

Leader's Notes

The Fruit of the Spirit studies

Goodness & Faithfulness



Key verse: Galatians 5:25-26.

Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.



Big Idea: Seeing the fruit of the Spirit as Christian '**performance indicators**' gives us a tangible way of assessing our progress in Christian living.

Today's focus is on two additional aspects of the fruit of the Holy Spirit, goodness and faithfulness.

Kick Off

What comes to mind when someone or something is described as being good?

(Discussion: 'Good' changes its meaning as its context changes. 'Good' can mean different and possibly opposite things to different people – by this world's standards, 'good' is relative. Main point: By God's standard 'good' is absolute because it is based on His unchanging character and not on our changing opinions.)

STUDY

Read Galatians 5:16-26.

In Greek, the word translated as 'goodness' is '*agathosune*' which can also mean intrinsic goodness or moral excellence. Interestingly, '*agathosune*' only appears 4 times in the New Testament. Some scholars have determined that this word only found in the Bible and is not present in secular Greek.

The first time that we come across the word 'good' in the Bible is in Genesis 1:4 when God made light and saw that it was good (Read Genesis 1:1-4).

Before the fall, creation reflected God's glory in its 'goodness'. The sin of Adam and Eve brought corruption into the world and corrupted the 'goodness' of creation.

1. What do we mean when we say that God is good? (All that God does is right. He is the moral standard by which everyone and everything else is measured up against. Part of that moral standard is that God looks out for the best interests of His creation.)

2. Jesus came into the world to redeem creation. Read Luke 4:1-13 (the temptation of Jesus), John 8:1-11 (testing of Jesus), John 2:13-17 (cleansing of the temple), and John 15:12-17 (sacrificial love).

- How do you see 'goodness' in the life of Jesus in these passages? (He does what is right even in trying circumstances and also what is good for others in the face of personal suffering.)

THINK AND APPLY

- How could you be more like Jesus? List 3 or more ways that you could exhibit more 'goodness' in your daily life (work, home, church). Discuss one or more of these with a person next to you.

(Allow not more than 3-5 min. for discussion)

Faithfulness

Can you think of some things that you are persuaded about but do not personally have much evidence for?

(Ideas: Facts that people accept because they have been told that it is so. The earth revolves around the sun, people set foot on the moon, the pyramids were built by people who lived thousands of years ago, and a man named Jesus died and rose from the dead two thousand years ago.)

In Galatians 5:22, faithfulness is the seventh aspect of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. The Greek word used here is "*pistis*" which can be translated as faith – to be persuaded, come to trust.

1. From this passage, where do we understand faith to come from (and not come from)? (Gal. 5:16)

(From the Holy Spirit, not from the flesh.)

The main reason why Paul is writing to the Galatians is because the Galatians were adding trust in rules on to faith in Christ as the means for approval (Gal. 1:6-7, 1:15-16). By this, works would dictate how they lived and identify approval with God, or so they thought.

2. Read Gal. 2:19-20. In verse 19 Paul's states that he died to the law (rules) so that he could live to God.

- As a Christian, what is Paul's motivation to live for God?
(Faith in Jesus and knowledge of Jesus' example of sacrificial love.)

THINK AND APPLY

- How might you respond today to Jesus' sacrificial love for you?
(As a non-Christian – faith in Him; as a Christian – sacrificially living and working out of gratitude for what He has done for me.)

PRAYER

What can you pray about arising from this study?



**For next week
Read
Matthew 5:1-16**