



Monday, 21 – Sunday, 27 July 2025

July 2025

Week	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
27	30	1	2	3	4	5	6
28	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
29	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
30	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
31	28	29	30	31			

St Wale

Minister of Christ & Truth-Explorer | Author of *The Paternoster Code*

## Agape-Shaped Goodness: The Flavour of Divine Love

In Galatians 5:22, Paul writes, “*But the fruit of the Spirit is love...*” and then unfolds the beautiful dimensions of this love—joy, peace, patience, kindness, **goodness**, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Notice that Paul speaks of *fruit* in the singular. There is only **one fruit of the Spirit—agape, divine love**. All the qualities that follow describe the many ways this Spirit-born love is tasted and seen in the Believer’s life. One of its most striking “flavours” is **goodness**.



The Greek word *agathōsynē*, translated as *goodness*, appears only in the New Testament—absent from classical Greek literature and secular texts.<sup>1</sup> Its rarity signals a distinctively **Spirit-born virtue**, not a common human trait. Rooted in *agathos* (“inherently good”) and the suffix *-synē* (expressing inner qualities), *agathōsynē* describes goodness that flows from purity of heart and seeks to bless.

It’s not mere moral decency—it is **love acting with integrity**, uprightness, and the will to pursue what is right, even when it is costly. Formed by abiding in Christ, this goodness reflects God’s nature: restorative, courageous, and unwavering

This term appears only four times in the New Testament, each time tied to Spirit-filled living. It is never used to describe the natural moral qualities of humanity apart from God. In fact, Scripture is clear that no one is truly good by their own nature (Romans 3:12). True *agathōsynē* can only be produced by the Holy Spirit as we remain in Christ, the true Vine (John 15:4-5).

Jesus Himself is the perfect embodiment of *agathōsynē*. His goodness was not selective or self-serving. It was a goodness that healed the sick, defended the oppressed, exposed injustice, forgave sinners, and ultimately laid down His life for the undeserving. In Him, we see that **goodness is love in action—love that reflects the holy character of God**.

In an age of curated virtue and surface civility, *agathōsynē* {**goodness**} stands apart as a goodness shaped by *agape* love—sacrificial, intentional, and restorative. It’s not just doing what’s right, but becoming someone through whom God’s goodness flows—especially when it’s inconvenient, costly, or misunderstood.

Each of the next seven days will explore a distinct facet of *agathōsynē*—goodness shaped by *agape* love and empowered by the Spirit. The journey moves deliberately: from divine revelation to personal reflection, and then toward Spirit-led transformation. At every step, we trace goodness back to its source in God, while uncovering its practical expression in the life of the disciple. This is not goodness as mere behaviour, but goodness as restoration, conviction, and sacrificial kindness—manifested through abiding, not striving.

Wednesday, 16 July 2025

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<sup>1</sup> <https://biblehub.com/greek/19.htm>

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**INTERNATIONAL  
SUNDAY**

**Sunday 27th July**

**BRING & SHARE LUNCH**



## IIC NOTICEBOARD



# Encounter Night

*"Miracles happen in this place"*

**Sunday July 20<sup>th</sup> 6.30pm**

Ipswich International Church Barlink Corner Portman Road Ipswich IP1 2NB



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## Baptism Service

**Sunday 31st August**

Please let us know if you would like to be baptised.

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## The Root of True Goodness

Mark 10:17-18; Psalm 34:8

<sup>17</sup> As Jesus started on His way, a man ran up and knelt before Him. “Good Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” <sup>18</sup> “Why do you call Me good?” Jesus replied. “No one is good except God alone. Mark 10:17-18, BSB

<sup>8</sup> Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him! Psalm 34:8 (BSB)



Goodness must begin where Jesus begins: in recognising that God alone is truly good. When the rich young ruler calls Jesus “good teacher,” Christ redirects the conversation—“Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.” This isn’t a denial of Christ’s divinity, but a profound reorientation: any human notion of goodness must be measured against divine purity, not cultural approval.

We cannot define goodness by social consensus, personality, or achievement. Scripture roots *agathōsynē*—Spirit-born goodness—in the very nature of God. This is echoed in Psalm 34:8: “Taste and see that the Lord is good.” Goodness is something *encountered*, not earned. It isn’t behaviour—it’s revelation. And once revealed, it transforms.

