

LIFE IN THE KINGDOM:

# THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Goodness: Ephesians 4:15-16, 22-32

August 16, 2020

## WORSHIP

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Take a moment to remind yourself why you are still meeting together during quarantine: *To grow as disciples of Jesus by cultivating our relationship with God and friendship with others.*

Listen to a song of worship: [Entrance - Liz Vice](#) or [Good to Me - Audrey Assad](#)

Or read Psalm 33:1-5 together:

- <sup>1</sup> Sing joyfully to the Lord, you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to praise him.
- <sup>2</sup> Praise the Lord with the harp; make music to him on the ten-stringed lyre.
- <sup>3</sup> Sing to him a new song; play skillfully, and shout for joy.
- <sup>4</sup> For the word of the Lord is right and true; he is faithful in all he does.
- <sup>5</sup> The Lord loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love.

## INTRODUCTION

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God is the epitome of goodness. Because God is holy, there is nothing evil in him, and all of his ways are beautiful and good both within the Trinity and toward all of creation.

One particular way we see God's goodness in the Trinity is through speech, where the Father, Son and Holy Spirit speak only truth to each other (Hebrews 6:18; John 18:37, 16:13), hide nothing from each other (Matthew 11:27; 1 Corinthians 2:11) and always glorify each other (John 17:4-5). The goodness of God shines in the beginning at creation (Genesis 1:31), throughout the life of Jesus, and will follow us all the days of our lives (Psalm 23:6).

Christians, when filled with the Spirit, live out goodness through lives and words of integrity. The fruit of goodness can be defined as honesty, transparency, and integrity or being the same in one situation as another. It is the opposite of hypocrisy. In a world where words are often used to vent emotions, harm another, or build oneself up, the Holy Spirit gives new power to become a person of goodness who speaks the truth in love. Today we will look specifically at how our words can bear the fruit of goodness.

## SCRIPTURE

20 MINUTES

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Read the following Scripture together. Then invite the group to respond to the questions below.

### **Ephesians 4:15-16, 22-32 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>15</sup> Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. <sup>16</sup> From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

<sup>22</sup> You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by

its deceitful desires;<sup>23</sup> to be made new in the attitude of your minds;<sup>24</sup> and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

<sup>25</sup> Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. <sup>26</sup> "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry,<sup>27</sup> and do not give the devil a foothold. <sup>28</sup> Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.

<sup>29</sup> Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. <sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup> Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. <sup>32</sup> Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

- ▶ What can we learn about God's will for our speech from verses 25-32?
  
- ▶ Several sins of the tongue are mentioned in this passage. Which of the following categories is particularly difficult for you? What kind of help do you need to see more consistent cultivation of the fruit of goodness (defined as honesty, transparency, integrity)?
  - Allowing untruthful speech (lying, exaggerating, white lies)
  - Talking unkindly *to* others (harshness, anger, cursing)
  - Talking unkindly *about* others
  - Talking indifferently or without love
  - Giving way to grumbling and complaining
  - Boasting or defensiveness
  
- ▶ How could speaking truth in love with one's neighbor build community (v. 15)? How does this compare or contrast with your current relationships with your neighbors, co-workers, or community group members?
  
- ▶ What is the most important point you will take away from this conversation? What Scripture promises align with this takeaway?

## GOING FURTHER THIS WEEK

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Use the [Fruit of the Spirit devotional guide](#) to grow in bearing the fruit of kindness.

## FELLOWSHIP AND PRAYER

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25 MINUTES

- ▶ Repent of ways that your speech has not been good.
  
- ▶ Ask the Holy Spirit to work the fruit of goodness into your speech and for a daily practice to build the fruit of goodness.
  
- ▶ Pray for those who do not know the hope of Christ by following the prayer on the following page.

Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you, especially...

**[members of the group name particular people].**

For the honor of your name. Amen.

Then with the Scripture discussion in mind, pray for each other and the particular needs in our city and world.

► Want to continue meditating on Scripture throughout the week? Join Virtual Noonday prayer:  
[eastside.redeemer.com/prayer](http://eastside.redeemer.com/prayer)