

Kings Norton Baptist Church

Sunday 26th March 2023 10 am

The fruit of the spirit is Goodness

Welcome to all.

Thanks for prayers,

Opening Scripture and prayer

Hymn MP 564 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

Scripture Psalm 34 (page 561)

Prayer of praise and thanksgiving.

Children's talk Seeing Jesus as he is, visual puzzle, or tasting

Chorus MP 244 How good is the God we adore
MP 185 God is good, let's sing and shout it

Notices Housegroup at ... 62b Long Fellow Road
Fellowship lunch next week. See the week's plan and keep your time free.

Prayer and share time

Reading Galatians 5:13-25 (page 1172)
Luke 6:43-45 (page 1035)

Hymn MP 746 What a friend we have in Jesus

Sermon The fruit of the spirit is 'Goodness'

Hymn MP 620 Sweet is the work my God my King

Closing Prayer From Phil 1

Close

Prayer & Exordium

- A humble Christian, A devoted husband, A loving father, A wise counsellor, A faithful friend "Thy gentleness hath made thee great" Erected in tribute to an inspiring life so reads an epitaph in the church at Colerne, Wilts. In other words he was a good man.
- What will they say about you? That widow had plenty to say about her departed husband. What will those you leave behind say about you? If they find it difficult to think of anything there is always plenty of help at hand online. Near the top is the suggestion "He was a good man". Will they say about you? He was a 'good man'? Or she was a 'good woman'? I wonder.

This morning we are looking at **goodness** x2, **goodness** is a fruit of the Spirit.

But what does it mean? - Being 'good' or doing 'good' mean different things to different people - so what is being meant here?

So what is good? – especially when some say 'it is good to be good', or we should do good for 'good's sake' but what is good?? How do you define it?

It appears over six hundred times in the Bible so there's plenty to go on! There are different words in the Bible all translated as 'good' in the English.

In the OT the commonest word is Tobh, which occurs very frequently and is translated in a great variety of ways. Of the different shades of meaning, which frequently run into each other, the following may be distinguished:

1. Possessing desirable qualities, beneficial, agreeable, e.g. "**good for food**" Ge 2:9; **Who will show us any good?"** Ps 4:6. "That was a good book"
2. Then there is Moral excellence, piety: **to know good and evil** Ge 3:22; **that which is right and good** De 6:18; **'Depart from evil and do good'** Ps 37:27; "**a good man**" Pr 12:2 Goodness is a quality that women look for in a man, women judge character, not always, it is part of your God given protection, to wisely assess risk. We hear women say: '*he is a good man*'
3. Then there is Kind or benevolent: "**The men were very good unto us**" 1Sa 25:15; "**Give thanks to God for he is good**" 1Ch 16:34; "**God is good to all**" Ps 145:9, etc. "We stayed in that hotel and the staff were very good to us"
4. It can mean Serviceable, adequate, sufficient: "**God saw the light that it was good**" Ge 1:4; "God said: **it was not good that the man should be alone**" Ge 2:18; and the phrase YaTabh, "**to do good**," occurs several times, as in Ge 32:12; **I will surely do you good**. "That garage offers a goods service".

In the NT we have different words and again they have different emphasis

One word is 2570 kalos = beautiful, magnificent, excellent in its nature.

Honourable, morally good, or noble such as when Peter says to suffering Christians **For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men.** 1 Peter 2:15

Then there is 15 agathopoieo ag-ath-op-oy-eh'-o = 'do good', 'well doing', and 'do well'; for another's benefit Mr 3:4 Lu 6:9,33,35 Ac 14:17

There is 18 ἀγαθός agathos ag-ath-os' = 'A good thing', 'that which is good', James 1:17 **Every good and perfect gift is from above.**

Or like a good conscience Acts 23:1 Paul said, "**My brothers, I have fulfilled my duty to God in all good conscience to this day.**"

Then in our passage Gal 5:22 we have the word 19 ἀγαθωσύνη agathosune ag-ath-o-soo'-nay 'goodness' Which means uprightness of heart and life,

It only appears in three other places 2Th 1:11 **Wherefore also we pray ... that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, his goodness** AV

And then Ephesians 5:9 **for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness,**

And lastly Romans 15:14 **I myself am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness,**

Here the word seems to be used in the sense of *beneficence*, or a disposition of good that results in doing good to others. So after that quick overview we can see that the word here relates to an inner characteristic of goodness. x2.

There we have it. I could end there - but there is a problem... Who has it?

Who is good?

