

The Journey to Goodness

Study Guide

Text: Ephesians 2:8-10

Goodness is not a feeling. As it relates to the fruit of the Spirit, it is an action, and nothing less.

God's plan for his people, who are growing in spiritual maturity, and who are walking in the fullness of the fruit of the Holy Spirit, is that they — we — will do good at every opportunity. Ref: Galatians 6:9; 2nd Cor. 9:8; Colossians 1:10; 2nd Timothy 3:17

The problem is that anyone who sets out to do good runs nose first into a mighty obstacle. What is that obstacle? We're not good. None of us. Not me, not you, not anyone else. Ref: Mark 10:18; Psalm 53:3; Romans 3:10

Three essential distinctions we need to make in order to fully cultivate this aspect of the fruit of the Spirit.

1. There is a difference between being and doing.

All our righteous acts are like filthy rags...(Isaiah 64:6)

Not only was your sin transferred to Jesus on the cross, but when you receive him as your Lord and Savior, his righteousness was transferred to you. Ref: 2nd Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 2:8,9

Continuing this journey into goodness, we need to remember that the Christian life doesn't end with being made positionally righteous through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Our Christian life continues as we become — through our actions — more and more like Jesus.

This was God's plan all along for each of us. You do good, not in order to earn God's favor, but in response to the favor you have been freely given. Ref: Ephesians 2:10

2. Goodness is never less than an action.

When it comes to cultivating the fruit of goodness, good intentions by themselves are never good enough. It comes down to what you do.

A character *is* what the character *does*.

3. Goodness is cultivated on a case-by-case basis.

**Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.
(Galatians 6:10)**

The best way to cultivate goodness, then, is to develop a “*THIS TIME*” mentality.

Goodness is cultivated on a day-by-day case-by-case basis. And it comes down to you saying: *This time* I will do good. Ref: Acts 10:38

Any negative emotion that you will ever have is absolutely powerless to affect the cultivation of this quality, because goodness is all about what you do, not what you feel. Ref: Galatians 6:10

