

What is Good & Evil?

(Scripture with Good questions?)

By Wayne R. Schmidt

Some may think, “We already know this in our hearts.” But if that were true, wouldn’t we be doing it better, as instructed in the Bible, as demonstrated by the characters in the Bible? Few of us learn how we deceive ourselves from correction. We might tell ourselves, “I’m fine” or “okay” not realizing the truth, because we are not watchful with good and evil. We all struggle with evil and few of us are much aware of it. We all have room for improvement, but few of us will continue with increasing good as the Bible instructs us to do.

We can be closer to God and God’s good which feeds, heals, and restores. We can. Those who improve in it can teach and demonstrate how to grow to the capacity that they themselves have grown. Those who don’t, can’t. Why wouldn’t we dedicate ourselves to grow in God’s good and practice evil less? Think about it and try to answer the question. It’s an important question. It’s not that we can’t, it’s that we won’t. It’s that we decide not to. We won’t endure, persevere, and face correction. This decision ‘not to’ comes from evil ideas we have accepted into our faith. The fact is that we can read this book. We can face the truth. We can make changes with good and evil. It’s a choice. God give us responsibility for our choices.

It is absolutely essential for us to own responsibility for our thoughts and choices. This is not about blaming, shaming, belittling, or condemning. We are not to beat ourselves or others down for what we have or have not done. There is nothing Godly good in such a response. We are to see the truth in our choices in a way of looking at the facts without opinionated judgements of right or wrong. Instead, we can examine our choices, actions, and thoughts with interest of learning and improving with God’s good.

Arrogance and inflated pride exist around us and will seek to protect itself. Such things are not with God. We are to humble ourselves. We ought to read God’s word with this in mind.

Question - Are you ready to read scripture with a humble mindset and to learn how to improve with God's good?

We ought to humbly, carefully, sincerely, and honestly examine ourselves with God's truth. How well are we doing what God says to do. How well are we improving? How can we make more corrections for improvement. It's not about being perfect, but growing toward that which is perfect, for our good, and the good of others. We can ensure we continue to grow if we apply ourselves to do it.

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

We can read this "for reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness."

It is beneficial to read with critical thinking, fact finding, and open minded, while avoiding quick conclusions or assumptions. Our old trainings and beliefs may be challenged. We all have thinking errors and faulty beliefs. No one is perfect.

God is good and we are instructed to be in that good for our good and the good of those around us. Yet evil exists within and around us interfering with good. We have a choice to grow in good or not. This is not always an easy choice. Our inward condition is impacted by our choices. Our inward choices affect our attitudes and beliefs. All this impacts our character.

This is a powerful study for those who can endure the challenging questions and diligently answer them with sincere honesty. It can impact your faith. It's not designed to be comfortable, it's designed to bring truth, even convicting truth, and direction for growth. Sometimes God's truth is not something we want to hear, but need to hear.

Even answering with I don't know can help us see what we don't know. Yet we ought to really take that to heart and maybe ask more questions. Why don't I know? Do I want to know? Am I willing to know? Do I really want to know God?

The first and great command for us is to love God with our all. The better we understand and practice God's good, the better we can know God. (1 John 4:7-8) Our seeking God and God's good is to be our highest priority (Matthew 6:33). Our problems have much to do with the production of evil

that exists within us (1 John 1:10). We have an inward battle to fight (Galatians 5:16-26). The solution involves discernment of our thoughts with new corrections (2 Corinthians 10:5). It depends upon our choices and actions (Deuteronomy 30 & Ezekiel 18).

The rewards are inward freedom, peace, love, and many other good spiritual feelings, thoughts, experiences, and sensations. How we are inwardly impacts everything we do spiritually. We can improve spiritually if we apply the instructions on practicing God's good. Note that practicing God's good is an inward experience that can manifest itself outwardly.

We will discuss how growth with God's good involves suffering and struggle. The scripture with questions and your searching for answers can involve uncomfortable inward sensations. But these are necessary. Growth and strengthening involves struggle. Avoiding it stunts growth. We are to persevere and endure with good courage.

Since we all sin, we all can benefit from correction. Who wouldn't want to be more adjusted with God's good? The evil within us does not want it—the evil we have developed within our beliefs. Participating more with good will set us in opposition with evil. We will experience cognitive dissonance and be placed in situations to make difficult choices. (Learn the story of the two wolves).

Here is the truth - We CAN have a BETTER LIFE if we CHOOSE to give ourselves, hearts and minds, over more and more to God's grace. God's grace is God's good. It's a gift. Just like the benefits of any gift, we will need to use it.

The only way for us to thoroughly know sincere love and peace is to inwardly be in it. If we have never really been in it, it can seem like a fairy tale. But it isn't a fairy tale. It's very real and we each can know it more. We can grow sincere love and peace with an open and willing mindset. This will require much inward correction. We can clean our conscience and purify our hearts as instructed in the Bible. After we have changed and grown with God's good, then we can be in a new inward position for new sensations and insights to really witness spiritual truth.

Question - Are you ready to learn how to walk more in God's love and peace?

Summery of evil:

Deceit, false lips, flattery, envy, covet, vanity, pride, arrogance, bitterness, wrath, anger, rebellion, malice, hypocrisy, ungodliness, clamor, debt, love of money, oppressing, being alone,

Malice - desiring ill will, misfortune, of others

Clamor - making lots of noise to agitate

Hypocrisy - playacting, insincere, being fake

Summery of Good:

Peace, truth, love, no partiality, charitable deeds, lending, forgiveness, mercy, faith, heading the word, repentance, zeal, perseverance, seeking good, knowing good, abhor evil, caring for enemies, not to burden, labor

Romans 12:9 *“Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.”*

To cling to good and abhor evil we must know what they are, what they are like, and our inward thoughts about them. We must learn to discern them within us and around us. We are to love without pretending/hypocrisy.

We are to increasingly seek, think, speak, desire, and do good. This is the goal and always has been God’s goal for people. The problem is evil, that we seek, think, speak, desire, and follow it. We choose it. We convince ourselves to participate in it. We have within us malformed habits with evil. Our society follows unspoken rules with evil. Much of it is beyond our consciousness. Yet we can increase our awareness if we practice looking for it.

This study is broken up into sections or topics describing God’s good. We all can learn from patterns and repetition. Children learn about patterns in school (apple, banana, orange, hammer). When scripture shares how we are to speak the truth over and over, but we find one verse that says otherwise, we can look at the pattern to find our answer. Just as the theme in the example with apple, banana, orange, hammer is fruit, so to the

theme of God's instructions for us is to speak the truth. What would Jesus do is always a good thought.

Repetition is often necessary. Often times the more we repeat the more we can learn. You can read this study one time and the next time learn even more. The first time we do something can create more confusion than learning, but that in itself is part of growth. Just keep at. That's called perseverance and continuance. These are good.

Within each section is a question to prompt further thinking. Please feel free to add your own questions and find answers. The point is to increase our learning of what the Bible says to do, do it to better, while sensing and witnessing spiritual things. The doing of it can teach us far more than merely reading.

Hopefully, you can experience some good shock and awe as I have. You may be surprised by some of what you read in the Bible because it differs from previous learnings. Remember, growth means change, but you must be ready for it. Pray for an open and willing mind. When we learn something in the Bible that conflicts with our understanding, it's likely a good idea to consider how our understanding may be wrong, especially when the Bible repeats it. Remember, it's not the question whether evil exists within us or not. We already know it does. The question is more about where within us does evil exist and how can we walk more in correction with God's good, even in tiny steps.

We can learn to identify the evil within us and the good to be done. We can examine ourselves for how we can make adjustments to better align with God. It's good to repeat this study. It's good to repeat the questions. Our minds are easily distracted and easily forget what they do not practice.

Neither good nor evil

Jeremiah 10:5 They are upright, like a palm tree, And they cannot speak; They must be carried, Because they cannot go by themselves. Do not be afraid of them, For they cannot do evil, Nor can they do any good."

