

The Good and Beautiful God

Introduction, through beginning of Chapter 1

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Summary

Our new book deals with how we might move into a life of intimacy with Father. We acknowledge (read: Millennia of pondering) that Jesus did this with perfection - but what does this show us? His successful navigation as a Human is a banner for us to learn and follow.

Perhaps His chief goal, after Salvation, is to help us understand how to live in the Kingdom of God, now. His reliance upon and trust of the Father He knows was His success - and should be ours as well.

Key points

Prelude We usually strive to do the 'right thing' in the eyes of God, but why? The first answer should be to glorify Him, but who can't say the notion of peace and success isn't a motivator? Fair enough, because among the promises in the Word are our peace and success. [Matt 6.19-20](#), [Prov 3.3-4](#), [Rom 8.28](#), [Ps 29.11](#), *et al.* As well

is our natural desire to avoid the opposite, pain and difficulty. And therein lies the issue – we might reason

1. God is good; 2. He is Sovereign; 3. He says He intends to bless us; 4. Difficulty comes; 5. We scramble to discover what we've done wrong, that it would be corrected, and the pain would go away.

Confliction about God (or at least what He might do next?) If we

see things this way, it is not hard to come away confused and conflicted about God. The responses of God of the Old Testament compared to the Father Jesus tells us about can add to the issue. How to reconcile this while acknowledging both reports about God are true and of the same Person? This is what the author addresses by examining what Scripture says of Jesus' understanding of Father, as He knows Him across the Old and the New Testaments. Jesus shows us the full and true realities of the Father He knows, understands and trusts.

Define failure and success Aside from the 'world' that doesn't belong to God, ask a typical follower of Jesus to define success, and he will rightfully include peace and prosperity. But is this God's economy? Jesus was asked what was most important, and He answered in *Matt 22.36-38*: "*Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?*" And he said to him, "*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment.* We are also told in *Eph 2.10*: *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.* Father intends for us to put Him first, and will bring us to do so as He works on us.

When do we tend to draw unto God; in plenty or in need? Father intends us good, but will not suffer being 2nd in our 'hearts'.

And, as mentioned at our meeting, we often find we are left more useful to Him - having a better understanding of Him - after trials test our faith and turn us to Him. Therefore, shall we call our peace success, or is a higher success shown as a deeper reliance upon God that results in true peace?

Jesus threw in Jesus fully threw in to the Human condition, except for sin. He navigated life following/relying upon Father through the same means available to us. His success is the Banner we must follow - but how? We must come to see, understand, and trust the Father that Jesus knows. We must grow into His Narrative, and thus our perception - and response to life - comes into line with His. This is how we are made like Him.

By all accounts, we are a lost cause. Sin has warped us and made our intentions patently against Him. Our eyesight is incapable of seeing the Truth without His intervention. What seems up is too often down, and vice versa. Enter, Jesus. Our Savior not only won our forgiveness, but He graciously demonstrated what life looks like in harmony with and in full reliance upon Father. Furthermore, He personally attends to our schooling, making us ready to be received and stand perfected before Father on that Great Day.

Big difficulties = bigger usefulness We all know mature Followers, those who have better expression of the Spirit's Fruits ([Gal 5.22-23](#)) that show as godliness, wisdom, usefulness to the Body. How do they come to possess this? The answer is through a learned familiarity with His Word and Its application. It also hinges on a hands-on history of experience with God Himself, won through the slow process of seeking Him, drawing close, learning dependence - through knowing, understanding, and trusting Him.

And this is all by His design, under His Sovereign care of the very details and circumstances of our lives.

Can't lead where you haven't gone So, what might be an excellent use of the life God gives each of us?

Line one of the common Catechism states our Chief Goal is to 'glorify God, and enjoy Him forever'. The Great Commission ([Matt 28.18-20](#)) includes making disciples and teaching them to observe Christ's commands. Taken together, an excellent life involves a more experienced soul helping a less experienced one. Therefore, our job is to cooperate with God's teaching of us, growing in maturity, and helping others who have yet to embrace more of Him. This is our call to grow, because who can lead where they haven't gone?

Narrative is imperative What we believe - that is, embrace, not simply acknowledge - resides in the 'heart'. It is from here our actions play out, and is therefore central to who we are.

Scripture is replete with God's references to our heart. Jesus said in *Matt 15.18a* "But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart". And consider A.W.Tozer's observation; "Were we able to extract from any man a complete answer to the question 'What comes into your mind when you think about God?', we might predict with certainty the future of that man."

If our narrative is key, then it reasons that we must fight for an improving one. Who better to inform our narrative than the One who knows God best?

Jesus not only went to great lengths to explain Father and the Kingdom, but He also demonstrated the ties to the Old Testament, lived an example, provided the Words for the New Testament, and continues to craft and shape us even today.