



Goodness: God's Character in God's Children

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith" (Galatians 5:22).

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A lot can be learnt if we consider Jesus' statement that only God is good (Matthew 19:17), and God's demand from Christians of "goodness" as one of the manifestations of the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22). This tells us that we cannot have goodness without God, just as we cannot have God without goodness.

"I said to the Lord, 'Thou art my Lord; I have no good beside Thee'" (Psalms 16:2). God wants His character reproduced in His children. That work begins at salvation (John 3:3), when the Holy Spirit moulds / sustains a godly character in Christians, enabling them to reflect God's glory through their lives. This is why God created man in His image and likeness **"This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise"** (Isaiah 43:21; Genesis 1:26).

Goodness, translated from the Greek word "agathosune" conveys the meanings of (1) uprightness of heart and life; (2) the state or quality of being good, (3) moral excellence, virtue, (4) kindly feeling, kindness, generosity, (5) the best part of anything; essence; strength; (6) general character recognized in quality or conduct.

The Omnipotence, Omniscience and Omnipresence of God channelled through His character of goodness brings tremendous blessings, comfort, encouragement, confidence and faith to humanity. James 1:13-17 reminds us that God is the source of every good thing, and that He is never the author of evil. God repeatedly assessed everything He made as "good" (Genesis 1:4,10,18; 1 Timothy 4:4). Also Psalms 84:11 tells us that God will not withhold any good thing from His children. He instituted marriage, not in response to man's ideas but because He saw that it was "not good" for man to be alone (Genesis 2:18-25). The goodness of God means that He has

"And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matthew 19:17).



our best interests at heart in all His dealings and actions.

We can co-operate with the Holy Spirit to bring this quality to perfection in our lives by:

- 1) Tasting God's goodness through repentance and faithfulness (Psalms 34:8; Romans 2:4; 11:22).
- 2) Drawing close to God in fellowship (Psalms 73:16,17,28; Philippians 3:10).
- 3) Accepting that all that emanates from God - His commandments, laws and providences are not only good but also meant for our good (Genesis 1:31; Romans 7:12)
- 4) Viewing things through His eternal perspectives (Psalms 73:16,17; Genesis 50:20; Psalms 119:67,75).
- 5) Gladly submitting to God's will, with the knowledge that all things (without exception), work together for the good of those that love God (Romans 8:28; 2 Corinthians 12:7; Hebrews 12:6-13).
- 6) Following divine examples by sowing seeds of goodness to all (Matthew 5:44,45; Acts 10:38; Galatians 6:7-10).
- 7) Focusing in looking for the good in God, His creation and in the ordering of our circumstances.

The Godhead is good. We were created in God's image with the potential to bear the fruit of goodness by the help of the Holy Spirit.