In the Spirit, this goodness begins to shape our convictions, relationships, and daily choices. It humbles us—reminding us that goodness isn’t ours to perform, but it is Christ’s to reproduce within us. The fruit of the Spirit is not about trying harder; it’s about abiding deeper.



(a) How does Jesus’ statement in Mark 10:18 challenge the way I view human goodness? (b) Where have I been trying to “be good” in my own strength? (c) What would it look like to let God’s goodness flow through me today? (d) How does one taste of the Lord’s goodness?



Father and God of perfect goodness, forgive me for trying to manufacture a virtue that can only come from You. Teach me to “taste and see” Your goodness in fresh ways today. May Your Spirit reshape my understanding—so that Your goodness becomes my reflex, my response, and my witness. Amen.



### Action Point

Write down three moments when you’ve experienced God’s goodness personally—whether through provision, correction, or mercy. Pray over each one, then ask: how might that same goodness be extended through me today?



## Goodness that Disrupts

Luke 6:27-36; Acts 10:38

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God's goodness is not polite—it's powerful. In Luke 6, Jesus speaks directly to our instincts: "Love your enemies...do good to those who hate you." That's not natural—it's supernatural. What He describes is not mere civility or passive tolerance, but a radical ethic shaped by the Spirit. This is *agathōsynē* in motion—goodness that mirrors divine grace, not human comfort.

In Acts 10:38, Peter describes Jesus as the one who "went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil." The goodness of Christ *liberated, healed, and provoked*. It wasn't confined to gestures of niceness—it was full-bodied restoration. When the Spirit reproduces this goodness in us, our actions begin to carry the weight of heaven's compassion.

Importantly, Jesus doesn't call us to a life of agreeable sentiment, but courageous kindness. *Agathōsynē* compels us to extend generosity where it's undeserved, mercy where it's unrewarded, and truth where it may be resisted. It's not passive; it's incarnational—stepping into mess and hostility with the goodness of God on display.

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(a) How is Spirit-shaped goodness different from just being "nice"? (b) **Where might I be mistaking "being nice" for being godly? Consider whether my silence, avoidance, or politeness is withholding the kind of Spirit-led goodness that actually heals, confronts, or sacrifices.** (c) Where is God calling me to actively "do good" in a way that stretches me beyond my comfort zone? (d) **How can I rely on the Spirit's power, as Jesus did, to bring God's goodness to others?**

Niceness avoids discomfort; goodness engages it redemptively.

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Lord, teach me the difference between being nice and being good. Help me to move beyond comfort, beyond performance, and toward agape-shaped action. May Your Spirit fill me with courage to love radically, speak truth gently, and do good with conviction. Amen.

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### Action Point

Identify one "disruptive good" act today: reach out to someone you've avoided, respond graciously to criticism, or give generously without recognition. Let the Spirit stretch your definition of goodness.

# Do You Think Prayer Is Trying To Convince A Hostile, Unwilling And High-handed God To Do Something He Doesn't Want To Do?

THEN YOU SHOULD READ

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A Novel On Prayer



*"The book illustrates God's mysterious ways, like His ability to draw straight with crooked lines. It calls attention to all to appreciate that God is everywhere and meets us irrespective of time, space, or agency. A compelling read."*

**Bishop Matthew Kukah**

*The picture of God as a loving and caring Father, and not a hostile, unwilling and high-handed Judge, is well-painted in the book. A number of other fundamental matters about prayer have been succinctly captured and aptly illustrated.*

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## Goodness That Overcomes Evil

Romans 12:21 & Proverbs 25:21-22



True goodness wears armour. Paul's command in Romans 12:21—"Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good"—is not naïve pacifism, but battlefield strategy. In a world where evil often marches forward cloaked in injustice, deception, and apathy, the believer's defence is not retaliation, but Spirit-forged goodness. *Agathōsynē* is our weapon; mercy is our tactic.

Proverbs 25 deepens this charge: "If your enemy is hungry, give him food... In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." This is subversive goodness—it dismantles hostility through generosity. The image of burning coals isn't vindictive but redemptive: convicting the conscience, provoking repentance, transforming enmity into humility.

Goodness that confronts evil does so with courage and clarity. It doesn't retreat or retaliate—it responds. It chooses restoration over revenge, truth over silence, and mercy over indifference. This is not soft virtue. It is divine power wrapped in grace, expressed through costly obedience.

