

## A GOOD PERSON

### I. INTRODUCTION

- A. We talk a lot about good things and people.
- B. Some get confused about what is good. Isaiah 5:20
- C. Only the Bible can help us define and demonstrate what good really means.
- D. In this study, we will use “good” as it refers to people and study what the Bible says about being good people.

### II. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A GOOD PERSON?

A. “A good man is simply a man who so uses all the powers God has put within his reach that they shall most perfectly answer the end God designed. We have, to guide us towards and in the right direction of all powers, these three principles:

1. That everything be done for the highest good of mankind generally, or of other men, not for self.
2. That it be done in the best, most perfect manner possible to the doer.
3. That in doing it, we recognise that universal design of a Father’s love under which the well-being of any creature, and of the whole universe, is possible. He whose life embodies these principles is a good man . . . (S. Fager, B.A.).”<sup>1</sup>

B. “The good man of the Bible is a man of religious faith and devotion, of communion with God, and sanctity of heart; and this Divine element flowing downwards, and working outwardly, produces the manifestations of equity, benevolence, industry, prudence, and all ‘holy conversation and godliness.’ . . . (T. Binney.)”<sup>2</sup>

C. “1. A good man is most likely to escape the evils and calamities of life and to pass through this world the freest from troubles and vexations. His virtues will be a natural defence and security to him against many evils and miseries which would otherwise befall him . . . . The good man places his happiness in the favour of God and the sense of his own integrity. He desires no more than he wants; and he wants no more than he can use and enjoy; and this reduces his necessities to a narrow compass. He bears an universal good-will to all mankind and is always ready to do all the good he can to others. He is sober and temperate in all his pleasures and enjoyments; and this upon a principle of religion and virtue.

2. Whatever calamities or afflictions befall a good man he will bear them much

better than other people. Disappointments are not so great to him who takes an estimate of things, not from fancy or opinion, but from truth and reality, and the just weight and moment of them. Though his virtues are not full proof against the strokes of fortune, and cannot ward off every blow, yet they will blunt the edge of afflictions and greatly abate their smart. It is well to consider the uncertainty of all external enjoyments, not to overvalue them, or set our hearts upon them, or place our happiness in them.

3. The good man has pleasures and enjoyments peculiar to himself which will, in a great measure, supply the want of external blessings. Every good and virtuous action we do affords us a double pleasure. It first strikes our minds with a direct pleasure by its suitability to our nature; and then our minds entertain themselves with pleasant reflections upon it . . . (*L. Abbot.*)”<sup>3</sup>

D. “Who is the good man? (ish tob). 1. The man whose heart is right with God, whose tongue corresponds to his heart, and whose actions correspond to both. 2. The man who is every thing that the sinner and backslider are not.”<sup>4</sup>

### III. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD PEOPLE IN THE BIBLE

A. Proverbs 12:2. A good man obtains favor (“*ra^tso^`n ra^tso^`n raw-tsone'*, (*raw-tsone'*), delight, pleasure, good will”) of Jehovah.

B. Proverbs 13:22. A good man leaves an inheritance to grandchildren.

C. Proverbs 14:14. A good man shall be satisfied from himself.

1. “There is no verb expressed in this clause, ‘shall be satisfied’ being supplied by our translators. Delitzsch and others read, ‘and a good man from his own deeds.’ It is simpler to repeat the verb from the former clause: ‘A good man shall be filled with that which belongs to him;’ *i.e.* the holy thoughts and righteous actions in which he delights.”<sup>5</sup>

2. Proverbs 12:14; 18:20

3. Isaiah 3:10

D. Ecclesiastes 2:26. A good man will be blessed by Jehovah with wisdom, knowledge and joy.

E. Matthew 12:35 – Luke 6:45. A good man has a good treasure (heart) and uses out of it.

1. “Agathos . . . describes that which, being good in its character or constitution, is beneficial in its effect . . . .”<sup>6</sup>

2. “You have seen the great reservoirs provided by our water companies, in which the water that is to supply hundreds of streets and thousands of houses is kept. Now, the heart is just the reservoir of man; and our life is allowed to flow in its proper season. That life may flow through different pipes-the mouth, the hand, the eye; but still all the issues of hand, of eye, of lip, derive their source from the great fountain and central reservoir, the heart; and hence there is no difficulty in showing the great necessity that exists for keeping this reservoir-the heart-in a proper state and condition; since otherwise that which flows through the pipes must be tainted and corrupt. C. H. Spurgeon.”<sup>7</sup>

