

**PP Root to Fruit! *Going Deep, Growing Up***

**Part 8-Galatians 5:22, *Goodness***

**2/24-25/2018**

Imagine if you will that someone paid for and gave to you an all-expense trip to an incredible destination

You accept the gift, and then learn that one awesome part of the trip is you get your very own trip advisor and guide, who is expertly familiar with the best ways to maximize your enjoyment and avoid common and serious travel mistakes

What a vacation that would be, the trip of a lifetime

Now bring that concept into the Christian experience of salvation

Jesus came to earth and took on human-ness, living a perfectly obedient life, keeping the entire Law of God in every detail...which means He loved God and others perfectly

He died on the cross providing for the trip of lifetime...salvation and freedom and joy

But how do we live that salvation out?

He sent a trip advisor, a travel agent, a Guide, the Holy Spirit, Who would do more than just send us pamphlets of scripture of how to live the Christian life, He would personally travel life with us, teaching us moment by moment how to travel well in this life

Not only teaching us, but providing the power to live out the freedom Christ has provided

I love how the New Living Translation gives us Philippians 2:12-13

**PP** ***“Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases Him.” Philippians 2:12-13***

We are free from the penalty and power of sin because of the death and resurrection of Christ

And because of the Holy Spirit we can live free with the power and desire to love God and others

God’s Spirit is producing in us new desires, and they have a goal...love!

He is working in us the life of Christ, so that His character is becoming our character

We are looking at the 6<sup>th</sup> virtue in the fruit of the Spirit bowl, called ‘goodness’

To the Jews, one becomes good by keeping the Torah, the Law of God

To the Greek, one becomes good through instruction in Greek Philosophy

To the Gospel, it is by walking with the Spirit

And as we dig into this virtue, we will discover that we have to look very carefully and closely to discern the difference between that and last week’s word, *‘kindness’*

My wife has a twin sister, and for both them, until several years ago, they thought they were identical twins but learned that they are, in fact, fraternal

But they look quite a bit alike, and they sound so much alike that they used to trade the phone back and forth between them when boys would call

It wasn’t until 5 years into our marriage that I was sure of which one I gave a ring to

**Goodness** and **kindness** are not identical twin words, but they are fraternal and very similar

We will need to excavate this word by slowly and carefully brushing away the confusion

**PP** (Pic of brush) So imagine yourself lying on the ground with a brush in hand, looking over the tiny bones of a prehistoric raptor, removing the encrusted soil grain by grain

**PP Brushstroke #1-Goodness defined**

There is an epitaph in Bristol, England, that goes like this: *“Here lie John and Richard Ben. Two lawyers and two honest men. God works miracles now and then.”*

But can goodness be summed up in an honest lawyer or two, and if not, what does it mean?

**PP** First, **'goodness'** translates a Greek word (*agathōsynē*) that gives us the name Agatha  
How unfortunate that this name has fallen out of popularity...less than 6,000 girls given the  
name in the US since 1880

It's a name that means moral excellence, and sweetness

But let's brush away the soil and look a little more closely

**PP** **'Goodness'** is the expression of kindness in word and deed

When the Spirit produces **'goodness'** in us, then that kindness springs into action with a  
generosity that is helpful for other people

So we have the fraternal twins of kindness and goodness

One which is a heart filled with gentleness and compassion, while the other is the expression of  
gentleness and compassion that moves on behalf of those who need help

**PP** You can look at it this way: kindness is *love being* and goodness is *love doing*

**PP** *"Kindness is a sincere desire to the happiness of others; goodness is the activity calculated to  
advance that happiness."* Jerry Bridges, *The Practice of Godliness*, page 189

Kindness is the inner disposition created by the Spirit that makes us sensitive to needs of others

Goodness is the Spirit-created movement to meet those needs with a generous display of our  
time, strength and resources

Paul put kindness before goodness, because we cannot give away what isn't there

**PP** Someone has said that *'patience is suffering love; kindness is compassionate love; and  
goodness is ministering love.'*

Paul connected active goodness in his writings

**PP** ***"To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of His calling  
and may fulfill every resolve for good [agathōsynē] and every work of faith by His power"***

**2 Thessalonians 1:11**

**PP** **'Goodness'** is love expressed in the generosity of action of serving others

It is the natural result of a heart filled with kindness that spills over into action

Goodness loves, even if that love is in the form of discipline, rebuke and correction for the sake  
of helping some come to repentance

## **PP** Brushstroke #2-Goodness Received

It is the goodness of Jesus Christ which the Holy Spirit is producing in us

Saying *'Oh my goodness'* is akin to me telling you about my Maserati that I don't own

Any goodness in Tim Ackley has come from the Spirit pouring the life of Christ into me

**PP** ***"God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about  
doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him."***

**Acts 10:38**

Parents the world over frequently tell their children to be good, but never encourage the opposite  
Being bad comes naturally to all of us, and goodness is unnatural, it comes from the Spirit

You hear me say that only the Christian can have this fruit of **'goodness'**, but then you think, *I  
know unbelievers that do good deeds, and do them more than most Christians I know*

How can that be?