Herd Mentality and Group Think have to do with conformity in a way where being different, even different with good, can bare with it negative social consequences.

Questions - What characters in the Bible spoke up for God in ways that were also against authorities?

What might it feel like to speak like this? What might it feel like to do nothing?

Habakkuk 1:13 You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he?

Questions - How might saying nothing be spiritually harmful? How might speaking up for good, at the expense of others disapproval, be spiritually good?

Zephaniah 1:12 “And it shall come to pass at that time That I will search Jerusalem with lamps, And punish the men Who are settled in complacency, Who say in their heart, ‘The Lord will not do good, Nor will He do evil.’

Question - What is it like to be “settled in complacency?”

Read Matthew 23 and discuss the good Jesus is doing.

God is good

2 Chronicles 5:13 indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers *were* as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, *saying: “For He is **good**, For His mercy endures forever,”* that the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud,

2 Chronicles 7:3 When all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the Lord on the temple, they bowed their faces to the ground on the pavement, and worshiped and praised the Lord, *saying: “For He is **good**, For His mercy endures forever.”*

Ezra 3:11 And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the Lord: “For *He is good*, For His mercy *endures* forever toward Israel.” Then all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid.

Psalm 136:1 Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for *He is good*! For His mercy *endures* forever.

Matthew 19:16-17 Now behold, one came and said to Him, “**Good** Teacher, what **good** thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” So He said to him, “Why do you call Me **good**? No one *is good* but One, *that is*, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.”

Mark 10:18 So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me **good**? No one *is good* but One, *that is*, God.

Luke 18:19 So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me **good**? No one *is good* but One, *that is*, God.

Questions: Are we ready to grow our understanding more and more with God’s good? What new good are we ready to practice in our minds, hearts, attitudes, and actions? (Examine the Quick Reference Sheet)

Do we trust in other things; greed, self-seeking, deception, self-image, pride, false flattery, etc? Are we willing to inwardly decrease such things and grow God’s good?

Righteousness & Justice, God’s will are good

Proverbs 13:21 Evil pursues sinners, But to the righteous, good shall be repaid.

Psalm 33:5 He loves righteousness and justice; The earth is full of the **goodness** of the Lord.

Hebrews 13:21 make you complete in every **good** work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.

Questions - Do we love righteousness? Do we study it? Are we practicing good works? How might we be repaid through our participation with righteousness?

Proverbs 2:20 So you may walk in the way of **goodness**, And keep to the paths of righteousness.

Luke 23:50 Now behold, *there was* a man named Joseph, a council member, a **good** and just man.

Questions - What is a good and just man. Can a man be good outwardly, but not inwardly? How so or why not?

Proverbs 29:6 By transgression an evil man is snared, But the righteous sings and rejoices.

Isaiah 33:15 He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly, He who despises the gain of oppressions, Who gestures with his hands, refusing bribes, Who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed, And shuts his eyes from seeing evil:

Question - How might we walk more righteously and speak more uprightly?

Doing for God is good

Matthew 6:1 [*Do **Good** to Please God*] “Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

Questions - How might we help or serve others ‘to be seen by them?’ How might seeking approval from others not be good?

1 Timothy 3:7 Moreover he must have a **good** testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that **good** and acceptable and perfect will of God.

1 Peter 2:12 having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Question - How might your good works glorify God?

Seeking Good

Proverbs 11:27 He who earnestly seeks **good** finds favor, But trouble will come to him who seeks *evil*.

Questions - What is earnestly seeking good? How can trouble come to those who seek evil?

Luke 11:34 The lamp of the body is the eye. Therefore, when your eye is **good**, your whole body also is full of light. But when *your* eye is bad, your body also *is* full of darkness.

Questions - What makes an eye good or bad? How might what we look at affect our body or mind? What might this have to do with perception, wants, or desires?

1 Peter 3:13 And who *is* he who will harm you if you become followers of what is **good**?

Questions - Do leaders prefer evil doers or those with integrity? If you were a person of authority, which would you want for a worker?

2 Chronicles 19:3 Nevertheless **good** things are found in you, in that you have removed the wooden images from the land, and have prepared your heart to seek God."

Questions - How can we prepare our hearts to seek God? Why might our hearts need preparation?

Colossians 1:10 that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing *Him*, being fruitful in every **good** work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Questions - How are we increasing in the knowledge of God? What increases knowledge better; reading what to do or doing it?

1 Thessalonians 5:21 Test all things; hold fast what is **good**.

Questions - What inward character or action are we testing? Do we test our understanding? How might we hold fast to what is good?

Proverbs 25:27 *It is not **good** to eat much honey; So to seek one's own glory is not glory.*

Questions - What is seeking one's own glory? Why might that not be good?

Amos 5:14 Seek good and not evil, That you may live; So the Lord God of hosts will be with you, As you have spoken.

Questions - How might seeking good and not evil help us to live? How might it impact "the Lord God of hosts" being with us?"

Ephesians 6:13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Questions - What is the armor of God and how do we take it up? How might our thoughts and attitudes impact the armor we take up?

Knowledge of good is good

Proverbs 19:2 Also it is not **good** for a soul *to be* without knowledge, And he sins who hastens with *his* feet.

Questions - What happens when we react without thinking or considering God's interests? Is being on autopilot a way to improve knowledge?

Proverbs 19:8 He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; He who keeps understanding will find **good**.

Questions - What is the difference between finding understanding and keeping it? Do you have personal experiences in spiritual wisdom and understanding?

Ecclesiastes 9:18 Wisdom *is* better than weapons of war; But one sinner destroys much **good**.”

Question - How might one sinner destroy much good? Read Matthew 16:5-12

Jeremiah 4:22 “For My people *are* foolish, They have not known Me. They *are* silly children, And they have no understanding. They *are* wise to do evil, But to do **good** they have no knowledge.”

Questions - Might doing good be the best way to learn what it is and what it does? What good are you practicing, learning, or training?

Acts 6:3 Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of **good** reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business;

Question - What character traits are part of good reputation? Are we growing in them, teaching them, and demonstrating them? How so, or why not?

Romans 16:19 For your obedience has become known to all. Therefore I am glad on your behalf; but I want you to be wise in what is good, and simple concerning evil.

Questions - How wise are we with good? How are we walking in obedience to good? What character traits do we obey?

Jeremiah 4:22 “For My people *are* foolish, They have not known Me. They *are* silly children, And they have no understanding. They *are* wise to do evil, But to do good they have no knowledge.”

Question - What is one thing we can do each day to develop more knowledge with good? Can we grow in good if we are not thinking about it? How can we maintain our focus on God’s good?

Heeding the word is good

Proverbs 16:20 He who heeds the word wisely will find **good**, And whoever trusts in the Lord, happy *is* he.

Question - What is heeding the word and not heeding the word? How might heeding the word help us find good and joy?

Hebrews 6:5 and have tasted the **good** word of God and the powers of the age to come,

Question - How might we taste the good word of God? How might knowing the word through experience—doing it, help us sense it?

Not Partiality or favoritism

Proverbs 24:23 These *things* also *belong* to the wise: *It is* not **good** to show partiality in judgment.

Questions - Are we more partial to the poor or rich, clean or dirty, or popular or outcast? Are we more partial to others who wear the same sports jersey, drive the same car, are in the same group/church, skin color, neighborhood, career, school, etc?

Proverbs 28:21 To show partiality *is* not **good**, Because for a piece of bread a man will transgress.

Question - How might we be swayed by money, wants, desires, expectations, favors, people pleasing, fear, conflict, etc.?

James 3:17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and **good** fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

Questions - Are we growing in such wisdom? How so or why not? How might we grow more?

James 2:8 have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

Questions - What are some examples of partiality? What might it look like in our own lives? How might we protect ourselves from partiality?

