attitudes associated with goodness in the Bible are truth, righteousness, justice and light. Ephesians 5:8-10 uses some of these synonyms: “For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.”

Psalm 52:1 tells us that “the goodness of God endures continually.” What is that goodness? It includes an absolute commitment to good over evil and right over wrong. Goodness, the fruit of the Spirit mentioned in Galatians 5:22, also includes generously doing good to others. Why does God want us to demonstrate goodness? It is because God is good, and He wants us to grow in the fruit of goodness so we can be like Him.

A phrase that is repeated several times in Psalm 107 reads: “Oh, that men would give thanks to the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!” The rest of the psalm mentions many aspects of God’s goodness. For instance, He delivered His people from distress and afflictions caused by their sins and He led them the *right* way (verses 6-8).

Our goodness should be something that other human beings can be thankful for, just as we are thankful for the amazing goodness God has shown to us.

What is the alternative? What happens when we determine right or wrong according to the values of a world twisted by the devil who hates us? John 8:44 tells us that Satan “was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the *father of it.”*

God wants us to demonstrate His goodness based on His commandments and character. Deuteronomy 6:24 reveals that “the Lord commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as it is this day.”

God knows what is best for us, because He created “good.” We must continue in God’s goodness that He has shown toward us if we are to avoid being cut off from a coming kingdom defined by goodness (Romans 11:22).

Why does God want us to demonstrate goodness? Because it is good for us and good for those around us. We are to be a light showing what is truly good—the beneficial commandments and righteousness of God. Ultimately,

God wants us to show goodness because He is good, and He wants us to be like Him—and to be His children forever (Romans 8:16-17).

**G. FAITHFULNESS (FAITH).**

The Greek word, *pistis*, means “faith.” In most modern versions it is translated "faithfulness". Vine's Dictionary points out that the two are aspects of the same concept. In the active sense *pistis* means "believing, trusting, relying" - what we usually call faith. In the passive sense it means "faithful, to be trusted, reliable" - what we usually call faithful. When we consider it as an aspect of the fruit of the Spirit it can be taken in both senses.

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Patience also is a command. "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love" (Ephesians 4:2). "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience " (Colossians 3:12). From these Scriptures we can see the close relationship between patience and other aspects of the fruit of the spirit such as love, gentleness and kindness. The virtues of patience, perseverance and longsuffering give believers several advantages in their war against their battle with worldliness.

We are not easily discouraged. "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up" (Galatians 6:9). "We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised" (Hebrews 6:12). "Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us" (Hebrews 12:1).

We stand firm in the face of obstacles. Be "strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience" Colossians 1:11. "After you have done everything, to stand" (Ephesians 6:13). "By standing firm you will gain life" (Luke 21:19). "Stand firm in the faith (1 Corinthians 16:13). "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer" (Romans 12:12).

We wait for the Lord's timing. "Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him" (Psalm 37:7; see also Psalm 27:14). "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength" (Isaiah 40:31 KJV). "But if we hope for what we do not have, we wait for it patiently" (Romans 8:25). We believe that God's purpose will come to pass no matter how long it takes. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him and he shall bring it to pass" (Psalm 37:5 KJV). "Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations" (Romans 4:18). "For the Lord Almighty has purposed, and who can thwart him?" (Isaiah 14:27). "No plan of yours can be thwarted" (Job 42:2). "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

Patience, longsuffering, and perseverance are essential qualities of the Christian life. We can expect tribulations and difficulties in the world (John 16:33). But, as James 1:2-4 says, we can take joy in our troubles because the testing of our faith develops perseverance and "perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything." Matthew tells of the troubles to expect in the end times and then says "he who stands firm to the end will be saved" (Matthew 24:13. See also Revelation 2:11, 17, 26, 3:5, 12, 21). Let us be reminded that the Spirit and the flesh are at war for our souls. As we allow the Spirit to have control, as we become Spirit-led, as we become mature and complete, we will increasingly develop and show the fruit of patience.

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