

Galatians 5:22 Goodness

Kingsgrove 9:30 am

8 March 2026

Well... good morning...

Over the Sundays...

That I've been with you...

We have been talking about the fruit of the Spirit...

What is the "fruit of the Spirit"...

Well, it is listed for us, in the 22nd verse of the 5th chapter of Paul's letter to the Galatians.

Galatians 5:22. (**on the screen Galatians 5:22,23**)

There are nine of these "fruits of the Spirit".

And today we want to talk about number 6 on the list...

Number 6 out of the 9 listed is "Goodness".

The five ahead of goodness...

They are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness...

There are three that follow "goodness"... faithfulness, gentleness, self control.

So, this, then is to be a sermon on "goodness".

What is it, then, about "goodness" that is so significant for us?

It's almost as if Paul is saying...

All of this "Fruit of the Spirit"...

It's all important.

them all in under one heading.

And then let's just call it "goodness".

We all know what "goodness" is.

Surely that's enough.

But then having got our minds thinking about "goodness", we will find Galatians 5:22 has to list three more.

But this "fruit of the Spirit".

"Fruit of the holy Spirit".

We who are trusting in the Lord Jesus for our salvation...

We have the Holy Spirit within us.

Therefore the "fruit" of the Holy Spirit is becoming evermore a part of our being.

It is as if Paul is saying to us...

Anyone can know what are these qualities of life called "fruit of the Spirit".

You don't have to be a Christian to know how worthy it is to be people of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control...

But Paul is also saying in this chapter 5 of Galatians.

We, as Christians, as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ...

We will be making every effort to make these fruits of the Spirit ours.

And, so in this chapter, he also talks about "living by the Spirit".

Paul talks about being "led by the Spirit".

He talks about "keeping in step with the Spirit".

So Paul suggests everybody in God's creation at one level or another will have a feel for these qualities of life called "fruit of the Spirit".

And to varying degrees... and among us some quite remarkably... people will or won't be putting them into action...

But... we as Christians, unlike most people, we will be actively working at making the "fruit of the Spirit" active in us...

"Living by the Spirit".

“Being led by the Spirit”.

“Keeping in step with the Spirit”.

All ways stated here for getting the “fruit of the Spirit” active in us. (**Remove Galatians 5:22,23**)

And for Paul... just to make his case all the more sure...

In verse 19 of this chapter 5...

He lists 14 ways that we will definitely not want to be gratifying what he calls “the desires of the sinful nature”.

And, sad to say, I’m am certain that none of us could fail to know exactly what are those 14 ways for gratifying the desires of the sinful nature.

Let’s pause for a moment to think about the word “fruit”.

We all eat it.

We all enjoy it.

And if we don’t we know we are supposed to.

Fruit keeps us healthy.

Fruit is all a part of the process of making this body we live in function efficiently...

We want to enjoy living in our bodies for as long as possible. So we eat fruit and lots of other healthy things.

All so we can live in our bodies for as long as possible.

And we do want to be in a position to be useful to others.

Should that then apply that to us as Christians, seeking to be useful for the Lord...?

As we fill up our Christian characters with the Fruit of the Spirit.

And so, just as we do not “make” the fruit we eat....

But we do allow it to work in us...

So, we did not “make” the fruit of the Spirit either.

But we do allow it also to be at work in us.

And all of that for the greater satisfaction of belonging to the Lord.

And... most significantly... to multiply the possibility of being of use to others.

Now, each of us in our daily bible reading unearths a verse like 1 Peter 3:15. (**on the screen 1 Peter 3:15**)

There Peter says....

“In your hearts, set apart Christ as Lord”.

“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone...

“Who asks you to give reason for the hope that you have...”.

O how each of us in Christ longs for that moment...

That someone should actually ask us to explain why we live in a sure and certain hope.

The “fruit of the Holy Spirit”...

Being evident in me will fuel that process.

I must get the fruit of the Spirit to be at work in me.

Stay in step with the Spirit.

