



## THE UNDEFILED GOSPEL

### FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT GOODNESS, GOODNESS, GOODNESS

GALATIANS 5:22-23  
JULY 9, 2017

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

As we continue on in our study of the fruit of the Spirit, it is important to understand that as the Holy Spirit works in your lives, there should be a character change. That is one of the reasons Paul list the fruit of the flesh, before he listed the fruit of the Spirit, to show the contrast of one who is walking or living under their own power, to the one is walking with the Spirit.

Thus far we have looked at love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, and today we come to goodness.

Remember I stated that before that love, joy and peace are fruit that affects you inwardly. Again, they are part of the transformation process that each and every follower of Christ must go through. This part of the fruit is designed to work within us to bring about a continuing change based upon our relationship to God through Jesus Christ.

Patience, kindness and goodness are outward expressions. Outward expressions that again is a demonstration of the Spirit working in the life of the follower. In other words, it is our behavior or actions toward others. When we talk about goodness, many people think about trying harder to improve on being good.

Goodness, the fruit of the Spirit is something that happens within us when we walk by the Spirit. The Greek word that Paul uses means an uprightness of heart and life. Again, one's behavior.

This is not a higher standard that we decide that we are going to achieve on our own, then do it. If that is what you are thinking then it won't happen. Edwin Chapin once said, "Goodness consists not in the outward things we do, but in the inward thing we are." (Edwin Hubbel Chapin, 1814–1880)

This type of goodness can only be achieved when you draw close to God and allow His Holy Spirit to work in your life. It is the Holy Spirit that produces this fruit in our lives. Not the work of the Spirit but, the Spirit working in you to produce the fruit of the Spirit.

Understand that salvation is not reformation but regeneration. What I mean by that is you cannot be reformed, you must be reborn. Jesus said that one must be born again in order to get into heaven. The same if true in order to produce fruit of the Spirit, you must be reborn! Changes within us are not due to imitation but indwelling power.

If you are imitating someone, then you are acting. A person can only pretend so long, before the real person is seen. If that is the case for you, may I encourage you to stop acting and start becoming. The world doesn't like hypocrites, and neither does God.

Stop acting and start becoming the man or woman that God wants you to be. Stop acting and start living the life full of love, joy and peace.

It is important for me to say the Holy Spirit is doing great things in your life and the life of this congregation. Therefore, we must recognize that and acknowledge that true goodness comes from the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Here is a pitfall we must avoid, many times when we do something we want to compare what we did or didn't do to someone. We must never do that. If we are going to compare what we do to what someone else does, then we must compare it to what God has done. Then and only then, can we recognize true goodness.

So today I would like for us to ask the question how can I recognize goodness.

I. A good disposition

A good disposition is different than a good mood. Moods come and go. Moods are changeable, like the weather. And moods are based upon circumstances. And many people are living their life based upon moods, and my I say mood swings are not only bad, they can be dangerous!

A good disposition is a part of personality. It is based upon who we are inside. The goodness we are looking at today is not some inherited trait, it comes from a consistent abiding in God's love, and seeking to please Him, not self.

This type of goodness is simply loving others as God loves them. Once we have come to know Christ, then this fruit of goodness is maintained through the continual study and application of God's holy Word to our daily circumstances; it's the yielding of our lives to the control of God's Holy Spirit; and the confession of any impurity or un-holiness.

A good disposition is not based upon how I feel but who I belong too. A person with a good disposition is easier to live with and don't we all want that? A good disposition shows love, joy, peace, patience, kindness. You can recognize someone with a good disposition because they are good to be around. Another way to recognize goodness is. . .

## II. A good attitude

There was once an optimistic farmer who couldn't wait to greet each new day with a resounding, "Good morning, God!" He lived near a woman whose morning greeting was more like, "Good God... it's morning?" Where he saw opportunity, she saw problems. Where he was satisfied, she was discontented.

One bright morning he exclaimed, "Look at the beautiful sky! Did you see that glorious sunrise?" "Yeah," she countered. "It'll probably get so hot the crops will scorch!" During an afternoon shower, he commented, "Isn't this wonderful? Mother Nature is giving the corn a drink today!" "And if it doesn't stop before too long, "we'll wish we'd taken out flood insurance on the crops," came the sour reply.