Rebellion of God's good is evil

2 Thessalonians 3:13 But *as for* you, brethren, do not grow weary *in* doing **good**.

Questions - How might we grow weary in doing good? What thoughts might sway us from going good?

Proverbs 17:11 An evil man seeks only rebellion; Therefore a cruel messenger will be sent against him.

Questions - If we seek only rebellion, with what sort of company would we keep? What type/conduct of people might we befriend?

Jeremiah 2:13 “For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, And hewn themselves cisterns —broken cisterns that can hold no water.

Questions - Is forsaking God also forsaking good? How so, or why not? If we obey evil, can we partake in good? How so, or why not?

Jeremiah 23:10 For the land is full of adulterers; For because of a curse the land mourns. The pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up. Their course of life is evil, And their might is not right.

Regarding ‘curse’ - read Ezekiel 18 (Our choices matter)

Daniel 11:27 Both these kings’ hearts shall be bent on evil, and they shall speak lies at the same table; but it shall not prosper, for the end will still be at the appointed time.

Questions - How can a heart be bent on evil? (Hebrew word for heart includes the mind.) How can lies hurt good?

2 Peter 2:10 and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. They are presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries,

2 Peter 2:12 But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption,

Questions - How might we speak evil of things we do not understand? Why might we say anything about something we do not know? Wouldn't it be better to learn first, gain experience, and then discuss it?

Jeremiah 35:15 I have also sent to you all My servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, 'Turn now everyone from his evil way, amend your doings, and do not go after other gods to serve them; then you will dwell in the land which I have given you and your fathers.' But you have not inclined your ear, nor obeyed Me.

Questions - What is an example of how you have turned from your evil way? How have you amended your doings?

Psalms 34:14 Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it.

Questions - What is it like to depart from evil and do good? How might we 'seek peace and pursue it?'

Micah 3:2 You who hate good and love evil; Who strip the skin from My people, And the flesh from their bones;

Question - When evil is done, does it affect others? How so or why not?

Disobedience can disqualify

3 John 1:11 Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God.

Question - How might we avoid imitating what is evil and ensure what we do is good?

Titus 1:16 They profess to know God, but in works they deny *Him*, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every **good** work.

Questions - How is our productivity with love, patience, kindness, truth, and other forms of spiritual good? Is our good work qualified or disqualified? How so?

1 Corinthians 5:13 But those who are outside God judges. Therefore “put away from yourselves the evil person.”

Questions - Are we discerning those who grow evil from those who grow good? How might we recognize someone who grows evil from someone who grows good?

Good is to be done, cling to, zealous, maintain

John 5:29 and come forth—those who have done **good**, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

Questions - How important is it for us to do good? Are there consequences from doing good or evil? How so or why not?

Romans 11:22 Therefore consider the **goodness** and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, **goodness**, if you continue in *His* **goodness**. Otherwise you also will be cut off.

Questions - What is meant here by severity and goodness? What is the meaning of the statements “if you continue” and “otherwise you also will be cut off?”

Ephesians 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for **good** works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Questions - Are we walking in “good works, which God prepared beforehand?” Is what we think, say, and do, good like the Bible describes good?

Titus 2:14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself *His* own special people, zealous for **good** works.

Questions - What might it be like to be zealous for good works? What are good works?

Titus 3:1 Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every **good** work,

Titus 3:8 This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain **good** works. These things are **good** and profitable to men.

Questions - Are we being careful to “maintain good works?” What might it mean by “be careful?” Why would we need to be careful?

Titus 3:14 And let our *people* also learn to maintain **good** works, to *meet* urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful.

Titus 1:8 but hospitable, a lover of what is **good**, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled,

Questions - How might we love self-control and being sober-minded? What would that be like?

2 Timothy 2:9 for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained.

Questions - To what point are we applying ourselves to do good works? Is it to the point of struggle and suffering?

Not compulsion, stewardship, or because we have to

Philemon 1:14 But without your consent I wanted to do nothing, that your **good** deed might not be by compulsion, as it were, but voluntary.

Questions - What is the difference between doing something we are supposed to do vs. something we want to do? How might that be different in our thoughts, feelings, attitude, words, and actions?

Proverbs 22:1 A **good** name is to be chosen rather than great riches, Loving favor rather than silver and gold.

Questions - Is it better to be rich with money or to be right with God in poverty? How might this impact our goals, perceived needs, choices, and daily actions?

Learn to do Good

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether **good** or bad.

Question - Are we learning how being in God's good is good? Is practicing evil bad? How so or why not?

2 Corinthians 6 (read all)

Isaiah 1:17 Learn to do **good**; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow.

Questions - How are we learning to do this? Who is showing us? Are we seeking how to do it? How so or why not?

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of **good** report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

Questions - How might we meditate upon these things? How often?

Hebrews 5:14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, *that is*, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both **good** and evil.

Questions - How might we have our senses exercised to discern both good and evil? Is experience needed? How so or why not?

Hebrews 13:9 Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For *it is **good*** that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them.

Question - How might our heart be established by grace?

Speak Good

1 Kings 12:7 And they spoke to him, saying, “If you will be a servant to these people today, and serve them, and answer them, and speak **good** words to them, then they will be your servants forever.”

Questions - What are ‘good words?’ Are good words made of truth, sincerity, love, peace, and compassion? In what ways can we better speak good words?

2 Kings 20:19 So Hezekiah said to Isaiah, “The word of the Lord which you have spoken *is **good!***” For he said, “Will there not be peace and truth at least in my days?”

Questions - How might we improve with speaking peace and truth? How might we help others?

2 Chronicles 10:7 And they spoke to him, saying, “If you are kind to these people, and please them, and speak **good** words to them, they will be your servants forever.”

Questions - How might kindness impact the speaking of good words? If we are kind to others, might they be more likely to be kind to us?

Job 2:10 But he said to her, “You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept **good** from God, and shall we not accept adversity?” In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

Job 15:3 Should he reason with unprofitable talk, Or by speeches with which he can do no **good**?

Question - What might unprofitable talk be like?

1 Timothy 2:1-3 I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people— for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. For this *is* **good** and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,

Questions - When we speak, is our goal to live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness? How so or why not?

1 Peter 3:10 -11 For “He who would love life And see **good** days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit. Let him turn away from evil and do **good**; Let him seek peace and pursue it.

Questions - Do we complain, faultfind without solutions, manipulate, or deny truth? Do we avoid making amends that might bring peace? Are we keeping to truth with mercy, compassion, patience, and kindness? How so or why not?

Numbers 24:13 ‘If Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the word of the Lord, to do **good** or bad of my own will. What the Lord says, that I must speak’?

Question - Is what we say and how we say it influenced by God’s ways? How so or why not? How might desires for self-seeking, physical comforts, money, status, approval from others, hurt our doing good?

Titus 2: 8 sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.

Titus 3:2 to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men.

James 1:13 Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.

James 4:11 Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge.

Question - What is speaking evil? Please refer to the 'Good & Evil Quick Reference.'

1 Peter 2:1 Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking,

Questions - What is 'all deceit?' What is hypocrisy? What is envy? Are we watching for it in our thoughts, desires, and interests?

1 Peter 3:9-10 not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. For "He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit.

Questions - How might we feel in our hearts if we do good for others who may have wronged us? How might we feel if we humbly forgive and trust more with God's good than hurt pride? What might others think of us, others who are right with God? How might this impact our spirit, mind, and soul?

Psalm 34:13 Keep your tongue from evil, And your lips from speaking deceit.

Psalm 50:19 You give your mouth to evil, And your tongue frames deceit.

Psalm 52:3 You love evil more than good, Lying rather than speaking righteousness. Selah

Questions - If we meditated upon God's good, thinking how our practicing it can heal our inward being, wouldn't we be more likely to grow in it? Do our thoughts shape our attitude and behavior?

Teach good

1 Samuel 12:23 Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you; but I will teach you the **good** and the right way.

