

Week 12 Day 7 | *Fruit of the Spirit: Goodness*

To understand how “goodness” can help us with our fitness, we first need to better understand what it is exactly. Coming from the Greek word *agathos*, goodness is moral and spiritual excellence. Now, that sounds a little boring until we take a look at the goodness of God’s nature. There we’ll quickly get excited at the prospect of the Spirit bearing this same fruit in our lives.

God’s goodness **protects** (Psalm 34:7; Psalm 86:17; Psalm 109:21) and His goodness **provides** (Psalm 34:9–10).

His goodness **renews** us (Psalm 119:40) and it **rescues** us (Psalm 116:12; Psalm 142:7).

His goodness **saves** (Psalm 96:2) and it **liberates** (Psalm 129:4).

His goodness is **mercy** (Psalm 116:5), a mercy so good that it **forgives** (Psalm 86:5), **forgets** (Micah 7:19), and **instructs** (Psalm 25:7–9)

His news is good (Matthew 9:35; Mark 1:15) and **His name** is good (Psalm 54:6).

His word is good (Hebrews 6:4–6) and **His will** is good (Romans 12:2).

His judgment, (Psalm 119:66), **His laws** (Psalm 119:39), and even **His disciplines** (Psalm 119:67–71; Isaiah 38:16; Hebrews 12:10) are all good.

His gifts are good (James 1:17; Matthew 7:11) and those good gifts are **abundant** (Psalm 31:19) because **His goodness is abundant** (Psalm 145:7). And of course, **His love** is good (Psalm 69:16).

So together, His love and His goodness are available to us. Not only that, but they are pursuing us all the time, for all of our life:

“Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”—Psalm 23:6 (NIV)

Excited yet?

It’s out of His goodness that He gave us bodies that move, eat, and sleep. Yet the temptation is to look at exercise, eating healthy, and getting sufficient sleep as sacrifices, not privileges. Far too often, we dread working out rather than being grateful for able bodies equipped to do amazing things. These amazing things benefit us, by the way.

Out of the goodness of His plan for our bodies, when we exercise, we release “feel good” hormones called endorphins. Out of that same goodness, when we exercise, our bodies get healthier, which makes life easier. Out of His goodness, healthier bodies help us feel better, have more confidence, do more, and enjoy more.

Yet, we tend to dread exercise, a good gift that keeps on giving. The same can be said of eating healthy and getting adequate rest. We prioritize other things at the expense of enjoying the blessings He’s orchestrated out of the good-

ness of His nature. It’s not that we want too much; it’s that we’re settling for too little.

It doesn’t have to be this way. We can enjoy our fitness. We can look forward to a workout. We can enjoy healthy food and have bodies nourished by solid sleep. This is good news if you’re still struggling with enjoying any or all parts of honoring God with your body. Start praying that out of the goodness of His character, He will change you—that He would renew your outlook, that you could rely on the fruit of His goodness working out of you to provide that change.

The Holy Spirit wants you to rely on Him for all things. For your fitness. For your comfort. For your heart, mind, attitude, and of course, for your goodness. The only way goodness is manifested in your life is when it originates from and is empowered by the Holy Spirit as He leads and guides. So, if you are ever going to add goodness to your faithfulness (2 Peter 1:5), it must come as a fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Yet once again, in His perfect goodness, God’s plan comes full circle. The Spirit we need is the Spirit He provides, and that Spirit is good too:

“Teach me to do your will, for you are my God; may your good Spirit lead me on level ground.”—Psalm 143:10 (NIV)

Living a Holy Spirit–powered life requires us to recognize God’s pure, perfect goodness. Out of that goodness, He can enable us to enjoy our fitness by first enjoying Him.

If you’re struggling with your fitness, focus first on enjoying God’s goodness demonstrated throughout your life. My guess is that you’ll soon realize that the Holy Spirit’s fruit of goodness isn’t just good; it’s great (Psalm 31:19).

Prayer

Father, thank You for your immeasurable goodness. Will You please forgive me when I rely on myself to produce the change I need? Please help me to always focus on the fruit of Your goodness toward me and working in me. Amen.

Meditation

The fruit of your goodness can change me.

Daily Spiritual Exercise

Today you will focus on the fruit of goodness. Remember, these are not “fruits of ourselves.” These are the outcomes of the Holy Spirit working in and through our lives.

As you are focusing on the fruit of goodness, pray for wisdom. You may need help in discerning whether you’re working out of your efforts or allowing the Holy Spirit to work.

Also, be sure to be teachable. Sometimes we are being taught a lesson we don’t want to learn. If we are truly open to the Lord working in our lives, however, we need to humbly receive all He wants to teach us.