SCRIPTURE:
“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” —Romans 8:28, NIV

MEDITATION: Life Is Good! But Why?
If you look at the headlines today, you might get the impression that our world is dominated by bad things, but that’s just a result of the bias of most of our news agencies. Who decided that news stories should almost always be bad!? That’s why I love the recent Some Good News episodes by John Krasinski (of The Office). As the pandemic gained steam, he asked people to report on anything good that was happening. Turns out, he was quickly inundated with an abundance of good news stories, many of which he shared with his viewers. Check out some of the episodes on YouTube if you want some good news for a change.

Of course, life is not always easy. Skeptics raise the question of why there is so much evil and suffering in the world, and this important query deserves our serious consideration. But, just for a moment, let’s turn this question on its head and ask, “Why is there so much good in the world?” As humans, we have been given the wonderful ability to experience goodness (the ultimate of which is to love, and to be loved), which results in joy. But why do we have this amazing capacity, and where does all this goodness come from? Turns out, we were engineered specifically to experience this kind of joy by our Maker.*

As an example, read the fascinating story of an appeal for King David to reconcile with his son Absalom, in 2 Samuel 14. It culminates with this beautiful picture of God’s heart: “Like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be recovered, so we must die. But that is not what God desires; rather, he devises ways so that a banished person does not remain banished from him” (2 Sam. 14:14, NIV). From this messianic verse, we see that God is in the business of happy reunions—of returning long lost lovers to each other’s arms. We see another facet of God’s love in passages such as Genesis 50:20, where Joseph is reconciled to his family after many years. Here, Joseph also gains a glimpse into God’s heart as he joyfully declares, “You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.”

REFLECTION:
That’s what God does. He makes good things, such as humans. And we desire goodness, probably because we are made in his image. And even when we fall short, he is able somehow to
turn it around and cause it to work for good, thanks to the redemptive sacrifice of Jesus. So, do what you can to be a force for good. And don’t worry about all the bad stuff in the news these days, because in all things, there’s an engineer behind the scenes who “works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (Rom. 8:28, NIV). Turns out, life is good because God is good. Like John Krasinski, let’s be proactive in sharing this good news.

PRAYER:
O Lord, you are good and what you do is good. Grant that we may follow in your footsteps and bring good things to the lives of those around us. Amen.


ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Dominic Michael Halsmer is a Professor of Engineering at Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and a registered professional engineer. His education includes Bachelor’s and Master’s Degrees in Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering from Purdue University, a PhD in Mechanical Engineering from UCLA, and a Master of Arts Degree in Biblical Literature from ORU. He received the Scholar of the Year Award from ORU in 2000 and 2015, as well as outstanding teaching awards in 1997, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2014, 2017, and 2019. He served as a NASA Fellow at Goddard Space Flight Center in 1996 and 1997 through the ASEE Summer Faculty Fellowship Program. He served as Dean of the ORU College of Science and Engineering from 2007 to 2012. He also served as Director of the Center for Faith and Learning at ORU from 2013 to 2016.

His current research involves engineering education, reverse engineering, and contributions from the field of engineering to the science and faith conversation. He and his student research team have produced many publications in these areas. His first book, which combines all three of these areas, was published in 2019: Hacking the Cosmos: How Reverse Engineering Uncovers Organization, Ingenuity, and the Care of a Maker.

He and his wife, Kate, delight in their four children—Nicholas, Christina, Mary Kate, and Josie; and three grandchildren—Sydney, Zeke, and Taya. Dominic and Kate reside in Jenks, Oklahoma, where he enjoys worshiping God through teaching, research, trail running, disc golf, ultimate Frisbee, sand volleyball, cross-fit, basketball, gardening, salsa-making, chess, reading, OneWheeling, and studying science and faith issues.
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