Questions - What is the good and right way? Do you keep in mind how you can better respond with God's good and right way? How so or why not?

2 Chronicles 6:27 then hear *in* heaven, and forgive the sin of Your servants, Your people Israel, that You may teach them the **good** way in which they should walk; and send rain on Your land which You have given to Your people as an inheritance.

Questions - Are we around others who teach the good way; model it, demonstrate it, and how we should walk in it? What do we teach, model, and demonstrate? How can we do it better?

Nehemiah 9:20 You also gave Your **good** Spirit to instruct them, And did not withhold Your manna from their mouth, And gave them water for their thirst.

Question - Are we seeking instructions from God's good Spirit?

Psalms 143:10 Teach me to do Your will, For You *are* my God; Your Spirit *is* **good**. Lead me in the land of uprightness.

Galatians 6:6 Let him who is taught the word share in all **good** things with him who teaches.

Questions - Are we sharing the good we have learned with others? How so or why not?

1 Timothy 4:6 If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a **good** minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the **good** doctrine which you have carefully followed.

Questions - Are we nourished in the words of faith? Are we carefully following them? How so or why not?

Romans 15:2 Let each of us please *his* neighbor for *his* **good**, leading to edification.

Questions - When we please others, is it for edification? What might be some examples of pleasing someone for their edification?

Romans 15:14 Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of **goodness**, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

Questions - How are we full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another? How are we growing that way?

Titus 2:3 the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of **good** things—

Questions - How might being reverent, avoiding slandering and much wine, help us be teachers of good things?

John 7:7 The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil.

Question - How might we testify of the world that its works are evil?

John 17:15 I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.

Question - How can we grow and improve in this world with God's good?

Truth is good

Matthew 22:16 And they sent to Him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that You are **true**, and teach the way of God in truth; nor do You care about anyone, for You do not regard the person of men. (Also Mark 12:14)

Questions - Are we swayed in our honesty by how other people think or feel? Do we fear conflict, social awkwardness, or hurt feelings?

John 3:33 He who has received His testimony has certified that God is **true**.

Psalms 100:5 For the Lord *is* **good**; His mercy *is* everlasting, And His truth *endures* to all generations.

John 4:23 But the hour is coming, and now is, when the **true** worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.

Questions - Do we examine ourselves and test for truth? How so or why not?

John 7:18 He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is **true**, and no unrighteousness is in Him.

Questions - In what ways are we seeking the glory of God when we speak? What righteousness are we seeking, learning, and practicing?

Numbers 23:19 “God *is* not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it **good**?

Questions - How diligent are we to ensure we do what we say and follow through with our agreements? Do we say yes and later cancel?

Proverbs 16:11 **Honest** weights and scales *are* the Lord’s; All the weights in the bag *are* His work.

Proverbs 20:23 Diverse weights *are* an abomination to the Lord, And dishonest scales *are* not **good**.

Questions - Do we examine ourselves fairly, not being swayed by fear, greed, self-seeking, nor envy? Have we justified lying? If so, what good did it bring?

Job 31:6 Let me be weighed on **honest** scales, That God may know my integrity.

Questions - How does dishonesty affect integrity? Has deception ever improved your spiritual integrity? How so or why not?

Isaiah 38:3 and said, “Remember now, O Lord, I pray, how I have walked before You in truth and with a loyal heart, and have done *what is good* in Your sight.” And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

Questions - In what ways are we walking in truth with a loyal heart to God? In what new and improved ways we can do this better?

Isaiah 39:8 So Hezekiah said to Isaiah, “The word of the Lord which you have spoken *is good!*” For he said, “At least there will be peace and truth in my days.”

Questions - How valuable is peace and truth to you? Are you willing to be different to grow in it? How so or why not?

3 John 1:12 Demetrius has a **good** testimony from all, and from the truth itself. And we also bear witness, and you know that our testimony is true.

Questions - Why might truth be important with testimony or teaching? Are we swayed by what others might think? How so or why not?

Proverbs 16:6 In mercy and truth Atonement is provided for iniquity; And by the fear of the Lord one departs from evil.

Questions - How might mercy and truth Atone for iniquity? If we lied and sought to make things right, how might that be good? Is remorse important? How so or why not?

2 Corinthians 7:14 For if in anything I have boasted to him about you, I am not ashamed. But as we spoke all things to you in truth, even so our boasting to Titus was found **true**.

Questions - Are we speaking truth in all things? How hard/diligent are we trying?

Ephesians 4:24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in **true** righteousness and holiness.

Questions - Are you practicing being new in true righteousness and holiness? How so or why not?

Philippians 4:3 And I urge you also, **true** companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names *are* in the Book of Life.

Questions - What is a true companion? What character traits would a true companion have?

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are **true**, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

Questions - How often are we meditating on what is true and noble? Do we think how to inwardly shape ourselves to be true and noble? How so or why not?

1 Thessalonians 1:9 For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and **true** God,

Questions - What idols have we turned from? In what ways have we served the living and true God? How might we do it better?

1 Timothy 1:2 To Timothy, a **true** son in the faith: Grace, mercy, *and* peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

Titus 1:4 To Titus, a **true** son in *our* common faith: Grace, mercy, *and* peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.

Question - What is a true son in the faith?

Hebrews 10:22 let us draw near with a **true** heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Questions - What is a true heart? What is an evil conscience? How can we learn more about these?

1 Peter 5:12 By Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the **true** grace of God in which you stand.

Questions - What is the true grace of God? How might we stand in it? How can we exhort and testify to it?

2 Peter 2:22 But it has happened to them according to the **true** proverb: "A dog returns to his own vomit," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."

Questions - Why is this proverb important? Do we return to evil deeds? Might such action reveal something wrong with our thinking? How so or why not?

1 John 2:27 But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is **true**, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.

Questions - Can we abide in God and a lie? Can we improve in righteousness and condone falsehood? How so or why not?

1 John 5:20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is **true**; and we are in Him who is **true**, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the **true** God and eternal life.

Peace is good

Job 22:21 "Now acquaint yourself with Him, and be at peace; Thereby **good** will come to you.

Questions - How are our thoughts growing in peace? How might we help shape our thoughts to grow with peace?

Mark 9:50 Salt is **good**, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another."

Questions - How might hurry, impatience, or restlessness affect peace? How might it affect others?

Luke 2:14 “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, **goodwill** toward men!”

Psalm 34:14 Depart from evil and do **good**; Seek peace and pursue it.

Questions - In what ways are we seeking peace and pursuing it? How might we do it better?

Romans 2:10 but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is **good**, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Questions - How might being inwardly right with God help bring peace? In what ways is peace good?

2 Corinthians 13:11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Become complete. Be of **good** comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

Questions - Describe a peaceful demeanor. Would being at peace involve calm thinking or racing thoughts? What might a peaceful schedule be like? Do we drive peacefully? How so or why not?

Love is good

Hebrews 10:24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and **good** works,

Questions - How do we “consider one another?” How do we stir up love? How so or why not?

Psalm 69:16 Hear me, O Lord, for Your lovingkindness *is* **good**; Turn to me according to the multitude of Your tender mercies.

Questions - What is lovingkindness and how is it good? What are tender mercies like?

Isaiah 63:7 I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the Lord *And* the praises of the Lord, According to all that the Lord has bestowed on us, And the great **goodness** toward the house of Israel, Which He has bestowed on them according to His mercies, According to the multitude of His lovingkindnesses.

Question - What is your experience with lovingkindnesses?

Forgiveness & Mercy

Psalms 86:5 For You, Lord, *are* **good**, and ready to forgive, And abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You.

Questions - What might it mean by 'all those who call upon You?' How might we sincerely call upon the the Lord with our heart, mind, and soul?

Proverbs 11:17 The merciful man does **good** for his own soul, But *he who is* cruel troubles his own flesh.

