

## Jesus and the Fruit of the Spirit (6)

Ponder: Goodness

Scripture: “. . . how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him” (Acts 10:38, NKJV).

We know what we mean when we say, “John and Mary are good people.” Yet it’s somewhat challenging to define the word good. Saying it’s the opposite of bad doesn’t help much.

Paul listed goodness as one of nine manifestations of the Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22, 23). Jesus manifested each of these in perfection. Today, we’ll see how Jesus demonstrated goodness, and how we, like our Lord, ought to be good by our very nature.

At Cornelius’ house, Peter spoke of Jesus going “about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil.” Jesus healed innumerable sick people and cast out uncounted demons. Still, some hard-hearted, stubborn souls found fault. Jesus challenged His critics: “Many good works have I shown you from My father. For which of those works do you stone Me?” (John 10:32). Even His adversaries didn’t deny that His works were good; they replied that they were not trying to stone Him for good works, but because He, being a man, made Himself out to be God. The fact is, however, Jesus’ works proved that He was, indeed, God in the flesh!

Jesus’ goodness extended even to His teaching. In Matthew 7:15-20, Jesus likened false prophets to “evil” trees which, by their very nature, would produce corrupt fruit. Conversely, true prophets were good trees bearing good fruit. Jesus Himself, of course, spoke nothing but truth. He reproved His enemies, saying, “But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God” (John 8:40).

As Jesus’ words and deeds were good, so ought ours to be. Look at the emphasis on good works in Paul’s letter to Titus. The preacher himself was to be an example of good works (2:7). Christians are to be zealous for good works (2:14) and maintain them (3:8) so that they will not be unfruitful (3:14).

Good teaching should characterize us, too (1 Timothy 4:6). Scripture refers to it as “sound (healthy) doctrine.”

Nobody had to coerce Jesus to be good; it was His nature. May it be ours as well!

Song: “We’ll Work Till Jesus Comes”