#### IV. SPECIFIC GOOD PEOPLE IN THE BIBLE

##### A. 2 Samuel 18:27. Ahimaaz.

1. Ahimaaz is described as a “good” man because he comes with “good” military news.
2. “Good” is from “Ṭo<sup>ˁ</sup>b (*tobe*); A primitive root, to *be* (transitively *do* or *make*) *good* (or *well*) in the widest sense.”<sup>8</sup>

##### B. Matthew 27:57-60; Mark 15:43-46; Luke 23:50-53. Joseph of Arimathea.

1. He was from Arimathea. This was a city of the Jews. Matthew 27:57; Mark 15:43; Luke 23:51
2. He was a rich man. Matthew 27:57
3. He was a councillor of honorable estate.” Mark 15:43
  - a. “Councillor” is from “bouleutes (bool-yoo-tace’) . . . an *adviser*, that is, (specifically) a *councillor* or member of the Jewish Sanhedrim.”<sup>9</sup>
  - b. “Honorable estate” is from *euschemon* which is used here “with reference to social degree, influential . . . .”<sup>10</sup>
  - d. He did not consent to the condemnation and crucifixion of Jesus. Luke 23:51
  - c. Acts 13:50; 17:12
  - d. Isaiah 53:9
4. He was a disciple of Jesus. Matthew 27:57

- a. He was “looking for the kingdom of God.” Mark 15:43
- b. He was a disciple secretly for fear of the Jews. John 19:38; 9:22; 12:42,43

5. He was a good and righteous (*agathos kai dikaios*) man. Luke 23:50

a. “Agathos . . . describes that which, being good in its character or constitution, is beneficial in its effect . . . .”<sup>11</sup>

b. “Righteous” is from *dikaïos* (*dik'-ah-yos*) which means “in a wide sense, upright, righteous, virtuous, keeping the commands of God.”<sup>12</sup>

6. He asked Pilate for the body of Jesus, took it, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, which he bought, laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock, rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb, and departed. Matthew 27:58-60; Mark 15:43-46; Luke 23:53

C. John 7:12. Some said Jesus was a good man.

D. Acts 11:24. Barnabas.

1. “Humble piety will often do more in the conversion of souls than the most splendid talents. No endowments can be a substitute for this. The real power of a minister is concentrated in this, and without this his ministry will be barrenness and a curse. There is nothing on the earth so mighty as goodness.”<sup>13</sup>

2. Barnabas’ goodness at Jerusalem.

a. Barnabas gave to help the poor saints. Acts 4:32-37

b. Barnabas supported Paul’s placing membership with the congregation. Acts 9:26-29

3. Barnabas’ goodness at Antioch.

a. He came as a representative of the Jerusalem congregation. Acts 11:22

b. He rejoiced at the reception of the Gospel. Acts 11:23

c. He encouraged the new converts to cleave unto the Lord with a determined effort. Acts 11:23

d. He was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. Acts 11:24

e. He brought Saul from Tarsus to work with the congregation at Antioch. Acts 11:25,26

f. He worked with the congregation at Antioch to teach the gospel. Acts 11:26

g. He and Saul took the contribution of the congregation to Judea. Acts 11:17-30

## **V. CONCLUSION**

A. Are we good people?

B. An accountable person who is not a Christian is not following the proper standard to be a good person in God's view.

C. Obey the Gospel.

D. Live faithfully.

## **ENDNOTES**

1. Biblical Illustrator, e-Sword version

2. Biblical Illustrator, e-Sword version

3. Biblical Illustrator, e-Sword version

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5. H.D.M. Spence and Joseph S. Exell, The Pulpit Commentary, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1950), Volume 9, Proverbs, p. 271

6. W. E. Vine, An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, Co., 1966), Volume 2, p. 163

7. Biblical Illustrator, e-Sword version

8. Word definitions are from Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright (c) 1994, Biblesoft and International Bible Translators, Inc., unless otherwise noted.

9. Archibald Thomas Robertson, *Word Pictures In The New Testament*, (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1930), Volume 1, p. 397
10. Vine, Volume 2, p. 42
11. W. E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, Co., 1966), Volume 2, p. 163
12. Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon Of The New Testament*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1977), p. 148
13. Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the New Testament*, (Grand Rapid, MI: Kregel Publications, 1974), p. 450