Questions - How does being merciful toward others affect our heart, mind, and soul? How does it impact relationships?

Psalms 145:9 The Lord *is* **good** to all, And His tender mercies *are* over all His works.

Exodus 34:6 And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in **goodness** and truth,

Questions - How might we grow more each day being 'merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in **goodness** and truth?' How might we improve ourselves and check ourselves for growth?

Charitable deeds are good

Acts 9:36 At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of **good** works and charitable deeds which she did.

Questions - How might charitable deeds improve hearts, minds, and souls? Does it bring hope or add faith? How so or why not?

Give, lend, but do not borrow

Deuteronomy 28:12 The Lord will open to you His **good** treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow.

Questions - Do we lend to others? Are we in debt? How can this impact hearts and minds?

Psalms 112:5 A **good** man deals graciously and lends; He will guide his affairs with discretion.

Questions - Do you deal graciously? How so or why not? What is guiding affairs with discretion?

Luke 6:35 But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.

Questions - What inward spiritual sense or feeling might we produce by loving our enemy? If we continue in it, what might that do to the relationship? How does love impact our hearts and minds?

Luke 6:35 But love your enemies, do **good**, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.

Questions - What's it like to lend to others, expecting nothing back? Is it comfortable, scary, awkward, fun, something you do a lot, rarely, or never?

Luke 6:38 Give, and it will be given to you: **good** measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."

Hebrews 13:16 But do not forget to do **good** and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Questions - How might others be spiritually impacted through giving and receiving? How might you be spiritually impacted?

Ecclesiastes 5:13 There is a severe evil which I have seen under the sun: Riches kept for their owner to his hurt.

Questions - How might riches kept to oneself create hurt? Does self-seeking or love of money play a part? How so or why not?

Ecclesiastes 5:16 And this also is a severe evil— Just exactly as he came, so shall he go. And what profit has he who has labored for the wind?

Questions - What does 'labored for the wind' mean? Are there ways where you have labored for the wind? How so or why not?

Good on Sabbath

Matthew 12:12 Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do **good** on the Sabbath."

Luke 6:9 Then Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do **good** or to do evil, to save life or to destroy?"

Questions - Are we seeking to do good in our free time or merely to please ourselves? Are there ways to do good in more areas of our lives? How so or why not?

Labor is Good

Ecclesiastes 3:13 and also that every man should eat and drink and enjoy the **good** of all his labor—it *is* the gift of God.

Questions - Do we "enjoy the good of all (our) labor?" How might we learn to enjoy it more?

Ecclesiastes 5:18 Here is what I have seen: *It is **good** and fitting for one to eat and drink, and to enjoy the **good** of all his labor in which he toils under the sun all the days of his life which God gives him; for it is his heritage.*

Matthew 25:21 His lord said to him, 'Well *done*, **good** and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

Questions - How might we experience joy? Does joy come before doing good or afterwards?

Matthew 25:23 His lord said to him, 'Well *done*, **good** and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

Questions - What is a good and faithful servant to God? What might such a person's mind and heart be like?

Galatians 4:28-29 Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with *his* hands what is **good**, that he may have something to give him who has need. Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is **good** for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

Questions - What might good edification sound like? What might education be like to someone who is afraid, worried, dishonest, self-seeking, fake, or oppressive? How might we help teach or correct others from such corruption?

Galatians 6:7-8 with **good**will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever **good** anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether *he is* a slave or free.

Question - When we serve, how might we discern if we are doing it for the Lord, for ourselves, or for others?

Revelation 2:2 "I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars;

Questions - How might we test others who teach the Bible? Are we relying upon schools, institutions, certifications, etc.? How can we know a person's works, labor, patience, evil, and honesty?

Caring for enemies

Luke 6:27 "But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do **good** to those who hate you,

Questions - Who hates you? How can you do good to them?

Romans 12:17 Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for **good** things in the sight of all men.

Questions - What was a scenario where someone you know did something evil? How might we respond to such a person with God's good?

Romans 12:21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with **good**.

Questions - Share an experience with overcoming evil with good? Describe thoughts, feelings, and what happened afterwards.

Luke 11:4 And forgive us our sins, For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one."

Questions - Share your experience with forgiveness? How is it inwardly good? How might it be good for the heart, mind, and soul?

Doing good silences ignorance

1 Peter 2:14-15 or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and *for the* praise of those who do **good**. For this is the will of God, that by doing **good** you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—

Questions - What good have you done where you put to silence the ignorance of others? What might that be like?

Romans 13:3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same.

Questions - If we are doing right by authority, why would we be afraid?

Good satisfies

Proverbs 14:14 The backslider in heart will be filled with his own ways, But a **good** man *will be satisfied* from above.

Question - How might being a good man be satisfying?

2 Thessalonians 3:3 But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one.

Question - How might practicing God's good improve protection from evil?

Satisfied soul is good

Isaiah 55:2 Why do you spend money for *what is* not bread, And your wages for *what* does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat *what is good*, And let your soul delight itself in abundance.

Questions - What satisfies our souls? What is God's good and how might we eat from it? How might love and peace benefit our bodies and souls?

Jeremiah 31:12 Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, Streaming to the **goodness** of the Lord— For wheat and new wine and oil, For the young of the flock and the herd; Their souls shall be like a well-watered garden, And they shall sorrow no more at all.

Question - How might God's goodness, that is, are partaking in it, reduce or end sorrow?

Jeremiah 31:14 I will satiate the soul of the priests with abundance, And My people shall be satisfied with My **goodness**, says the Lord."

Question - How does abiding in God's goodness impact our hearts and minds?

Lamentations 3:25-27 The Lord *is* **good** to those who wait for Him, To the soul *who* seeks Him. *It is* **good** that *one* should hope and wait quietly For the salvation of the Lord. *It is* **good** for a man to bear The yoke in his youth.

Questions - How might waiting for God bring good? Imagine a sponge quickly dipped into a puddle vs. one that sits in the puddle. Wouldn't the sponge that rests in the puddle soak up more? Might our patiently being in God's good feed our souls more?

1 Peter 4:19 Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls *to Him* in doing **good**, as to a faithful Creator.

Questions - Why might commitment of our soul to God in doing good be important?

Jeremiah 6:16 Thus says the Lord: "Stand in the ways and see, And ask for the old paths, where the **good** way *is*, And walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not walk *in it*.'

Questions - How might we walk more in God's good ways? What might happen if we put it off or don't walk in it?

What is evil

Lying, scheming, deception, and not speaking up for truth is evil

Psalms 36:3 The words of his mouth *are* wickedness and deceit; He has ceased to be wise *and* to do **good**.

Proverbs 12:20 Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, But counselors of peace have joy.

Question - What is one thing you can do to be more like a counselor of peace?

Proverbs 17:4 An evildoer gives heed to false lips; A liar listens eagerly to a spiteful tongue.

Questions - Do we listen better to people who agree with us than those who don't? Are we quicker to see how we are right? How so or why not?

Isaiah 32:7 Also the schemes of the schemer are evil; He devises wicked plans To destroy the poor with lying words, Even when the needy speaks justice.

Isaiah 59:4 No one calls for justice, Nor does any plead for truth. They trust in empty words and speak lies; They conceive evil and bring forth iniquity.

Questions - What might empty words sound like? Would they be more about good or evil?

Isaiah 59:7 Their feet run to evil, And they make haste to shed innocent blood; Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; Wasting and destruction are in their paths.

Jeremiah 9:3 "And like their bow they have bent their tongues for lies. They are not valiant for the truth on the earth. For they proceed from evil to evil, And they do not know Me," says the Lord.

Questions - What lies have we told that are okay with God and spiritually good? When have we spoke the truth when wanting to lie? What happened?

Jeremiah 23:14 Also I have seen a horrible thing in the prophets of Jerusalem: They commit adultery and walk in lies; They also strengthen the hands of evildoers, So that no one turns back from his wickedness. All of them are like Sodom to Me, And her inhabitants like Gomorrah.

