

## **Questions for discussion**

### **1. What is good?**

I grew up climbing trees and playing in the dirt. That was the life of a little boy. I have read in the news that one set of parents have fought to have their transgender five-year-old given special rights. Does a five-year-old need special rights? We can argue this till the cows come home. I think my childhood was good while others would consider it bad. What is good or bad? How do we judge the goodness in things around us?

*“That has led me to also ponder the question, “What is good?” *Scream Queens* on TV was hilarious, but I bet many people thought it was a horrible show. *The Walking Dead* is the best TV show I’ve ever seen, yet I know tons of TV enthusiasts who hate it. I love strawberry but others might prefer orange. Isn’t tofu an acquired taste? I hate it. A vegetarian couple insisted that tofu is great in chili. “You won’t even taste it,” they said. I did, and it still sucks. Still, those poor misguided people love it.” Chapter 2, p, 1*

### **2. Who do you learn good from?**

My mom has lived a good and bad life. What did I learn from her. My dad is a good man but who really knows a person. I have great memories of Santa and Christmas. The good came from funny shows, trips, and digging in the dirt. I learned a ton about laughing from my childhood. Passing on laughter has been a main goal of mine for my kids. We learn and teach the good and bad. How are you doing with that?

*“I want to concentrate on the good we have in this life. In the first chapter I talked a bit about Santa who seems to be the good guy in our upbringing. What he stood for is still a good message. I said that God is love. God still resonates with some people. I believe God never changes so that might mean He has remained holy and good. There are good and bad parents. If you are complaining about your upbringing, then hand them the training book. Oh right, there isn’t one. We learn about the good early on from many peers.” Chapter 2, p, 3*

### **3. How do we see the good clearly?**

Here is a secret I told nobody. Years ago, in my childhood, I punched a girl in the face. To this day I am sorry that it ever happened. If I could go back into my childhood and change that moment I would, but should I? That moment has changed me for the better. I have never hit a soul since. I have made it my life pursuit to love women and respect women in the best way I can. To do the good I first had to experience the bad.

## ***Blessings and Curses*** Chapter 2 (The Good)

Passion in the moment can be used in the wrong way. It can also be used to look ahead and be a blessing rather than a curse.

*“The action of pulverizing a trash can in the dressing room in frustration is symbolic. Does it represent frustration and panic? Many would say yes but I see it as positive anger. At what point did Edison give up on a light bulb? To me, that would have happened after the first 100 tries. The fire in his belly would not let it go until he succeeded. I bet he spent a ton on garbage cans. That fire is in a griped stick, smashed can, and 10,000th try. It’s good to fail because it creates creative alternatives. The “I never thought of that” comes from failure. In the end we see the fruits of our labour in the automobile, light bulb, and better access for wheelchairs.” Chapter 2, p, 6*

### **4. Could a curse become a blessing and a blessing become a curse?**

I have saved money and bought a car. Years later that freedom from payments helped me buy a house. Some time after that I ended up divorced. The house was split up and I received a payment for a new place. The money was a blessing but the divorce was a curse. Fast forward another 5 years and I am married again and used the sale of my trailer to buy a new home with a new wife. Curses do become blessings. Think about it.

*“That brings me back to blessings and curses. I bet you wondered if this book, so far, is really about them. It is, but I wanted to set it up. The good and bad are generally attached to blessings and curses. A blessing is good and a curse is bad. I hope to paint a picture that tells a different story. And when God comes into the picture it gets interesting. If we think of blessings and curses as nothing more than fate, then that’s all you have. It’s complete randomness. However, if God is involved then a blessing can be a curse and a curse can be a blessing. I think that could put a positive spin on how we deal with a life that tries to deal us more curses than blessings.” Chapter 2, p, 7*

### **5. Could God only be interested in the good?**

If I had a dollar for every person who is angry at God for killing children I’d be rich. Strange that they may hold more anger towards God than the criminal. The criminal can’t help it but God could. Odd that people have married their caregiver, nanny, and phycologist. It seems we gain passion for those who try and help us. God helps in silent and tough ways. If bad times usually turn into good times, then what can be said? If God allowed them to happen, and you turned out all right by the experience, then maybe his intention was for good.

*“I feel drawn back to the “very good” statement in Genesis 1. If God took the time to make things very good, then He is interested. If He was willing to do the whole Jesus on earth thing, then He is interested. Maybe blessings and curses show us that He*

## ***Blessings and Curses*** Chapter 2 (The Good)

*is interested in our lives. I wonder if more good things could befall us if we were more interested in God?" Chapter 2, p, 8*

### **6. Does our view on blessings and curses shape our view on the good?**

We do look at blessings and curses a certain way? My goodness we have opinions. Is a sickness a curse? Is a lottery a blessing? The end results might make you think twice about being sick or winning a lottery. We treat things differently because we have experienced them. Fire is very hot the second time. Walking around without a jacket is dumb after your sick. Losing a spouse to wealth would make you cautious in a second marriage. Events change our perspective on blessings and curses.

*"Here are some final thoughts on goodness:*

*Be willing to fail because that makes you tougher, smarter, and wiser.*

*Look to the good but please don't kill yourself over the bad. I think when a curse happens, it means good things are right around the corner. Is it possible that God is using blessings and curses to teach us? I think about my parents grounding me and spanking me. I liked the grounding more. It's weird because the spanking hurt more but was far shorter than a grounding. Those times groomed me to respect and know the difference between the good and bad." Chapter 2, p, 12*