Jesus demonstrated this kind of warfare. His goodness cast out demons, challenged oppressors, restored the broken—and ultimately conquered sin not by force, but by the cross. That same goodness now flows through Believers by the Spirit, inviting us to stand in the face of darkness with unshaken love and resolve.



(a) What evil have I been fighting with its own weapons (anger, gossip, withdrawal)? (b) Where is God calling me to deploy strategic goodness today? (c) What might it mean today to *overcome* rather than be overcome? (d) Consider how mercy could disarm bitterness, or how quiet truth might confront falsehood.



Father, Your goodness is stronger than any evil. Thank You that in Jesus, You have overcome darkness. Holy Spirit, I am willing to be trained to fight with goodness. Forgive the ways I've reacted in pride or retreated in fear. Teach me to clothe myself with Your Spirit's kindness, courage, and truth—so that evil is not ignored but transformed.



### Action Point

Choose one "counterattack" today:

- Write a blessing for someone who hurt you
- Meet a practical need for an "unworthy" person
- Speak well of a critic



## Goodness That Builds Up the Church

Romans 15:14 & Galatians 6:10



Spirit-formed goodness is not just personal—it's profoundly communal.

Paul's words in Romans 15:14 affirm the Church's capacity: "You yourselves are full of goodness, filled with knowledge and competent to instruct one another." This is *agathōsynē* in practice—goodness that builds, restores, and matures the Body of Christ.

Galatians 6:10 adds urgency and direction: "As we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, especially to those who are of the household of faith."

Goodness is not occasional sentiment—it's a **Spirit-led rhythm of care**, prioritising the Church while extending grace to all. It's proactive, not reactive; intentional, not accidental.

Together, these verses reveal a goodness that is discerning and timely. It corrects with humility, encourages with truth, and serves with consistency. It's not flattery or vague affirmation—it's the kind of goodness that strengthens the Church's witness and deepens its unity.

Importantly, Paul's phrasing—"as we have opportunity"—reminds us that goodness is seasonal and strategic. We must be alert to the Spirit's prompting, ready to act, and willing to invest. *Agathōsynē* is not just what we feel—it's what we steward.



(a) How has another Believer's goodness strengthened my faith? (b) What area of our church family needs my goodness today?



Father, Lord, thank You for placing me within Your household of faith.

Help me to steward the goodness You've planted in me—not for self-image, but for the strengthening of others. Where relationships are strained, let me build bridges. Where needs exist, make me generous to fill them. Where wounds fester, help me bring healing. May I be alert to opportunities, bold in encouragement, and gentle in correction. Make our church a showcase of Your goodness. Amen.



### Action Point

Practice one act of "body goodness":

- Send encouragement to a church leader
- Meet a practical need in your small group
- Initiate reconciliation where there's tension.



## Goodness That Shines in Darkness

Ephesians 5:8-14 & Philippians 2:13-15



Goodness is not a performance—it's **identity radiation**. Ephesians 5 doesn't say we were *in* darkness—it says we *were* darkness. But now, through Christ, we are light. This is not behavioural adjustment—it's spiritual rebirth. "Live as children of light," Paul urges, "for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth." *Agathōsynē* is not a moral achievement—it's the natural glow of those indwelt by Christ.

Philippians 2 confirms this: "It is God who works in you to will and to act... so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God... shining like stars." Goodness is not self-generated—it's Spirit-activated. We shine not by effort, but by abiding. The fruit of goodness is cultivated in surrendering, not striving. Ephesians 5:11-14 then shifts the metaphor from fruit to confrontation. "Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them." This is not harsh judgment—it's holy clarity. When light enters, darkness is revealed. And when something is exposed by the light, it becomes light. That's redemption. That's transformation.

The closing call—"Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you"—is both evangelistic and pastoral. It's a summons to spiritual alertness. Goodness is not passive—it's prophetic. It doesn't hide in niceness—it shines in truth.



(a) Where have you been dimming your light—out of fear, fatigue, or conformity? (b) **Are you radiating identity or rehearsing morality?** (c) Where is God calling you to shine without preaching? (d) **In what ways has Christ transformed you from darkness into light?** (e) **How can your daily choices reflect the goodness and truth of God's light?**



Father & Lord of Light, thank You for rescuing me from darkness and making me light in Christ. Holy Spirit, let Your goodness radiate through my life so others may see Your truth and love. Let my goodness be radiant, not rehearsed—fruitful, not forced. Help me to live boldly as a child of light, pushing back darkness wherever You send me. Amen.