Titus 1:12 One of them, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons."

Questions - How might we respond when around others who deceive or lie? Will we encourage it with a smile, condone it, or communicate to correct it?

Proverbs 28:10 Whoever causes the upright to go astray in an evil way, He himself will fall into his own pit; But the blameless will inherit good.

Questions - How might misleading people in an evil way hurt our hearts? How are we setting our thoughts to walk more into ways that are blameless?

Isaiah 59:15 So truth fails, And he who departs from evil makes himself a prey. Then the Lord saw it, and it displeased Him That there was no justice.

Question - How can departing from evil make ourselves a prey?

Hosea 7:15 Though I disciplined and strengthened their arms, Yet they devise evil against Me;

Micah 7:3 That they may successfully do evil with both hands— The prince asks for gifts, The judge seeks a bribe, And the great man utters his evil desire; So they scheme together.

Question - When around others full of self-seeking, pride, lovers of money and vanity, how can we stand for love, peace, and truth?

Nahum 1:11 From you comes forth one Who plots evil against the Lord, A wicked counselor.

Ecclesiastes 8:11 Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

Questions - Are we slow to correct evil work, deception, and lies? Which is more important, keeping ourselves from conflict or speaking corrective truth with peace and love?

Pride & Arrogance are evil

James 4:16 But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.

Questions - What is arrogance? (See proverbs 12) Have you ever boasted in self-seeking achievements? What are some examples of boasting in arrogance?

Proverbs 30:32 If you have been foolish in exalting yourself, Or if you have devised evil, put your hand on your mouth.

Questions - Have we practiced exalting ourselves? How so or why not?

Job 35:12 There they cry out, but He does not answer, Because of the pride of evil men.

Questions - Is selfish pride good or evil? How so or why not?

Vanity is evil

Ecclesiastes 2:21 For there is a man whose labor is with wisdom, knowledge, and skill; yet he must leave his heritage to a man who has not labored for it. This also is vanity and a great evil.

Questions - What is vanity? What might be vanity in our thoughts, goals, words, attitude, or behaviors?

Ecclesiastes 6:2-3 A man to whom God has given riches and wealth and honor, so that he lacks nothing for himself of all he desires; yet God does not give him power to eat of it, but a foreigner consumes it. This is vanity, and it is an evil affliction. If a man begets a hundred *children* and lives many years, so that the days of his years are many, but his soul is not satisfied with goodness, or indeed he has no burial, I say *that* a stillborn child *is* better than he—

Question - What is a soul satisfied with goodness? Why is having a satisfied soul with goodness more important than family and money? How can we better satisfy our own souls with goodness?

Iniquity is evil

Psalm 94:20 Shall the throne of iniquity, which devises evil by law, Have fellowship with You?

Questions - What are some examples of iniquity? How can we have fellowship with iniquity? How might our choices impact our fellowship with iniquity or evil?

Flattery is evil

Proverbs 6:24 To keep you from the evil woman, From the flattering tongue of a seductress.

Questions - How might we become extra nice to someone in order to persuade, win, or manipulate them? How might others feel if they found out or realized we were deceitful/misleading? Does this build trust and belonging or hurt it?

Matthew 5:37 But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.

Questions - Do you ever say yes holding to the idea that you can always cancel? Is it uncomfortable to say no? What's more important, being right with God or avoiding social awkwardness? Was Jesus ever fake?

Love of Money is evil

1 Timothy 6:10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Questions - How might love for money create sorrow? What is the difference between money we need and money we want? Does our pursuit of money impact our growth with good? How so or why not?

Proverbs 28:22 A man with an evil eye hastens after riches, And does not consider that poverty will come upon him.

Question - How can we chase after growing God's good more than money or personal comforts?

Various forms of evil

Romans 1:29-30 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

Question - What is the process of being filled with unrighteousness?

Ephesians 4:31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.

Question - How might we put such evil away from ourselves?

1 Timothy 6:4 he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions,

Question - How might we handle situations with someone who is seeking an argument?

Colossians 3:5 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

Questions - How might passion, desire, and covetousness be evil? How might we put them to death?

Ecclesiastes 12:14 For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.

Being perverse or against God's ways is evil

Proverbs 2:12 To deliver you from the way of evil, From the man who speaks perverse things,

Questions - How might we be delivered “from the way of evil?” What thoughts might bring a person to speak perverse things? What is good way to respond toward such thoughts?

Proverbs 2:14 Who rejoice in doing evil, And delight in the perversity of the wicked;

Questions - How might someone learn to delight in God’s good instead of perversity? Would we need to practice it to feel the delight? How so or why not?

Proverbs 8:13 The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate.

Questions - How can loving good help us to hate evil? How is pride and arrogance evil?

Proverbs 17:20 He who has a deceitful heart finds no good, And he who has a perverse tongue falls into evil.

Questions - Can someone trained to deceive learn to to be honest? How so or why not?

Covet & Envy is Evil

Proverbs 12:12 The wicked covet the catch of evil men, But the root of the righteous yields fruit.

Questions - What is meant by the root of the righteous? How can someone root themselves in righteousness? How might practicing righteousness yield fruit?

Psalms 37:1 Do not fret because of evildoers, Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity.

Questions - What is an example of envying workers of iniquity? How does envy come about? How can someone keep themselves away from envy?

Evil practiced hurts

Jeremiah 2:19 Your own wickedness will correct you, And your backslidings will rebuke you. Know therefore and see that it is an evil and bitter thing That you have forsaken the Lord your God, And the fear of Me is not in you,” Says the Lord God of hosts.

Questions - How might our own wickedness correct us? How might our backsliding rebuke us? What feelings, thoughts, and sensations come from wrongdoings? Does it feel good to be in error? How so or why not?

Jeremiah 4:4 Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, And take away the foreskins of your hearts, You men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, Lest My fury come forth like fire, And burn so that no one can quench it, Because of the evil of your doings.”

Questions - How might insincerity, dishonesty, uncaring, being fake, and lack of compassion harden our hearts, like callousness or extra layer of skin? How can feeling hurt—remorse from doing wrong be helpful and good?

Jeremiah 4:14 O Jerusalem, wash your heart from wickedness, That you may be saved. How long shall your evil thoughts lodge within you?

Questions - How might evil thoughts affect us—pure heart or clean conscience? What is meant by, “that you may be saved?” Saved from what exactly? How might we wash our heart from wickedness?

Jeremiah 18:10 if it does evil in My sight so that it does not obey My voice, then I will relent concerning the good with which I said I would benefit it.

Questions - Are we obeying the voice of love, compassion, and mercy with thoughts, words, and actions? Are we sincere, authentic, and deeply connected with each other? How so or why not?

Philippians 3:2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation!

Questions - What are dogs or evil workers? How might we beware of evil workers? Should we beware of our own evil thinking?

1 Thessalonians 5:22 Abstain from every form of evil.

Questions - What forms of evil are we abstaining from or seeking to decrease? How might we do this better?

1 Peter 4:15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters.

Questions - What is it like to suffer from evil? Is it something we want to avoid? Would setting our minds and hearts to be more centered on experiencing good help us from such suffering?

Exodus 23:2 You shall not follow a crowd to do evil; nor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after many to pervert justice.

Questions - How might we follow a crowd to do evil? What would we do if others in our group were practicing evil or lacking in a good? Would we speak up? Why or why not?

Psalms 34:21 Evil shall slay the wicked, And those who hate the righteous shall be condemned.

Questions - How can evil slay the wicked? What impact does practicing evil have on our hearts, minds, relationships, and souls? How is harming others harming ourselves? How is doing good for others doing good for ourselves?

Proverbs 11:19 As righteousness leads to life, So he who pursues evil pursues it to his own death.

Questions - Does pursuing evil grow it within us? What might it be like to pile up consequences and experiences with evil in thoughts, words, and deeds? What might it be like to pile up good deeds in righteousness?

