



*Lesson 1, January 22*

# *Goodness*

by Jan Patterson

Review of "The Fruit of the Spirit"  
(Galatians 5:13-26).

Take note of:

- "through love serve one another"
- "walk by the Spirit"
- "ye cannot do the things that ye would" (KJV)
- "led by the Spirit"
- "live by the Spirit . . . walk by the Spirit"

1. Zechariah 4:6, *Not by might, nor by power, but BY MY SPIRIT*” is the work of God done.
2. Philippians 2:13, *It is GOD Who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.*
3. “FRUIT of the Spirit,” the word is a collective, and together they form a picture of Christlikeness.
4. “Fruit” here means “**beneficial results.**”
5. They rarely come easy, because of our flesh.
6. In their ESSENCE they are **self-sacrificial.**

*“To maintain this attitude toward those we love is hard enough. To express [these attributes] toward those who are against us requires the work of God (1 Cor. 6:4-6). That is why [goodness, or patience, or any of them] is a fruit of the Spirit.” ([www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org))*

# What is Goodness?

- Thesauruses give words like morality, uprightness, and integrity.
  - The Oxford English Dictionary defines it this way:  
“**Goodness** is the simple word for a general quality recognized as an inherent part of one's character: that which is pleasing or valuable or useful.”
1. **AGATHOSUNE** is the Greek word, the basic idea of the word is “profitableness” or “effectual.”
  2. Kindness . . . **inward disposition, benevolence** (a kind, tender, amiability toward others)
  3. Goodness . . . **the habitual actions, beneficence** (actions or words that manifest your desire for good to others).
  4. By way of contrast, Goodness **includes a sterner quality of doing “good” to others not necessarily by gentle means**

*“Goodness is virtue and holiness **in action**. It results in a life characterized by **deeds** motivated by righteousness and a desire to be a blessing. It's a **moral characteristic** of a Spirit-filled person. The Greek word is defined as “uprightness of heart **and life**.” **Agathosune** is goodness **for the benefit of others**, not simply for the sake of being virtuous.” ([www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org))*

# Goodness in the New Testament

1. Romans 15:1-3 (“good” is the same root) Ideas of **self-sacrifice**, the **benefit of others**, and the outcome of a kind, upright **heart disposition**
2. Romans 15:14 Goodness, especially regarding the importance of **unity**, and what was **spiritually beneficial** for all
3. II Thessalonians 1:11 “desire for goodness” has its **root in Him**, and its **fulfillment** through **His** work. He shows **GOODNESS toward us**, and desires it **in us**, and **by us**.

*“The good pleasure of God denotes his gracious purposes toward his people which flow from his goodness, and are full of goodness toward them; and it is thence that all good comes to us. If there be any good in us, it is the fruit of God's goodwill to us, it is owing to the good pleasure of his goodness . . .”*

Matthew Henry

4. Philemon 14 involves **forgiving and accepting** a brother which enables unity of God's people. **Goodness should only be voluntary.**

# What Does Goodness Look Like?

- its “essence” is **sacrificial**
  - it is not compelled but **voluntary**
  - we are given the **desire, the skill, and the opportunity** to exercise it by the Holy Spirit, not our own strength or determination
  - it is **profitable for, effectual and of benefit** to others
  - it can be “**stern,**” as part of upholding righteousness or God's glory
  - it is a “**moral characteristic**” of a believer but it is also an **action**
  - it is **displayed** in “**good works**” or “**good deeds.**”
1. Ephesians 2:10 says, *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.* It is a major purpose in our salvation!
    - We are all to be “*an example of good deeds,*” Titus 2:7
    - We were redeemed that we might be “*zealous for good deeds,*” Titus 2:14
    - We are to be “*ready for every good deed,*” Titus 3:1
    - We are to be “*careful to engage in good deeds,*” Titus 3:8
    - We must learn to, “*engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs,*” Titus 3:14
    - We must “*consider how to stimulate one another to . . . good deeds,*” Hebrews 10:24
  2. The motive for our Goodness displayed in good works is always **LOVE**, and our good works are meaningless if otherwise (I Corinthians 13:1-3, Galatians 5:13b, I John 3:18).

3. These deeds are **“BEYOND SELF.”** Our own plans, opinions, desires, and importance are not a part of the picture.
4. They are not according to our **circumstances**—time, money, convenience.
5. There are two passages in I Timothy where “good works” are applied specifically to women.
  - I Timothy 2:9-10 tells us that good works should be **“our adornment.”**
  - I Timothy 5:9-10 indicates that ALL women should strive to have a **reputation for these good works.**
6. God has inbred **our feminine nature** with a unique ability to sympathize and show compassion, and to exert ourselves to meet those needs we see around us.

*The nature of woman seems to be adapted to the performance of all deeds demanding kindness, tenderness, and gentleness of feeling; of all that proceeds from pity, sympathy, and affection; . . . there is something exquisitely appropriate to the female character of deeds of humble and unobtrusive sympathy and benevolence. God seems to have formed her mind for just such things, and in such things it occupies its appropriate sphere . . .*

Albert Barnes

7. These good works are **primarily for the benefit of God’s people** but not only. (Galatians 6:10, *“So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to **all people**, and **especially** to those who are of the **household of the faith.**”*)

8. The Proverbs 31 woman ministered tenderly to her **husband, her family, her servants, and also “the poor and . . . needy,”** verse 20.
9. Dorcas (Acts 9) is a perfect example of I Timothy 5:10 that speaks of “**a reputation for good works . . .**” to which she “**devoted**” herself.

## Conclusion

- There is constant tension between (1) the commands of the New Testament to “walk” and “do” and “work,” and (2) the transforming work and **power of the Holy Spirit** to produce this fruit in us, to transform us into Christlikeness.
- Remember Philippians 2:13, “It is **God** who is at work in you, both **to will** and **to work** for His good pleasure.

*“God does not compel or force, but He works in the submitted heart to **influence**, and in our circumstances to give **opportunity** . . . and **we exert** our will, **we yield** to that pressure from His Spirit. Sometimes it is painful; it is sacrificial; and goes against the flesh.”*

Albert Barnes

*“[Goodness] is a fruit of the Spirit, but . . . We will never enter into the life of the Spirit unless we diligently **DO** the things God has told us to do.”*

John Walvoord

## Not I, But Christ

Not I, but Christ be honored, loved, exalted;  
Not I, but Christ, be seen, be known and heard;  
Not I, but Christ, in every look and action,  
Not I, but Christ, in every thought and word.

### **Chorus:**

Oh, to be saved from myself, dear Lord,  
Oh, to be lost in Thee,  
Oh, that it may be no more I,  
But Christ, that lives in me.

Not I, but Christ to gently soothe in sorrow,  
Not I, but Christ, to wipe the falling tear;  
Not I, but Christ, to lift the weary burden,  
Not I, but Christ, to hush away all fear.

Christ, only Christ! no idle words e'er falling,  
Christ, only Christ; no needless bustling sound;  
Christ, only Christ, no self-important bearing;  
Christ, only Christ, no trace of "I" be found.

Not I, but Christ, my every need supplying,  
Not I, but Christ, my strength and health to be;  
Christ, only Christ, for spirit, soul, and body,  
Christ, only Christ, live then Thy life in me.

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