

The Fruit of the Spirit is GOODNESS

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness...what comes next? Goodness.

We experience goodness all around us. We see good artwork. We hear good music. We taste good cookies. We smell the good scent of flowers. We enjoy the good feeling of a backrub. But we also experience badness all around us. We see bad drawings and bad words scribbled as graffiti on buildings. We hear bad words come from people's mouths. We taste bad food. We smell the bad scent of rotting garbage. We feel the bad pain of a broken arm or sore throat.

When God first created the world, there was nothing bad in it. The Bible tells us what God thought of the world after he created it:

•*Genesis 1:31 – “God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.”*

Soon after creation, however, Adam and Eve were tempted by Satan, sinned, and evil entered the world. God's good gifts of nature and life were now existing alongside the bad things that came about because of sin and evil.

The brokenness of sin in our world cannot destroy God's goodness. Listen to these verses from the Bible about God's goodness:

•*Psalm 145:9 – “The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.”*

•*Psalm 119:68 – “[God] You are good, and what you do is good.”*

•*James 1:17 – “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the father of the heavenly lights.”*

•*Romans 8:28 – “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him.”*

Because Satan is at work in the world, we feel the effects of the sinful actions of other people. Satan also tempts us to act in bad ways, to have wrong attitudes, and to use inappropriate words. But when the Spirit of God lives in us, he teaches us that God's goodness can always overpower the sin and evil caused by Satan. The Holy Spirit can help us to show God's goodness in our actions, attitudes, and words. He created us to spread God's goodness in the world. Listen to what the Bible says:

- *Psalm 34:14* – “Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.”
- *Romans 12:9* – “Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.”
- *Hebrews 13:16* – “And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.”
- *Galatians 6:10* – “As we have opportunity, let us do good to all people.”

When we respond to the Holy Spirit's leading and share God's goodness with others, God works through us to restore the goodness of his creation.

Prayer:

Father God, you created something very good when you made the world and when you made us. Satan has tried to destroy that goodness. By your Spirit, develop your goodness in us so that we may do good to all people. Amen.