Proverbs 12:21 No grave trouble will overtake the righteous, But the wicked shall be filled with evil.

Questions - What might it be like to be filled with evil? What might it be like to be filled with righteousness? What might it be like if practiced staying away from evil and righteousness? Which of these might lead to us to feel empty inside?

Isaiah 13:11 "I will punish the world for its evil, And the wicked for their iniquity; I will halt the arrogance of the proud, And will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

Isaiah 65:12 Therefore I will number you for the sword, And you shall all bow down to the slaughter; Because, when I called, you did not answer; When I spoke, you did not hear, But did evil before My eyes, And chose that in which I do not delight."

Questions - Which does God call us to practice; humbling ourselves, arrogance, seeking good, or self-seeking pride? Which is better for our souls, conscience, heart, and relationships? Which do we seek to grow?

Isaiah 66:4 So will I choose their delusions, And bring their fears on them; Because, when I called, no one answered, When I spoke they did not hear; But they did evil before My eyes, And chose that in which I do not delight."

Jeremiah 21:12 O house of David! Thus says the Lord: "Execute judgment in the morning; And deliver him who is plundered Out of the hand of the oppressor, Lest My fury go forth like fire And burn so that no one can quench it, Because of the evil of your doings.

Questions - Do we choose that in which God will delight or not? How are our choices affecting our inward being? Are we able to make new and different good choices? How so or why not?

Jeremiah 44:22 So the Lord could no longer bear it, because of the evil of your doings and because of the abominations which you committed. Therefore your land is a desolation, an astonishment, a curse, and without an inhabitant, as it is this day.

Jeremiah 51:24 "And I will repay Babylon And all the inhabitants of Chaldea For all the evil they have done In Zion in your sight," says the Lord.

Ezekiel 6:9 Then those of you who escape will remember Me among the nations where they are carried captive, because I was crushed by their adulterous heart which has departed from Me, and by their eyes which play the harlot after their idols; they will loathe themselves for the evils which they committed in all their abominations.

Ezekiel 36:31 Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations.

Questions - What is loathing yourself like? What brings it about? Can righting ourselves inwardly help turn us from destruction? How so or why not?

Hosea 9:15 “All their wickedness is in Gilgal, For there I hated them. Because of the evil of their deeds I will drive them from My house; I will love them no more. All their princes are rebellious.

Micah 3:4 Then they will cry to the Lord, But He will not hear them; He will even hide His face from them at that time, Because they have been evil in their deeds.

Questions - If we choose to follow evil and respond by it, how might that affect our inward experiences? If we continue down the path of evil in our thoughts and actions, how might that impact our awareness of God's good? Would be more aware of good or less?

Luke 16:25 But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented.

Questions - When we do evil to others, how might it affect our conscience, connection, love, compassion, unity, or affection? How might caring for others be good for us?

John 3:19-20 And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

Questions - What might it feel like If we expose our evil deeds? Might humbling ourselves for Godly correction be good, even if it does not feel good? Can fear of seeing the evil within us convince us away from being more right with God?

John 5:29 and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

Questions - How might doing good with God help us feel more alive? How might doing evil feel like condemnation?

Romans 2:9 tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek;

Questions - What is an example in your own life where evil has brought anguish? What inward experience might restoring wrongs bring?

Romans 13:4 For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.

Questions - Which is better, responding to a guilt feeling with correction or avoiding it? Does correcting the evil we practiced help purify our hearts and clean our conscience? How so or why not?

1 Corinthians 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."

Questions - What is evil company? What might that look like, sound like, or feel like to be around?

2 Timothy 3:13 But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

Questions - What is an evil man? How do we check for deception? Do we examine each other for deception? How so or why not?

1 Peter 3:12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

Questions - How well do we know God's righteousness and how to grow in it? How are you growing in it?

2 John 1:9-11 Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.

Questions - How might we improve our abiding in the doctrine of Christ and God? Do you have room for improvement? How so or why not?

Living by own ideas or ways is not good

Isaiah 65:2 I have stretched out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, Who walk in a way *that is not good*, According to their own thoughts;

Question - How might we trust our own ways more than God's? How can we make corrections?

Proverbs 3:7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and depart from evil.

Question - How might being wise in your own eyes block your growth with God?

Jeremiah 18:12 [God's Warning Rejected] And they said, "That is hopeless! So we will walk according to our own plans, and we will every one obey the dictates of his evil heart."

Question - Are we willing to set aside some of our ways in order to grow more with God's?

Proverbs 14:16 A wise man fears and departs from evil, But a fool rages and is self-confident.

Questions - How do we depart from evil? Are we self-confident? How so or why not? Do we believe self-confidence is good? How so or why not?

Jeremiah 7:24 Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but followed the counsels and the dictates of their evil hearts, and went backward and not forward.

Questions - Can obedience to God's good will help us? Can you give an example of why or why not?

Thinking and speaking evil

Jude 1:8 Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries.

Questions - Have you spoken evil of leaders? How might this be evil? Can we correct others with application of good instead of evil? How so or why not?

Jude 1:10 But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves.

Questions - How does speaking evil corrupt ourselves and others? How can we speak evil of things we do not know?

Ecclesiastes 9:3 This is an evil in all that is done under the sun: that one thing happens to all. Truly the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil; madness is in their hearts while they live, and after that they go to the dead.

Questions - What is madness in the heart? Can peace be restored to madness? How so or why not?

Abhor evil is good

Psalms 36:4 He devises wickedness on his bed; He sets himself in a way *that is not good*; He does not abhor evil.

Questions - What thoughts devise wickedness? How might we set ourselves in a way that's not good? How is abhorring evil good for us?

Amos 5:15 Hate evil, love good; Establish justice in the gate. It may be that the Lord God of hosts Will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

Questions - What is an example of how you can love good and hate evil? What might that look like in our thoughts, attitudes, words, and actions?

Romans 12:9 [Behave Like a Christian] Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.

Questions - How might being fake impact love? Is pretending to care good or evil?

1 Corinthians 10:6 Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.

Questions - What are some examples of lusting after evil things? Do we follow others who lust after evil things? How do we respond with good?

Psalms 97:10 You who love the Lord, hate evil! He preserves the souls of His saints; He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked.

Questions - How can we redirect ourselves away from evil thoughts? How might decreased evil and increased good help our souls?

Proverbs 4:14 Do not enter the path of the wicked, And do not walk in the way of evil.

Questions - What is walking in the way of evil? Is walking in the way of good? What might that be like in our thoughts, desires, wants, interests, or goals?

Do not render evil for good

Psalms 38:20 Those also who render evil for **good**, They are my adversaries, because I follow *what is good*.

Questions - Are we associating with others who render evil for good? Why or why not? Would that affect our good? How so or why not?

1 Thessalonians 5:15 See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is **good** both for yourselves and for all.

Questions - How might we help others from returning evil for evil? What might we say or do? Why is this important?

3 John 1:11 Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is **good**. He who does **good** is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God.

Questions - What new good are we seeking to imitate? How can we imitate good better?

Matthew 5:39 But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.

Question - What does retaliation do to relationships? What does forgiveness and mercy do? Do we hurt others to protect our pride? How so or why not?

Matthew 6:13 And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

How can our trusting, seeking, and serving God's good protect us from evil?

Romans 12:17 Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men.

Question - When we feel attacked, is it possible stay with love and peace? How so or why not? What helps us to feel content more, good or evil?

Romans 12:21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Questions - When your thoughts go to evil, what do you do? Does humbling yourself affect pride and bitterness? How so or why not?

1 Thessalonians 5:15 See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.

Questions - How can we always inwardly pursue what is good? Why are we instructed to always pursue what is good?

Mixing Evil with Good

Isaiah 5:20 Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

Questions - What might mixing evil with good be like? What if we mixed sloth with labor, pride with humbling ourselves, greed with lending, lies with truth, forgiveness with resentment, or love with self-seeking? What message would this teach about good and evil?