And just so we begin to stay in touch with the topic for today's sermon... specifically "goodness". (**Remove 1 Peter 3:15**)

Flip over a couple of pages from 1 Peter to John's third letter.

One chapter only for this book of the bible.

It doesn't even occupy a page of the bible. (verse 11).
(**On the screen 3 John verse 11**)

"Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but...

"What is good".

And then to make it all the more clear...

John then says...

"Anyone who does what is good is from God".

"Anyone who does evil has not seen God".

So how do I get this fruit of the Spirit called "goodness" at work in my life?

How do I get "goodness" working for the benefit of others?
It's interesting to note how the word "goodness" surfaces in everyday life.

For those of us who have developed the more polite ways of expressing how annoyed we can be...

Or how frustrated we are...

Or even how amazed we are...

You may use expressions like.

"For goodness sake".

Or "my goodness".

Or "thank goodness for that".

Or "goodness knows".

Or even "what's the good?".

Interesting how the word "goodness" or simply "good"....

Interesting how it can underlie our reactions in these moments of being overwhelmed.

That is so long as we are seeking to honour our Lord is our choice of expressed reactions.

Well how can we put some content into what "goodness" actually is?

Yes, we all know what goodness is.

But can our Scriptures enable us to get into it a little more deeply?

A thought from 1 Corinthians 12:7.
(**on the screen 1 Corinthians 12:7**)

“Now to each one... and in that context “each one” is each believer...

“To each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good”.

Quite simple isn't it?

A little like the quotes from 1 Peter 3:15 or from John's third letter.

Should the Spirit's work be clearly in evidence in us...

It will be for the common good.

That may mean that the people around us hear and respond to the gospel.

The same idea as Paul opens up his letter to the Colossians (1:10). **(on the screen Colossians 1:10)**

Where he talks about bearing fruit in every “good” work.

This idea of the overflow in the “fruit of the Spirit” continues to surface.

Fruit keeps us healthy.

And us kept healthy... spiritually healthy that is... enables us to make a difference in the lives of others.

But whatever it is that is “goodness”...

It equates exactly with the character of our God.
Across the psalms and elsewhere, the thought comes to the surface...

“He is good,

(“His love endures forever”).

Psalms 100...

Famously recreated in one of our old hymns.

The fourth verse opens with the words.

**(on the screen 100:4,5 from the hymn).
(The Lord our God is good
His mercy is forever sure
His truth at all times firmly stood
And shall from age to age endure)**

“The Lord our God is good”.

“His mercy is forever sure”.

Verse 5 of the psalm from which the hymn derives.

“For the Lord is good”.

And so as we deal with this word which is defying our capacity to define it...

The undisclosed psalm writer goes on to flesh out what it means for the Lord to be “good”.

What it means for us, in fellowship with the Holy Spirit, as we seek to display “goodness” in us.

So verse 5 continues...

“And his love endures for ever”.

“His faithfulness continues through all generations”

Interesting to note though...

In explaining “goodness” we have to introduce two other of the fruits of the Spirit.

What is highlighted about the Lord’s ‘goodness’...

In its component parts, there is an enduring quality.

“Goodness”... something that endures forever.

It is something that continues through all generations.

So that “goodness” has a quality that will be reliable.

It will be consistent.

(remove from the screen Psalm 100 hymn)

All of us are conscious of the fact that there can be an ebb and flow in our walk with the Lord.

Some of us can talk of phases in our life when we ceased to attend church.

Then some circumstance brought us back.

We may have been zealous in our bible reading.

Only to grow cold in our thirst for its truth.

We can be more and less filled with a desire to pray.

Can we even become less diligent in our willingness to care?

Yet we are people of faith in the Lord Jesus.

We have the Holy Spirit in us.

And we know that the fruit of that Holy Spirit is made clear in our “goodness”.

So we model our “goodness” on our Lord.

“Goodness” is in the very substance of his being.

There is no lapse in the “goodness” of our Lord.

It’s always in place.

So often my own thoughts will wander in directions they should not go.

I know it’s unfitting for a follower of the Lord Jesus to wander where my thoughts have taken me.

Yet, that unfailing goodness of the Lord remains firmly in place.

