

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: GOODNESS

Goodness is moral excellence and integrity that flows from a heart transformed by God, expressing itself in kindness, generosity, and right living toward others. It is not niceness or good behavior performed for approval, but a deep character quality produced in you by the Holy Spirit as you follow Jesus. Biblical goodness always acts for the true benefit of others, even when it costs you something (i.e., time, talent, treasure), because it reflects the goodness of God Himself. Unlike the works of the flesh listed in Galatians 5:19-21, which are self-serving and destructive, goodness builds up, heals, and points people toward Jesus. As you grow in this fruit, you will find yourself doing what is right and beneficial not out of obligation, but out of a renewed nature that genuinely loves what is good.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE

- **Galatians 5:22-23** – Goodness is listed among the fruits of the Spirit, showing that it is a supernatural work in you, not a self-generated virtue.
- **Ephesians 2:10** – You were created in Christ Jesus for good works that God prepared beforehand for you to walk in, meaning goodness has purpose and direction. Engage in it and go for it!
- **Romans 15:14** – Believers are called to be full of goodness, able to instruct and encourage one another, showing goodness is meant to be shared in community.
- **Psalms 34:8** – God Himself is the source and standard of goodness; receiving His goodness shapes how you extend it to others.
- **Matthew 5:16** – Your good works are meant to shine before others so that they glorify your Father in heaven, connecting goodness directly to gospel witness.
- **2 Corinthians 9:6-8** – Generosity is one of the clearest expressions of goodness; God supplies you with everything you need so that you can abound in every good work, including cheerful and sacrificial giving.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Why can true goodness only come from the Holy Spirit and not from human willpower or self-improvement?** *Possible Answer:* Because our natural hearts are corrupted by sin (Romans 3:12), goodness must be produced by God's Spirit within us as we abide in Christ (John 15:5; Galatians 5:22-23). Godly or true Goodness has pure motives and is sacrificial.
- 2. Where in your life have you tried to manufacture goodness through effort instead of relying on the Holy Spirit?** *Possible Answer:* Many believers try to be "good enough" through religious performance, forgetting that goodness is fruit, not fabrication; walking by the Spirit produces what striving cannot (Galatians 5:16, 25).
- 3. Where has God prompted you to be generous recently, and did you obey that prompting?** *Possible Answer:* Generosity is goodness lived out through your time, money, and resources; obeying the Spirit's prompting to give, especially sacrificially, reflects the cheerful generosity God calls His people to (2 Corinthians 9:7).
- 4. Who in your life is difficult to show goodness toward, and what would it look like to extend it to them this week?** *Possible Answer:* Jesus calls you to do good even to those who are hard to love, following His example of loving enemies (Luke 6:35), trusting the Spirit to supply the grace you lack on your own. Pray for the spiritual fruits regularly.

GOSPEL CONNECTION

If you are a believer, remember that your goodness is not the root of your salvation but the fruit of it. You have already been made right with God through faith in Jesus Christ alone (Galatians 2:16), and now the Holy Spirit is producing His goodness in you as you walk with Him daily. Repent of any effort to earn God's favor through your own good deeds, and believe again today that Christ's righteousness, not yours, is what secures your standing before God. Let His finished work free you to do good simply because you are loved, not because you are trying to be loved.

If you have not yet trusted in Jesus Christ, know that no amount of good works can make you right with a holy God, because even your best efforts fall short of His perfect standard (Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:23). The good news is that Jesus lived the perfectly good life you could never live, and He died the death your sin deserved, then rose again to give you new life. Turn from trusting in your own goodness, and turn to Him in faith. He alone can forgive your sin and give you a new heart, one where His Spirit will begin producing real, lasting goodness in you.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Monday: The Source of True Goodness

Key Verse: Galatians 5:22-23 – *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."*

Reflection: True goodness is not something you produce by trying harder; it is fruit grown in you by the Holy Spirit as you follow Jesus. When you rely on your own strength to be good, you grow weary and often fail. But when you walk with the Spirit, goodness begins to flow naturally from a changed heart.

Application Question: Where have you been relying on willpower instead of the Spirit to produce goodness in your life? *Possible Answer:* You might notice this in a habit of gritting your teeth to "be good" rather than praying and asking the Spirit to change your desires from the inside out. Yes, the Spirit's work is to change you from the inside out!

Prayer: Lord, I confess I often try to manufacture goodness on my own. Teach me to walk closely with Your Spirit today, trusting Him to produce real goodness in me, in Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday: Rooted in God's Character

Key Verse: Psalm 34:8 – *"Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him."*

Reflection: God's goodness is not a distant idea; it is something you can personally experience through His faithfulness, provision, and grace toward you. The goodness He calls you to reflect flows directly from His own perfect character, not from cultural standards or personal opinion. Jesus defines goodness!

Application Question: How have you personally experienced Jesus' goodness this week? *Possible Answer:* Perhaps through an unexpected answer to prayer, provision in a hard season, or simply the quiet assurance of His presence in your daily life.

Prayer: Father, thank You for Your goodness toward me. Help me recognize it more clearly each day and let it shape how I treat others, in Jesus' Name, Amen.

Wednesday: Goodness Expressed Through Generosity

Key Verse: 2 Corinthians 9:7 – *"Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."*

Reflection: Generosity is one of the clearest ways goodness shows up in daily life, giving your time, money, or resources for someone else's benefit, even at personal cost. God is not looking for reluctant obedience but a cheerful heart that trusts Him enough to give freely.

Application Question: What is one specific way you can be generous this week? *Possible Answer:* This could be giving financially to someone in need, offering your time to help a struggling friend, or simply being generous with encouragement and attention.

Prayer: Lord, loosen my grip on what I hold tightly. Make me a cheerful, generous giver who reflects Your goodness to those around me, in Jesus' Name, Amen.

Thursday: Goodness With Backbone

Key Verse: Galatians 2:11 – *"But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned."*

Reflection: Goodness is not always soft or comfortable like kindness; sometimes it requires courage to speak truth or confront sin for someone's true benefit. Paul's willingness to correct Peter shows that real goodness cares more about a person's spiritual health than about keeping peace on the surface.

Application Question: Is there a loving, honest conversation you have been avoiding out of fear rather than pursuing out of goodness? *Possible Answer:* You may be avoiding a conversation with a friend or family member about a harmful pattern because you fear conflict rather than trusting that honest love, spoken gently, can be truly good for them.

Prayer: Father, give me courage to speak truth in love when it is needed. Let my goodness care more about others' good than my own comfort, in Jesus' Name, Amen.

Friday: Goodness as Gospel Witness

Key Verse: Matthew 5:16 – *"Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."*

Reflection: Your good works are never meant to earn salvation or draw attention to yourself; they are meant to point others to Jesus and testify to His transforming grace in your life. As unbelievers watch you live differently, marked by real goodness, the Holy Spirit can use your life to draw them toward the gospel.

Application Question: Who in your life might need to see the gospel evidenced through your goodness this week? *Possible Answer:* This could be a coworker, neighbor, or family member who does not yet know Jesus but who regularly observes how you live, speak, and treat others.

Prayer: Lord, let my goodness this week point clearly to You. Use my life, however imperfect, to draw others toward the hope found only in Jesus, in His Name, Amen.

Sources: The Message of Galatians by John Stott, The Bible Speaks Today series; Galatians (NIV Application Commentary) by Scot McKnight; Systematic Theology by Wayne Grudem