Convinced that he could instill some awe and wonder in her hardened attitude, he bought a remarkable dog. Not just any mutt, but the most expensive, highly-trained and gifted dog he could find. The animal was exquisite! It could perform remarkable and impossible feats which, the farmer thought, would surely amaze even his neighbor. So, he invited her to watch his dog perform. "Fetch!" he commanded, as he tossed a stick out into a lake, where it bobbed up and down in the rippling water. The dog bounded after the stick, walked on the water, and retrieved it. "What do you think of that?" he asked, smiling. "Not much of a dog" she frowned. "Can't even swim, can he?"

A good attitude is very important in the life of a Christian. It is sad but true, many people walk around today just like the lady in the story. Never seeing anything good in anything. Perhaps that's you. Maybe your setting there thinking, "preacher you just don't understand." You know I may not understand why you've had such a hard time. I may not be able to understand why this has happen or that has happened.

However, I can tell you I understand you have a choice. You have a choice to stay where you are, or you can choose to allow God' Holy Spirit to work in your life. You see, you may not be able

to choose your circumstance, but you can choose your attitude! A good attitude is one that is friendly. Are you a friendly person? Jesus was quick to befriend people. I know it didn't win Him much accolades with the Pharisees. It is in Matthew 11:19 where the religious leaders accused Him of being a friend to sinners.

One of the greatest things about Jesus was He was always looking for the best in people. He didn't focus on their faults. He didn't go around complaining or slandering. We need to be that way. We need to not look at a person's faults or weakness. One reason is because we all have them. The second reason is we must take them from where they are and lead to where they need to be!

Paul writes, *"Therefore, encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing."* (1 Thess. 5:11)

Do you need a better attitude at home, at church, at your work place, or at school? Goodness produces a good attitude. Another way we can recognize a goodness is...

### III. A desire to do good to others

Doing good works does not save us for we are saved by grace. *"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God- not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."* (Ephesians 2:8-9)

The good works which we do is simply evidence of our relationship to Christ. James wrote, *"Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself. But someone may well say, "You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works."* (James 2:17-18)

Jesus said in *"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."* (Matt 5:16)

When people see that you care for them, truly care, then you can make a difference in their life. It is true, people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. Allowing the fruit of the Spirit to be obvious in our lives will make an impact in the lives of others.

A wise woman who was travelling in the mountains found a precious stone in a stream. The next day she met another traveler who was hungry, and the wise woman opened her bag to share her food. The hungry traveler saw the precious stone and asked the woman to give it to him. She did so without hesitation. The traveler left rejoicing in his good fortune. He knew the stone was worth enough to give him security for a lifetime. But, a few days later, he came back to return the stone to the wise woman. "I've been thinking," he said. "I know how valuable this stone is, so I want to give it back in the hope that you can give me something even more precious. Give me what you have within you that enabled you to give me this stone." (Unknown)

Conclusion; Goodness is the fruit of the Spirit that will help us in our relationship to others. Signs of goodness is a good disposition, a good attitude and a desire to do good to others.

So, I guess it's time for a checkup. Check your disposition, your attitude and your service.

Stuart Holden (1874-1934), the author of "Prevailing Intercessory Prayer", was in Egypt and met a sergeant in a Highland regiment. "How were you brought to Christ?" he asked this bright Christian.

The sergeant responded: "There was a private in the same company as myself who had been converted in Malta, and I gave him a terrible time. I remember one night in particular when it was very rainy and he came in wet and weary from sentry duty. Yet, as usual, he still got down on his knees before going to bed. My boots were covered in mud and I threw them both at him and hit him twice on the head. He kept kneeling and praying.

The next morning when I woke up I found my boots beautifully cleaned and polished at my bedside. This was his reply to me and it broke my heart. That day I was brought to repentance." (From a sermon by Ken Pell, A Fruit-Full Marriage: Gentleness (Gentle Love), 9/4/2011)

Paul said, "if we live by the Spirit, let us also walk with the Spirit." By walking with the Spirit and demonstrating the fruit of goodness, a believer can help lead others to God.

Are you walking with the Spirit?  
Amen