It endures forever.

It continues through all generations.

Therefore also must I be striving to keep the fruit of the Spirit at work in me.

Psalm 145:9. **(on the screen Psalm 145:9)**

“The Lord is good to all”.

“He has compassion on all he has made”.

So that... when we speak of our Lord’s “goodness”.

It flows from him... it is available to all... without exception.

And the universality of “goodness” as displayed in our Lord.

It has built into it ,“compassion”.

Again... it is there for everybody without exception.

Does my personal “goodness” embrace compassion?

The one who is ultimately “good” went to the cross for a people heedless of his compassion.

It’s always a challenge to show compassion when we see a need... yet find our compassion is rejected.

Jesus died for us.

Yet almost none were seeking a pathway to everlasting life that day.

So many in need of compassion...

Who do they want to receive it from?

They will only accept from the one they judge worthy to offer compassion.

The goodness that the Holy Spirit works in us offers that compassion regardless.

Whether we are judged worthy to offer it by the one who is needy... or not.

(remove Psalm 145:9)

The book of Nahum is not one we often go to.

Yet every book of the bible has gems for us to grasp.

Chapter 1, verse 7. **(on the screen Nahum 1:7)**

“The Lord is “good”.

“A refuge in times of trouble”.

“He cares for those who trust in him”.

We model our “goodness” on the “goodness” of the Lord.

Like him we become a place of refuge for the troubled.

Here, in Nahum, the Lord’s goodness is highlighted as coming to those who trust in him.

The Nahum verse is an answer to those moments when our “goodness” is rejected.

Be alert for those prepared to place their trust in us.

Be ready with our “goodness”... ready to be the refuge that is our Lord.

(remove Nahum 1:7)

You know...

From the very beginning we have had a hunger to know what is good.

Tragically, in the day of Adam and Eve.

We wanted to be like God.

Why?

We wanted to be like God so that we knew about evil, as well as “good” like he did.

Eve then Adam ate the forbidden fruit.

And so came the knowledge of “good” and evil.

That event will alert us to the fact that to know “goodness” is now a struggle.

For we are also aware of evil.

Galatians 5:19 has brought to our attention the “desires of the flesh”.

All 14 of them... and not to say there are not many others not listed there.

Each of us in Christ is engaged in a struggle to bring the “fruit of the Spirit” to the forefront of our lives.

Oh that in Christ we could be people whose lives are wholly marked by that fruit.

We can identify with the despair expressed in Romans 3:12 (quoting the psalms).

(on the screen Romans 3:12)

“No one does “good”, no even one”.

That is base we start from, when we begin to live in Christ.

And that is why in the same letter Paul can say 9 chapters later (12:9).

“Cling to what is good”. **(remove Romans 3:12)**

And so we take heart as we read on into Ephesians 2:10

That, in Christ, we have been created for “good “ works.

Those works we call “good”... generated in us by the fruit that flows from Holy Spirit being in us.

Yes, it is a struggle we now engage in...

Now we are in Christ.

On the way through, we’ve taken time to quote from Paul, Peter and John among the letter writers.

Now the unknown author of the letter to the Hebrews.

In chapter 5 and verse 12.

(on the screen Hebrews 5:12)

He urges us to continually draw on what he calls the solid food of the Word.

The writer says the solid food is for the mature.

We are to make constant use of the solid food of the Word.

And the result of that constant use of the Word.

“We are able to distinguish “good” from evil”.

Adam and Eve had demanded of the Lord a world where they knew of “good” and evil.

There is a pathway back to the place where it is only “goodness” we live with.

In the meantime, we have solid food of the Word of God.

We have the Holy Spirit who opens our eyes to that Word.

We have the living Word who is Jesus Christ our Lord.

In this time of waiting...

Let us feed on the living Word...

As we learn to distinguish "good" from evil.

And so we allow the fruit of the Spirit...

Specifically that fruit we call "goodness" to be increasingly the distinguishing mark of our lives.

We are positioned to continually reveal to a needy world the "goodness" of the one who alone is "good".