

Spirit Fruit: Goodness/Generosity

“Good is the absence of defect or flaw and the presence of complete wholeness.”

Jesus said that only God is good. (Mark 10:17-18) Jesus was not denying his own deity, but he quickly challenged the man to carefully think about what he was saying when he addressed Jesus as “good teacher.”

Agathosyne – is the Greek word for goodness, used in the New Testament. It is generally defined as “uprightness of soul and as an action of reaching out to others to do good.” It is a rare word that “combines being good and doing good.”

Goodness as a fruit of the Spirit is not just what you say but what you do. Those who possess the quality of goodness are generous by nature.

Goodness = generosity = benevolence.

Paul uses the term, *agathosyne*, in Romans 12:8, 2 Corinthians 8:2; 9:11, 13.

An Example of Goodness/Generosity

An example of this Spirit fruit was shown by the Macedonian Christians as described by Paul in 2 Corinthians 8:1-5. “**...during a severe ordeal of affliction, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part.**” (v. 2) How was this possible? Perhaps the answer is reflected in verse 5. “**...they gave themselves first to the Lord and by the will of God, to us...**”

- Are you surprised when Paul notes that these Christians were suffering and experiencing extreme poverty, and yet their generosity overflowed? Might you have concluded, these were really “good” people?
- How do you think “giving themselves first to the Lord” made it possible for these Christians to be so remarkably generous? Also see 2 Cor. 8:9.
- Notice what Paul writes in 2 Cor. 9:6-8 and 11-12. Describe the relationship between acts of generosity and thanksgiving to God.
- In addition to being generous monetarily, describe other acts of generosity that will demonstrate this fruit of the Spirit.