



Where is God's Goodness and Mercy?

*"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life;
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever." Psalm 23:6 NKJV*

Number 31 in the series "The Lord is My Shepherd"

In the midst of your painful situations, especially ones that go on for years with no end in sight, do you ever wonder, "Where is God's goodness and mercy in my life?" Ephesians 5:20 (KJV) reads, *"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our LORD Jesus Christ."* You may be thinking, "How do I give thanks for this painful situation? I can understand giving thanks to God for good things, but there is nothing good in this." Or you may have read Philippians 4:4-7 (NIV) and thought, "How can I do that in my suffering?" It reads, *"Rejoice in the LORD always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The LORD is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*

Beloved believer, perhaps you are thinking, "It's easy for Paul to write these scriptures in Ephesians and Philippians. He doesn't understand my mental, emotional, physical, or financial pain. In my circumstances, how am I supposed to rejoice or be gentle? I don't feel like rejoicing, and I'm confused. I don't understand why this is happening to me. I don't feel gentle. I feel angry. How am I expected to be free from anxiety? I just lost my job. I'm in physical pain all the time. My mate wants a divorce. My mate is

addicted to gambling, drugs or pornography. My children are rebellious. I can't pay my bills. A loved one just died. Pray? Pray about everything? I've tried praying. I don't feel God hears me. Besides, I'm busy. I've got a lot on my mind. I've got to do something about my situation. I can't just sit around and pray all day. I don't feel this peace of God that Paul speaks of, and I sure don't see this goodness and mercy in my life. Paul doesn't understand my situation."

Beloved, how many of you are being bombarded by those thoughts and emotions? Read 2 Corinthians 11:23-31. It tells us that Paul was in prison many times for his faith. He was beaten countless times, and almost died several times. Five times he received 39 lashes. He was stoned. Three times he was shipwrecked. He was constantly in danger as he preached. He was often hungry and thirsty. He constantly lost sleep. He had the pressure and concern of all the churches.

Yes, beloved, Paul understood suffering for many years, and still he said, *"Rejoice evermore and again I say, rejoice. In everything give thanks."* Beloved, in the midst of painful situations in my life for years, I have constantly experienced God's amazing grace and His goodness and mercy.

— Janice McBride

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