

# Goodness

Fruit of the Spirit--part 6

May 17, 2015

## DAY 1:

1. Why is goodness a fruit of the Holy Spirit's work? This begs the question, what is the difference between human goodness and the goodness that only the power of the Holy Spirit can produce?

*Romans 8:28*

"Good" has a bad connotation in our culture. It implies "goody-goody" or "goody two shoes." It often comes with a sneer of "He thinks he's better than everybody else." Here is implied a hypocrisy which elevates himself up above others while everyone else can see right through the sham.

The Pharisees in the time of Jesus were masters at having the appearance of goodness, using that appearance of goodness as a way of exalting themselves.

In contrast is the apostle, who late in life ...

*...I am the chief of sinners.*

### Calvin Miller

Humans: good, better, best.

God: Creation account--"it was good." That was the pinnacle.

God is good. You'll hear people complain, "Well, if God is so good, why is there evil in the world? Why is there suffering?" When we see injustice, God's goodness is absent. People have not allowed His goodness to be brought to bear on the situation. When someone treats you without mercy, God's goodness is not being called upon. God will not IMPOSE His goodness in a situation without your permission and surrender.

We allow His goodness to supercede what we consider "good."

MICAH 6:8 !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Human goodness:

- In comparison with others
- Relativism vs. a real standard of goodness.
- "My definition of goodness is all that matters."
- Doesn't always win approval; sometimes brings ridicule.
- Seeks to act in a way that is good for God and others at cost to itself.

*Romans 12:9 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.*

Tie with Romans 3:21-22--a righteousness, a goodness which we can never achieve.

"Goodness is that moral quality that sets virtue as a premium" -C. Miller

Do good, what's right when someone watching you? That's not goodness; that's the craving for reputation. When we do what's right when no one is watching except God, and we're OK with that, we're on the right trail.

What happens inside you when:

Someone else gets the credit for doing something? You were overlooked.

p. 53--"You cannot bring spotless living out of impure hearts. You cannot be saved for struggling hard enough to keep all the commandments, never breaking one of them." -Miller, p53

### **Through p. 66**

#### **Illustrations:**

Luke 3:7-9--you brood of vipers -- p15

Joseph and Potiphar's wife--p17-18

**PARENTING!** Examples: Sibling rivalry. She hit me. But he told me I was a pig.

"She got to break her curfew last weekend. Why can't I. Well if you were just more responsible..."

"How long are you going to be in that bathroom??!!"

What do you wish for as a parent? That they would be good. There is a goodness you wish you could implant in them that superceded their human goodness and allowed them the power to love each other instead of bickering.

*Isaiah 1:2 Hear, O heavens! Listen, O earth! For the LORD has spoken: "I reared children and brought them up, but they have rebelled against me.*

*<sup>3</sup> The ox knows his master, the donkey his owner's manger, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand."*

*<sup>4</sup> Ah, sinful nation, a people loaded with guilt, a brood of evildoers, children given to corruption! They have forsaken the LORD; they have spurned the Holy One of Israel and turned their backs on him.*

*<sup>5</sup> Why should you be beaten anymore? Why do you persist in rebellion? Your whole head is injured, your whole heart afflicted.*

Woman anointing Jesus (Mt. 26) Righteousness implanted in her!!! This was her expression of gratitude and worship for the new life Jesus had given her and implanted in her heart!

#### **The rich young ruler**

*Mark 10:17 As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"*

What did the young man believe about how someone gains eternal life?

Why do you think he asked this question? What do you think was motivating him?

*Mark 10:18 "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good--except God alone."*

I'm sure the young man never saw this answer coming! He was looking for an answer to a question about eternal life, and what he could do to merit receiving it. Instead, he was questioned as to why he called Jesus "good." Why do you think Jesus was up to here?

Why would this questioning of what was "good" matter to gaining eternal life?

If one needs to be saved from sin (doing bad), yet has a view of himself as good, what chance does he have of even seeing his need to be saved?

What standard of goodness do you think the man was using?

When Jesus asked, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone" what do you think happened in the man?

People use the word "good" in different ways. Most of the time "good" is used to define a human standard of goodness that we assume is "good enough."

The stunner is that Jesus uses "good" to describe

*Mark 10:19 You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.'"*

<sup>20</sup> *"Teacher," he declared, "all these I have kept since I was a boy."*

<sup>21</sup> *Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."*

<sup>22</sup> *At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.*

<sup>23</sup> Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!"

<sup>24</sup> The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God!

<sup>25</sup> It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

Arrived at a generous view of himself doubtless through comparison. He saw himself like many see themselves today. "I know I'm not perfect, far from it, but I'm a fairly moral guy." Think of this as "self-approved morality." Usually "self-righteousness" connotes a hypocrite. But self-righteousness can also mean someone who has declared himself righteous. You decide what the standard of goodness is *and* you are judge and jury if you have met your standard.

In our current culture where the God of moral standards is dead, all that's left is the measuring stick in your hand. This is what's called relativism. "What's good for you is 'good' for you. What's 'good' for me is 'good' for me. Don't impose on me your standard of what is good."

If this is hard to see in yourself, just think of interactions you've had with your teenagers. They have their standard of what goodness is and if you try to up their standard, watch out! And if you imply that they are not meeting a reasonable standard of goodness, watch out again!

This fine little apple cart gets overturned when you measure your goodness versus someone way farther ahead than you. And it meets its end point when we compare ourselves to Jesus Christ, as God expects us to do.

*Isaiah 64:6 filthy rags*

**Re-finishing a wood desk.** Used a heavy chemical stripper to help remove the old varnish and stain. I had a pile of rags that had the gunk all over them. I threw them into the washing machine ... and threw a few clothes in since I was washing the rags anyway. When that load finished I threw the whole batch into the dryer. I thought I had done a good thing. Instead, my oldest daughter's best dressed was in that load and it emerged from the dryer with spots all over it. No amount of washing, no amount of laundry detergent could undo those stains. The dress was ruined, no matter how good it once looked or still might look at a distance.

IMPLANTED RIGHTEOUSNESS.

### **Baker's Dict. Of Theology:**

Root OT word is "tob" which means pleasant.

Moral goodness is something that is developed as the bible progresses in time.

Creation is called good.

Good is the equivalent of right (Deut. 6:18)

Good means benefits (Job 2:10)

Agathos and kalos--NT

Bible centers goodness on the character and nature of God. Plato and Aristotle thought of the highest object as the Summum Bonum but were not thought of as a living personal God.

The height of God's goodness is seen in His redeeming love. God's work of remaking us to be like Christ requires His goodness. His goodness actively promotes truth and righteousness. Some severity is necessary to make sinful men good.

Goodness cannot be derived from mere naturalistic or evolutionist grounds. It is distinct from the useful (evolutionary) or the pleasant (naturalistic).

Sometimes the good is not useful to us, nor is it pleasant to us, yet we acknowledge its absolute claim upon us, whether or not we respond to that claim.