

## AM I GOOD ENOUGH?

### What is goodness in the Bible?

- Positive moral quality characterized especially by interest in the welfare of others.<sup>1</sup> Is not found in the classical writings or even in Josephus.<sup>2</sup> It is a distinctly “Christian” word.<sup>3</sup>
- May be thought of both as an uprightness of soul and as an action reaching out to others to do good even when it is not deserved.<sup>4</sup>
- Rare word: only found 4 times in the entire New Testament.

Q: Is there such a thing as objective goodness?

A: Without God, there is no objective foundation for goodness or morality.

“My argument against God was that the universe seemed so cruel and unjust. But how had I got this idea of “just” and “unjust”?...What was I comparing this universe with when I called it unjust?...Of course I could have given up my idea of justice by saying it was nothing but a private idea of my own. But if I did that, then my argument against God collapsed too---for the argument depended on saying that the world was really unjust, not simply that it did not happen to please my private fancies...Consequently atheism turns out to be too simple.” – C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*<sup>5</sup>

Galatians 5:22

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, **goodness**,*

Ephesians 5:8-9

*for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light <sup>9</sup> (for the fruit of light is found in all that is **good** and right and true), <sup>10</sup> and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.*

Romans 15:14

*I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of **goodness**, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another.*

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

*To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for **good** and every work of faith by his power,<sup>12</sup> so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

### Praying for integrity

- We pray for God to enable our **walk** to match our **calling**: We are called to a life of integrity – 1:11a *To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling*
- We pray for God to fulfill every **purpose** we have for good – 1:11b *and may fulfill every resolve for **good***
- We pray for God to complete every **courageous** action we take for Him – 1:11c *and every work of faith by his power,*
- For what purpose? – 1:12 *so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

“Morality may keep you out of jail, but it takes the blood of Jesus Christ to keep you out of hell.” – C.H. Spurgeon

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<sup>1</sup> W. Arndt, F.W. Danker, W. Bauer, & F.W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed., (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ben Witherington III, *Grace in Galatia: A Commentary to Paul's Letter to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1998), 410.

<sup>3</sup> R. N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, Vol. 41 (Dallas: Word, 1990), 262.

<sup>4</sup> D. K. Campbell, *Galatians*, in J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck eds., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, Vol. 2, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 608.

<sup>5</sup> C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: Macmillan, 1960), 31.