

Goodness and the Spirit-filled life

Text: Ephesians 5:9; James 12:27

Introduction

The Spirit-produced fruit of goodness grows out of God's perfect goodness.

Goodness includes both what a man is and what he does.

Everyone agrees that the spiritual man is a good man. But what is a good man? (1) One who never sins? Then lock him in a cell with no temptations. (2) One who is better than the average man? (3) Moral integrity or purity as God demands in His Word.

Message

1. God's goodness.

a. The Bible uses the image of light to describe the goodness of God.

These verses speak of goodness as light and evil as darkness: 1 John 1:5; John 3:19; Matthew 4:16; Ephesians 5:8; and 1 John 1:7.

b. Christians are the reflected light of God's goodness (Matthew 5:14,16).

If the earth comes between the sun and the moon, there is an eclipse of the moon. If something comes between God and us, we do not reflect His goodness. We must stay in the light of God's sun (the Son).

2. Man's highest good.

a. One should be a person of integrity all the time.

One good deed does not make a good man. Like the dependable performance of a champion athlete, the good man is consistently good.

b. The best deed one can perform for his fellowman is to lead him to know God (Proverbs 11:30).

3. Goodness distinguished from kindness.

a. Kindness is a pervading attitude or spirit. (See discussion in text.)

b. Goodness goes beyond being to doing.

A zeal for good detests and crusades against evil (Romans 12:9).

4. Active benevolence and liberality.

a. Pure religion (or goodness) is described in James 1:27.

The truly good man gives to needy ones because he loves them, not because he wants his act to be seen. Remember Christ's denunciation of the Pharisees and hypocrites.

b. Hospitality and generosity seek opportunities to bless others, with no thought of a returned favor.

Conclusion

The good man loves good for its own sake, not because it pays off. A child may do good to avoid punishment, but he becomes a good person when he chooses right for himself.

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