- Why does God let the world go on like this?
- Because He's longsuffering to us, extending to us more opportunities to be saved. He could zap us the moment we first sin, but in His longsuffering, He patiently waits on us because it is not His desire for **ANYONE** to go to hell.

2 Peter 3:9, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."

- Listen, if you die and go to hell, it will be despite what God has done for you. He has extended many opportunities for you to come to Him, and He wants nothing more than for you to trust

Him as your Savior and He waits patiently for you to respond. Will you come to Him before it's everlastingly too late?

- The writer of Hebrews asks this important question in **Hebrews 2:3** – **“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?”** God is patient with us, but someday His patience will run out. Eventually, the Bible says that every person who has neglected God's free gift of salvation will face judgment and hell. Come to Him today before it is everlastingly too late.

God Is For Us!

1. He Listens To US!

- **Read verses 1 and 6**
- He LISTENS to us and He HEARS US when we pray. He's close and available, waiting for us to confer with Him, and waiting for us to seek His help, His care, His guidance and His direction.
- He's NEVER preoccupied; He NEVER misses a thing we say, and everything we say to Him is “portent.”
- However, there are times God chooses not to hear us...

Psalms 66:18, If I regard iniquity (sin) in my heart, The Lord will not hear.”

- If I allow sin [that is, if I leave it unconfessed] in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. God doesn't promise to hear the prayer of a backslider until he repents and turns away from his sin. Though nothing can take away our relationship as a son of God, sin damages our fellowship with Him.
- So how do you restore fellowship with God once you have sinned so that God will hear your prayers? – John tells us, **“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)**



2. He Protects Us.

- **Read verse 2**
- When God preserves His people, He makes them last! This is what we call the “eternal security of the believer”—the truth that once a person places His trust in Jesus Christ and is truly saved, he is saved FOREVER and can NEVER lose his salvation.

Philippians 1:6, “being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;”

- When God starts something, He finishes it!
 - The day of Christ is the DAY OF HIS RETURN. So Paul says you can be confident in one thing for sure—that what God STARTED in you the day of your salvation, He will continue and NEVER STOP until the very day of Christ's return in the Rapture.
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1 Corinthians 1:8-9, “who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.”

- God says He **“will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.”**
- The Greek word translated **“confirm”** here means “to keep you; establish you; make sure your final salvation happens.” Paul says that we will be blameless, meaning, sinless, protect and preserved.
- How can we be sure of this? **Verse 9, “God is faithful”** God keeps His promises; He performs what He says He’ll perform; He finishes the job; He saves us to the very end! If our salvation were dependent upon our own faithfulness, NONE OF US would have a chance because we’re not always faithful.
- But God is faithful, and a faithful God who says that if you’ll believe in Him, you’ll have EVERLASTING LIFE—which means, life that never ends.

3. He Gives Us Joy

- **Read verse 4**
- Believers will only find real joy when you are right in the center of God’s will.
- The world will tell you that if you serve God, you’ll miss out; but the truth is that the **ONLY** place for abiding joy that lasts even during trial and trouble is found in serving and loving God. God gives us joy, but note three conditions of joy the Bible talk about:
- *First is obedience to God.*

John 15:10-11, If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. 11 “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.”

- There is no more miserable person in all the world than a disobedient Christian.
- *Second is walking in the Spirit.* God’s fruits of His Spirit pour out of us when we are walking close to Him, listening to His promptings, and obeying Him each step of the way.
- *Third is looking to Jesus to fill you up.*
- Look to the LORD to fill your cup and give you satisfaction, He’ll never fail you, He never becomes outdated, and His joy is permanent. You can have the joy of the Lord even during great struggle and trial if you’re looking to the Lord for your joy and fulfillment.

4. He Teaches Us

- **Read verse 11**
- I’m so glad I don’t have to figure out the Christian life by myself! God teaches me and leads me along and helps me grow in the Lord.

- God teaches us through His Holy Spirit little by little, bit by bit, but only as we listen and learn by studying God's Word and listening to sound Bible teachers and good preaching and carefully listening to the Holy Spirit.

5. He Delivers Us from Hell

- **Read verse 13**

Hebrews 9:27, "And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,"

Revelation 20:15, "And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire."

- The great thing is that you don't HAVE to go there; God has provided an escape. Jesus Christ came to earth to die for your sins and take away your sins. If you'll trust in Him as your Savior, you have the promise of Jesus Himself that you will live with Him for eternity in heaven.
- **John 3:16-18 and 36**
- God has given you a fire escape, but what good is a fire escape if you neglect it?

6. He Helps and Comforts Us

- **Read verse 17**
- When we are in the valley of despair, the Lord reaches down and helps us, and when He chooses to allow us to go through a trial for our good and His divine purposes, He is always there to comfort you.
- How many times have I faced an insurmountable obstacle in my life, or a seemingly unsolvable problem, or an unbearable trial in which God either came down and delivered me, or He took me in His arms and said, "I know this hurts; it hurts ME, but you must go through this fire for your own good and the good of my kingdom, but I will be with you; I will take care of you; I will comfort you."

1 Peter 5:6-7, "Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, 7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you."

- He does care for you and He will help and comfort you through your darkest hours.

Conclusion

The Psalmist reminds us that God is a good God who loves us and is committed to us. When you love someone and you're committed to them, you do things for them, don't you?

God loves you and He's committed to you. Do you love Him, and are you committed to Him in return? If not, why not give your life to Christ today?

Christian, God does many things for you every day of your life. What are you doing for Him? How are you serving Him or pleasing Him with your life and actions? Time to get off the bleachers and get into the game for God.