Is there any one good? Jesus said there is no-one good "**Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No-one is good— except God alone."** Luke 18:19

No-one is good

There are some who look at me in the eye and say "*I am a good person*"

"Have you ever done wrong? have you loved God with all you heart, with all you mind with all your strength, all of the time?" "Well", you hear the reply, "well no-one is perfect". Yes quite! Any 'act' but also thought, attitude or motive contrary to God's will - is sin. His will, his law, is written on your heart and mine. Your conscience confirming that you and I are all lawbreakers – and deserved to be judged accordingly.

2a

✚ **So how can someone who does wrong - be good?**

- You wouldn't drink a glass of milk if there was just a minute element of arsenic (a poison) in it would you?
- If I put one drop of cochineal (a food dye) in the milk would it still be white? No it is tainted.

✚ **Goodness is not an action but a condition.**

Being 'nice' does not mean you are good. Nor letting someone go ahead

In the supposedly 'good' action - one has to ask *why* was it done?

- Volunteering has been in the news recently, ask why someone volunteers and it is not uncommon to hear someone say "I do it because it made me feel useful. i.e I find peace of mind.

The motive is self, test yourself in this. Remember, wherever, whenever the motive is not for the Glory of God - it cannot be good in the sight of God.

whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God 1 Cor 10:31. anything that does not come from faith – anything that is not relating rightly towards God is sin.

Paul in summarising the state of every man before God in Rom 3 says: **All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no-one who does good, not even one.** 3:12 he's quoting from Psalms 14:1-3; 53:1-3; Eccles. 7:20

That is right, there is no-one good, **not even one.**

To deny this is to deny the truth of God. -- to deny this is to not know yourself. *it is like trying to convince yourself that you don't snore!* Paul, a man who knew himself, declared: **I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature** Rom 7:18. **sinful nature** meaning my flesh.

God is good

"**No-one is good— except God alone.**" Luke 18:19

- I used to malign God, blame him, or more often just ignored Him.
- Then when the Lord first met with me those years ago and He suddenly became real in my experience I was filled with Joy. And knowing God as my loving heavenly father I can remember my overarching impression was that He is good, He is good. yes

"Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures for ever." 1Ch 16:34

To Moses **the LORD said, "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you,** Ex 33:19

Jesus was/is good. He had no sin, he could not be found guilty of any sin.

2b

Jesus perfectly loved His father and brought Him glory in everything. As Jesus went through the crowds many said: "**He is a good man.**" John 7:12
It's easy to compare ourselves with others, but how different we all are when we compare ourselves to Him.

There is no good in me, - if I am to be good - I will need to be made good!
"Lord make me good" x2 He gives us his goodness

To be made good is the work of Christ. His Spirit firstly reveals that I am not good, His Holy Spirit exposes the truth; my unholiness, that I am not good.

■ Joshua, I am sure he will not mind me quoting him, said he used to think he was good, and but when he became a Christian, when Christ came to him, he suddenly saw himself as 'not good' at all.

✚ **The work of God in a man or woman is to expose the truth of sin - and then like apply the cure.**

The work of Christ's shed blood on the cross removes the barrier to God. The barrier is sin, God can have no direct dealing with sin. But Jesus who had no sin – became sin, took on sin that I might become the righteousness of God. **Through the obedience of the one man Jesus the many were made righteous.** Romans 5:19 **righteous** - in other right with God.

Now the repentant sinner who has received Christ's righteousness, God, like a potter, starts his work in recreating me - to be like Him.

His Spirit in me can make me good

This is **the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.**" Eph 4:24. That is the Spirit of Christ in me - forming, moulding my character to His character.

Jesus with his physician's knife, cuts deep and removes the offending sin.

If you are a Christian this morning, if Christ is doing that wonderful yet painful moulding work in you, we too long for it to be completed in you. Paul says **I am in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you,** Gal 4:19

✚ **Goodness is the fruit of the Spirit in me – it is not of me. If you bear this fruit then you show that you have the Spirit.**

Notice the word used in Gal 5:22 for **goodness** - is only used of Christians. Christian character is not mere moral or legal correctness, but the possession - and manifestation - of these nine graces: of which one is **goodness**.

3a

1. **love, joy, peace** — Here is character as an inward state;
2. **Patience, gentleness, goodness** — Here is character expressed outwardly towards others; Remember we saw that **patience** is not a grin and bear it, nor is it negative but positive because the resulting action is one of **kindness**. Where does this kindness come from? A good heart, a heart made good, a root made good - "Lord make me good"
3. **faithfulness, gentleness, Self-control** — character expressed toward God. **Ever seen a picture of Jesus?** These characteristics taken together present a moral portrait of Christ.

Paul says of his life "**Not I, but Christ,**" Ga 2:20 This character is possible because of the believer's vital union to Christ. If I am in him and he is in me then **I will bear much fruit showing myself to be His disciple.** Joh 15:5 1Co 12:12,13. This is how to see who are Christians and who are not.

