

No One is Good but One

By Michael Clark

Have you ever asked yourself what it means to be good? When I used to witness on the streets as a young Christian I used to ask, "Do you know for sure that you are going to heaven?" Invariably folks would replay, "I am a good person. Sure, I will be going to heaven!" Now we have in our minds a list of bad things that we should not be doing and a list of good things that we should. Is that enough?

The problem with just knowing good and evil is that at best if we can manage to always choose what is good we become like the Pharisees who chose good and deplored evil, yet they were always at odds with Jesus.

They said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. "Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?" This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear. So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first." And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground.

Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?"

She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more." (John 8:4-11, NKJV).

Jesus always chose a higher way than the fruit of that forbidden tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He chose life and that is what this poor woman walked away with. For the first time in her life she knew the power to sin no more.

Jesus was not impressed with the righteousness of the Scribes and the Pharisees. He is not impressed with yours, either. He warned those who would follow Him that it was not enough.

"For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds [the righteousness] of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:20, NKJV)

In the heavenly kingdom depicted in Revelation, you find the Prince of Life and the Tree of Life, but no where to be found is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Your righteousness will never exceed that of the Pharisees if you keep barking up the wrong tree.

God never meant man to be like God, knowing both good and evil. He meant man to be one WITH the Son, abiding in the goodness of God and not his own. We were created in HIS image and likeness, but the fall recreated us in the image of the serpent. One is walking IN Truth and not just about truth. The other way is a delusion.

I do not doubt that in the eyes of many, you are a good person. But is that enough? The point is that none of us are good, except the Father. He wants you to look higher than your goodness.

Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. 20 "You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother.'"

And he said, "All these things I have kept from my youth."

So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich.

And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." (Luke 18:18-25, NKJV).

Here we have a "good man"! He kept the law from his youth. That is not the point. Our "goodness" is never good enough with God for it is as stinking, filthy rags compared to the goodness of the Holy One (Isaiah 64:6). What evil was there in this man that he had riches? Nothing of itself is unclean (Romans 14:14). Yet, Jesus looks on the heart

and never the outward works. It is what motivates us that He is concerned with (1 Samuel 16:7). This man was possessed by his riches and not free to follow God and Jesus saw that. The door to the goodness of God was right in front of him and he refused to go through because he depended rather on his own good works and wealth. There are many who call themselves Christians in America who are just like him.

We need to ask God to search our hearts and see if there be any wicked ways in us (Psalm 139:23-24) and expose and bring them to His marvelous light and stop covering our nakedness with the fig leaves of religion. Only ONE is good. Only Christ the Son of God in us is good. To claim any goodness of our own is of the antichrist spirit (the one who tempts with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil). Yes, we can DO good works, but only as we abide in the Tree of Life, bearing its fruit.

Jesus said,

If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Luke 11:11-13, NKJV).

One time I was feeling the hand of God heavily on me and I became aware that He was constantly trying to change me. I cried out, "God, what is it with You! I can never be good enough for You!" The point is that our "goodness" is never good enough in the eyes of God. At best it is evil in His sight. Only His gifts and goodness working through us bring forth "good fruit" from The Good Tree.

Jesus warned,

Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?"

And then I will declare to them, "I never knew <1097> you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!" (Matthew 7:21-23, NKJV).

Have you ever asked yourself how the omniscient (all knowing) God could NOT KNOW someone? This word knew means something more than mere head knowledge.

Strong's defines it this way:

<1097> *ginosko* {ghin-oce'-ko}

1) to learn to know, come to know, get a knowledge of perceive, feel

1a) to become known

2) to know, understand, perceive, have knowledge of

2a) to understand

2b) to know

3) Jewish idiom for sexual intercourse between a man and a woman

In the judgment scene depicted in Matthew chapter seven, these are good folks who do good works and call Him Lord! But He sees it all as doing iniquity, because He never KNEW them. If our "good works" are not born from above and conceived in heaven, God does not see them. It is not enough to just be religiously good, doing only what we think is good.

Peter was a good Jew and also kept the law and tried to do what was good even as an apostle. That was not good enough, either.

The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour. Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth.

In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. And a voice came to him, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat."

But Peter said, "Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean."

And a voice spoke to him again the second time, "What God has cleansed you must not call common."

This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again. Now while Peter wondered within himself what this vision which he had seen meant, behold, the men who had been sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate. And the following day they entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was

waiting for them, and had called together his relatives and close friends. As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I myself am also a man." And as he talked with him, he went in and found many who had come together. Then he said to them, "You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean. Therefore I came without objection as soon as I was sent for. I ask, then, for what reason have you sent for me?" (Acts 10:9-17, 24-29, NKJV).

Sometimes, as it was with Peter, our good works will go against the goodness of God. We must follow the spirit of the law, not the letter. God expects the good works of His Son to manifest in us, not our own.

Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. (John 14:10, NKJV).

One time I prayed, "Father, make me like your Son. I only want to do the works I see you doing and speak the words I hear you saying." I had just enough time to think to myself, "Wow, that sure was a righteous prayer!" Then I heard Him say back, "No, my son, that is only the starting place."

But didn't He say that you will know a tree by its fruit? Yes, but He does not desire our fruit, but the fruit of the Spirit.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. (Galatians 5:22-26, NKJV).

Dear saints, let the ax be laid to the root of your tree of goodness. Let the Tree of Life grow and prosper in you always.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have

Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. (Matthew 3:7-11, NKJV).

[Copyright © aWildernessVoice.com](http://aWildernessVoice.com)