The Bible looks at these fruit from two distinct perspectives

The first one is the measuring rod of the Law, which evaluates the external performance of how  
we live

The Law tells us to not steal, and you may know someone that would find it unthinkable to steal, and even teaches criminals of theft how to live a life of honesty and integrity

That person has kept the law of God, and never stolen anything from anyone...they are in that sense, a good person

But the Law also has an inward aim and standard, right to the motivation in each of us?

God sees the heart and His evaluation goes to that depth...why are we doing what we're doing?

If a person is to do a good deed, then she must conform externally to the Law of God's command, and that action must spring from a heart whose motivation is to love God and want to honor Him

The Christian must do good and not steal because the Law of God says not to, and there is no higher motivation in us than to love and honor God Himself

When you consider human performance from this level, an unbeliever might do good and not steal, but they cannot be filled with goodness motivated to love and honor God displayed in never wanting to take from another what does not belong to him

**PP** This is why Jesus said, ***"Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone."***

**Luke 18:19**

He was forcing that man to recognize Him as God, and himself as a sinner, who may have kept the outward commands, but had fallen short of the inward motivation to love God above all

### **PP Brushstroke #3-Goodness Illustrated**

The word here for goodness only occurs in 4 places in the NT, so it's a word best seen in action

**PP** ***"Now there was in Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which, translated, means Dorcas. She was full of good [agathos] works and acts of charity."*** Acts 9:36

**PP** ***"So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good [agathos] to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith."*** Galatians 6:10

**PP** ***"women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good [agathos] works."*** 1 Timothy 2:9-10

Nothing is more beautiful on a woman, or a man than a life of good works...it's clothing made from the best material...kindness

Goodness is built on selflessness and it is best seen when it's in action

Before we turn to our 4<sup>th</sup> and final brushstroke, let me tell you about Jesus

It was kindness He displayed when he defended the woman of the city weeping and anointing His feet as Simon the Pharisee was just judging her and Him

But it was an illustration of His goodness when He drove the moneylenders out of His Father's house

### **PP Brushstroke #4-Goodness Lived**

Most of us are familiar with Ephesians 2:8-9, which teaches that salvation is by grace, but we should be as familiar with verse 10 which continues Paul's thought

**PP** ***"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good [agathos] works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."*** Ephesians 2:10

Amazingly, before we came to Christ, even before He created the world, God created good works specifically for each Christian, that each of us *‘should walk in them’*

Paul’s telling us we have common, every day opportunities for the goodness of Christ being produced in us to be displayed to others...lived out in normal life

And He equips us to live goodness from the inside out by His Scriptures

**PP** *“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17*

The Word of God is miracle grow in the hands of the Spirit, readying us to display kindness in generous action to those all around us

Friends, for some of us, we need to change our perspectives about our jobs, our work, our careers  
They are of course, opportunities to earn what we need to live

But much more deeply than paying bills, or gaining wealth, our jobs are the primary place where we can display the goodness of Christ

We spend more than half of our waking hours at work yet for many of us, we are throwing away opportunities to do good by not realizing God gave us the job to display His goodness

And what this looks like is simply meeting the needs of ordinary people

Perhaps helping a co-worker with an assignment, or a smile to someone obviously struggling, or gently refusing to gossip or slander a peer, or going the extra mile for a difficult customer

Are you pursuing a job as an opportunity to display God’s goodness, do you see your job in that way?

But not just at work, but in life is goodness displayed

Listen to the early church’s advice as to what widow should be qualified for church assistance

**PP** *“Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years of age, having been the wife of one husband, and having a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good [agathos] work.” 1 Timothy 5:9-10*

A person full of goodness has a heart turned toward others, living generously for them with no thought of a return for yourself, even for those who do not deserve it

Do you know that Christians are the biggest problem for Christianity?

The world should be taking notice of our good works and glorying the God Who saved us

But resist the impulse to think corporately on that...about the church as a whole

Think personally...are you honestly full of good works; devoted to every good work; equipped for every good work; professing salvation by good works?

You see goodness is the rational, well thought out, deliberate display of kindness to any and all

A good person will not allow evil to run rampant and let people be treated unjustly

Goodness steps in to relieve suffering, doing what it can to stop and control the effects of evil with the love and kindness and power of Jesus Christ

**PP** It sacrifices, not becoming *‘weary of doing good...[but] as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are in the [church].’ Galatians 6:9-10*

It years that no one in our lives would say what King David once wrote:

**PP** *“I look for someone to come and help me, but no one gives me a passing thought! No one will help me; no one cares a bit what happens to me.” Psalm 142:4 (NLT)*

Amen? Pray