

What Does the Bible Say About Goodness?

We use the word good loosely, calling a meal good, a movie good, a day good. The Bible has a far higher view of goodness. It roots all goodness in God, who alone is truly good, and it calls His people both to be good in heart and to do good with their hands. Goodness is not weakness or mere harmlessness. It is one of the strongest forces in the world, and it belongs to the character of God. Let us see what the Scriptures say.

God Alone Is Good

When a man called Jesus "Good Master", the Lord answered, "*Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God*" ([Mark 10:18](#)). All goodness has its source in Him. The psalmist said to God, "*Thou art good, and doest good*" ([Psalm 119:68](#)), and James reminded us that "*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights*" ([James 1:17](#)). Whatever good we have ever received, and whatever good we are ever able to do, traces back to Him.

God Works All Things for Good

God's goodness is seen not only in the gifts He gives but in how He governs everything that touches His people. Paul wrote, "*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose*" ([Romans 8:28](#)). This does not say that every thing is good. Much of what happens is painful and hard. It says that God, who is good, is able to weave even the hard things together for the good of those who love Him. A good God can be trusted in the dark, even when we cannot yet see what He is doing.

Goodness Is the Fruit of the Spirit

Goodness is named in the fruit of the Spirit ([Galatians 5:22](#)), the harvest that grows in a life governed by God's word. We are "*created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them*" ([Ephesians 2:10](#)). Christ redeemed for Himself "*a peculiar people, zealous of good works*" ([Titus 2:14](#)). Goodness, then, is not optional decoration on the Christian life. It is the very thing we were remade in Christ to do.

Jesus Went About Doing Good

Goodness in the Bible is active, not merely the absence of evil. Peter summed up the whole life of Jesus in a single phrase, that He *"went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him"* ([Acts 10:38](#)). He did not simply avoid harm. He went looking for ways to bless. To be good as He was good is to go through life on the lookout for good to do, not waiting to be asked.

Do Good to All Men

The goodness God calls for is not reserved for our own circle. *"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith"* ([Galatians 6:10](#)). It begins with the family of God but does not stop there. Every opportunity to do good to anyone is a door God has opened, and the good person walks through it rather than past it.

Overcome Evil With Good

Goodness has a power that evil cannot match. Paul wrote, *"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good"* ([Romans 12:21](#)). When wronged, the flesh wants to repay evil with evil, but that only multiplies the evil. Returning good for evil breaks the cycle and can melt an enemy's heart as nothing else will. It is slow work, and tiring, so Paul added, *"let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not"* ([Galatians 6:9](#)).

Good From the Heart, Good in the Hands

Goodness begins inside and works its way out. *"A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good"* ([Luke 6:45](#)). And when it shows in our deeds, it points people to God: *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven"* ([Matthew 5:16](#)). So let goodness fill the heart and flow out through the hands. Be good, and do good, to all you can, as long as you can, reflecting the God who is good and does good.

Every Scripture reference in this study links to the King James Version. Open it and read for yourself.