■ It is not baptism, nor attendance, nor volunteering, it's character!

✚ **In other word a Christian must be a 'good' man.**

Do you remember what Jesus said: "**No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognised by its own fruit**". Jesus gives an immediate example: **People do not pick figs from thorn-bushes, or grapes from briars.** In other words people can recognise a good tree, or a good man and expect good things from him.

The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart.

How does one make the tree good?, or the heart good?, the passages before and afterwards explain how it can be done. The one before is about self-judgment / humility - the one following is about obeying Christ's teaching.

The one who does the first – is then able to do the second. This says John is the one born of God, for only one born of God - will do the will of God.

And how does that show? Jesus continues, the first sign of a changed man or woman is in the tongue, in words. Listening to someone speaking is like having a **camera looking down into the heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.**" Luke 6:43-45

Jesus' perfect character showed in his life...

Acts 10:38 **Jesus of Nazareth .. went around doing good**

we often just go around, or go around doing that which is essentially self-serving .. but doing good to others - well that's another thing.

3b

✚ Goodness is the outworking of being good. *Goodness* shows itself in a readiness to do good to all - as we have opportunity,

Doing good is what He has called you to.

Think of what you could be doing? Who you can do good for, what action? There will be something, and once you start more will come.

“**For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.**” Eph 2:10 *Are you doing them?*

For example this Christlike character is seen in a **disciple named Dorcas, who was always doing good and helping the poor.** We read Acts 9:39 **Peter went with them, ... and all the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them.** Goodness is very practical, - she used her gifts for the benefit of others.

✚ What is the first thing you notice about someone? What they are wearing? Good deeds are like clothes.....

I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God. 1 Timothy 2:9,10

Paul says if it is not there don’t expect help from the church, Paul says: **No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband, and is well known for her good deeds, such as bringing up children, showing hospitality, washing the feet of the saints, helping those in trouble and devoting herself to all kinds of good deeds.** 1 Tim 5:9,10

In the parable of the good Samaritan we see goodness in action, that Jesus said should be the outworking of faith, action like that. The two who should have displayed their love for their neighbour, who did not stop, sinned.

Anyone.. who knows the good he ought to do and doesn’t do it, sins. James 4:17

Joseph Scriven who wrote ‘what a friend we have in Jesus’

■ Born in Ireland in 1820, his prospects seemed favorable. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin. Joseph Scriven had wealth, education, a devoted family, and a pleasant life in his native Ireland. Then unexpected tragedy entered. On the night before Scriven's scheduled wedding, his fiancé drowned. In his deep sorrow, Joseph realized that he could find the solace and support he needed only in one person his dearest friend, Jesus.

■ This was the first of many misfortunes that led him to consecrate his life and property to Christ's service. Soon after this tragedy,

Scriven dramatically changed his lifestyle. He left Ireland for Port Hope, Canada, determined to devote all of his extra time in being a friend and helper to others. He often gave away his clothing and possessions to those in need, and he worked without pay for anyone who needed him. Scriven became known as the Good Samaritan of Port Hope. - That challenges me -

■ In time he became engaged to Eliza Roche. Once again tragedy struck. Shortly before the couple were to marry, the girl became ill and died. One can hardly estimate Joseph's shock and depression.

■ He joined the local Plymouth Brethren and assisted their elderly. His own sorrows seemed to make him more aware of the suffering of the poor and weak and he attempted to live out the Sermon on the Mount, giving or lending to anyone who asked and sympathizing with all who were more unfortunate than himself. He sawed wood for the stoves of the physically handicapped and comforted the poor and mentally distressed.

■ Joseph wrote his famous hymn in 1855 to comfort his mother who had become ill in Ireland. He did not seek to be noticed for it, and his authorship was only discovered by accident shortly before his death.

✚ How sad it is to see those who profess faith, but don’t seem to be busy doing good to others. It’s a contradiction.

■ Not to do so is a bit like making a car that is never driven or the sad state of a bird that never flies.

If you have sorrows like Joseph Scriven then use them to sympathise with others. Ask “what can I do to help someone, today”. Let us do as Jesus did, **go around doing good, not seek our own good, but the good of others.** 1 Cor 10:24

Next week, here is a way to help the elderly lunch club and OPH, to love the lost come out with a leaflet, invite to food evening =Happy Heart

Don’t neglect it. **Do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.** Hebrews 13:16

Feeling weary? Feeling despondant? Feeling you can make no difference? - **Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.** Gal 6:9 remember there is Joy in serving

Your time and mine on here on earth will soon be over – May they say of you on that day: 'he was a good man' or 'she was a good woman'

10 **Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.** _____END