### Action Point

Engage in one act of *luminous goodness* that reflects your identity in Christ—  
→ Leave an extravagant tip with an encouraging note → Bring light to a "dark" workplace conversation → Speak truth with grace, serve without spotlight, or forgive without fanfare. Let your light expose, heal, and invite.



## Goodness Under Pressure

Luke 23:34 & Acts 7:59-60

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It's easy to speak of goodness when life is comfortable. But what happens when you're mistreated, falsely accused, or even violently opposed? In Luke 23:34, Jesus—nailed to the cross, mocked, bleeding—utters a prayer that defies logic: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." This is *agathōsynē* at full stretch: goodness that absorbs violence and responds with mercy. It is not weakness—it is divine strength refusing to mirror evil.

Years later, Stephen, the first Christian martyr, echoes this posture. As stones crush his body, he prays, "*Lord, do not hold this sin against them.*" How could he respond with such grace? Because he was **filled with the Holy Spirit** (Acts 7:55). The same Spirit who empowered Jesus to love His enemies empowered Stephen to do the same.

Both Jesus and Stephen show us that *agathōsynē* is not circumstantial. It doesn't depend on fair treatment, emotional bandwidth, or cultural approval. It is forged in communion with God and revealed in crisis. This kind of goodness confronts evil not with retaliation, but with intercession. It doesn't excuse sin—but it refuses to let sin define the response.

Importantly, both prayers are not passive resignation—they are active resistance. Forgiveness is not forgetting; it is choosing not to weaponise pain. It is spiritual warfare, where mercy is the tactic and goodness is the armour.

It reminds us that the fruit of the Spirit is not about self-improvement—it's about Christ living His life in us, even in the most difficult moments.

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(a) What recent pressure exposed your "default setting"? (b) Where are you under pressure—emotionally, relationally, spiritually? (c) What would it look like to respond with *agathōsynē* rather than self-protection or retaliation?

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Lord Jesus, You showed goodness when the world showed cruelty. My instincts need reprogramming. When squeezed, let Your goodness pour out - not my bitterness. Train me to bless before I feel ready. Make me light to darkness. Amen.

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### Action Point

Practise goodness in a pressured space today: respond gently to provocation, pray for someone who's hurt you, or choose mercy over retaliation. Let your goodness be a witness—not of your strength, but of Christ in you.

PAUSE

OBSERVE

REFLECT

Sunday

27 July 2025

## Pondering the Fruit: A Kairos Reflection

“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”

— *James 1:22 (ESV)*

Today is for sacred listening. Throughout this week, we’ve explored the dimensions of *agathōsynē*—the goodness of God alive in us by the Spirit. From identity to action, from community to confrontation, each day invited us into deeper abiding and bolder obedience.

Now we pause. What has ministered to you most? What stirred conviction, comfort, or courage? Where did goodness feel closest to your fingertips—or furthest from your instincts?

Kairos moments are more than divine interruptions—they are invitations to align, obey, and bear fruit. This space is for *recollection*, *repentance*, and *response*.



### Reflection Prompts

Consider journaling or praying through the following:

- **What ministered to me most this week?**  
Was it a moment of mercy, a call to courage, or a glimpse of God’s light in my own pressure?
- **What is God highlighting?**  
Is there a relationship, habit, or posture He’s inviting me to reframe through goodness?
- **What will obedience look like this week?**  
Is there a conversation to initiate, a silence to break, a generosity to risk?



### Closing Prayer

Spirit of Truth and Goodness, thank You for speaking through this journey. Awaken me to Your kairos moments—those quiet urgings, holy interruptions, and clear invitations. Help me not to just reflect, but to respond. May Your goodness take root in my life, bear fruit through my obedience, and overflow to others. In Jesus’ name, Amen.



### Suggested Action

Write a short plan—a “goodness rule of life”—for the week ahead. It could include:

- One person you will serve intentionally
  - One habit to cultivate (e.g., daily intercession, silence, generous words)
  - One space where you’ll radiate goodness, especially under pressure
-