Mark 3:4 Then He said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they kept silent.

Questions - If the Sabbath is for good and we use it selfishly, are we doing it correctly?

Jeremiah 7:30 For the children of Judah have done evil in My sight," says the Lord. "They have set their abominations in the house which is called by My name, to pollute it.

Questions - How can our responses with evil pollute a church or group? If we say we are with God, but inwardly we are not, are we with God? How so or why not?

Evil heart involves our thoughts

Matthew 12:35 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.

Questions - What good do we treasure in our hearts? What good things does that bring forth? How might we treasure good more in our hearts?

Mark 7:21-23 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man.”

Questions - How does our inward participation with such things defile us? How can we increase awareness of our thoughts and better guide them toward good?

Matthew 15:19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

Matthew 9:4 But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, “Why do you think evil in your hearts?

Question - If we know we think evil in our hearts, why wouldn't we correct them?

Psalms 140:2 Who plan evil things in their hearts; They continually gather together for war.

Questions - How can we plan new good things? How can we think and talk more about God's good?

Hebrews 3:12 Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God;

Questions - What might an unbelieving heart be like? What might it think about?

2 Chronicles 12:14 And he did evil, because he did not prepare his heart to seek the Lord.

Questions - How are we preparing our hearts to seek the lord? After we prepare our heart to seek the lord, do we seek good or evil? How so?

2 Chronicles 25:2 And he did *what was* right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a **loyal** heart.

Questions - What is a loyal heart? If we do what is right without our hearts upon it, would that be a heartless act? How so or why not?

Good work inwardly

Philippians 1:6 being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a **good** work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ;

Question - What is an inward good work or “good work in you?”

Philippians 2:13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* **good** pleasure.

Questions - How might God work within us? Is our cooperation or obedience needed? What happens if we choose to ignore doing good or right?

2 Timothy 1:14 That **good** thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

Question - How might we keep a good by the Holy Spirit within us? How do we sense the Holy Spirit?

1 Peter 4:10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as **good** stewards of the manifold grace of God.

Question - What might a good steward of grace be like in thoughts, attitudes, words, choices, and behavior?

Thoughts, devise

Hebrews 5:14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Questions - Are your senses exercised to discern both good and evil? How so or why not? How is using our senses a better way to learn good and evil?

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Questions - How are your thoughts of peace? How can we add more thoughts toward peace and less toward evil?

Zechariah 8:17 Let none of you think evil in your heart against your neighbor; And do not love a false oath. For all these are things that I hate,' Says the Lord."

Questions - What is thinking evil? What's an example? Is making a commitment or promise an oath? How do false oaths impact relationships, hearts, and minds?

Luke 6:45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

Questions - How can we grow abundance of good within our hearts? How often can we think about God's good character traits and how to participate with them?

Hebrews 10:22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Questions - How can we draw near to spiritual good with a sincere heart? How much thought does it take? How is an evil conscience developed?

1 Peter 3:16-17 having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

Questions - How can good conduct cause others to 'revile?' How can we suffer for doing good?

1 Corinthians 13:5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil;

Questions - How might we think less evil? How can we not seek our own? Would our thoughts need adjustments? How so or why not?

Jeremiah 11:15 “What has My beloved to do in My house, Having done lewd deeds with many? And the holy flesh has passed from you. When you do evil, then you rejoice.

Question - What are some examples of rejoicing after doing evil? How might we be deceived to believe evil is good?

Ezekiel 38:10 ‘Thus says the Lord God: “On that day it shall come to pass that thoughts will arise in your mind, and you will make an evil plan:

Questions - How can we notice thoughts that arise in our minds to make evil plans? Can we intervene on them, submit them to God, and pray for guidance?

Hosea 7:15 Though I disciplined and strengthened their arms, Yet they devise evil against Me;

Proverbs 14:22 Do they not go astray who devise evil? But mercy and truth belong to those who devise good.

Micah 2:1 Woe to those who devise iniquity, And work out evil on their beds! At morning light they practice it, Because it is in the power of their hand.

Questions - Can we find evil thoughts if we aren’t looking for them? How so or why not? What is the process of devising iniquity?

Proverbs 11:27 He who earnestly seeks good finds favor, But trouble will come to him who seeks evil.

Proverbs 13:19 A desire accomplished is sweet to the soul, But it is an abomination to fools to depart from evil.

Question - How can we depart from evil in our choices or thoughts? Can we depart from evil if we don’t know how? How so or why not?

Proverbs 15:28 The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, But the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil.

Proverbs 16:27 An ungodly man digs up evil, And it is on his lips like a burning fire.

Questions - Do we listen to what we say and think how it might affect others? How so or why not? Are we paying attention to the condition of our hearts before we speak? How so or why not?

Following dictates of the heart over God's ways is evil

Jeremiah 11:8 Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but everyone followed the dictates of his evil heart; therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do, but which they have not done.

Questions - How can we incline our ear more with God's good? How can we set aside the dictates of our evil thoughts and obey God better?

Jeremiah 13:10 This evil people, who refuse to hear My words, who follow the dictates of their hearts, and walk after other gods to serve them and worship them, shall be just like this sash which is profitable for nothing.

Questions - How are we hearing God's words? How might we hear God's words better? What are some ways to learn the dictates of our hearts?

Jeremiah 16:12 And you have done worse than your fathers, for behold, each one follows the dictates of his own evil heart, so that no one listens to Me.

Questions - What is the cause of no one listening? If everyone around us follows after evil, how might that affect our walking in good? Are we willing to practice God's good where others do not? How so or why not?

Matthew 12:34 Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

Question - What shapes our heart? Can we change our inward attitude? How so or why not?

Pure in heart, walk uprightly, conduct, honorable

Micah 6:8 He has shown you, O man, what *is* **good**; And what does the Lord require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?

Questions - How can you love mercy or walk more humbly with God? Would that feel different? How so or why not?

Psalm 73:1 Truly God *is* **good** to Israel, To such as are pure in heart.

Questions - How might our hearts become more pure? What might that feel like? How would it affect stress, sleep, relationships, or the body?

Psalm 84:11 For the Lord God *is* a sun and shield; The Lord will give grace and glory; No **good thing** will He withhold From those who walk uprightly.

James 3:13 Who *is* wise and understanding among you? Let him show by **good** conduct *that* his works *are done* in the meekness of wisdom.

Questions - How good is your conduct? Please elaborate. How might we practice meekness? What does meekness have to do with wisdom?

1 Peter 2:12 having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by *your* **good** works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Questions - Is your conduct honorable? How so or why not? How has your good works helped others glorify God?

Isaiah 56:2 Blessed is the man who does this, And the son of man who lays hold on it; Who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, And keeps his hand from doing any evil."

Question - How can keeping our hands from doing evil help us be happy or blessed?

Repentance is good

Isaiah 7:15 Curds and honey He shall eat, that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good.

Question - Do you know to refuse evil and choose good? How so or why not?

Romans 2:4 (1-16) Or do you despise the riches of His **goodness**, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the **goodness** of God leads you to repentance?

Question - How might the goodness of God lead you to repentance? If you are lead to repentance, do you follow repentance? How so or why not?

Proverbs 24:1 Do not be envious of evil men, Nor desire to be with them;

Questions - What's an example of envying evil men? What new choices might help us feel more content with God?

Proverbs 22:3 A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself, But the simple pass on and are punished.

Proverbs 27:12 A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself; The simple pass on and are punished.

Question - How might we foresee evil? Do we need to pay attention? How so or why not?

Proverbs 28:5 Evil men do not understand justice, But those who seek the Lord understand all.

Question - Is God too complicated or are we too simple? Are you growing in understanding? How so or why not?

Jeremiah 18:8 if that nation against whom I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it.

Jeremiah 23:22 But if they had stood in My counsel, And had caused My people to hear My words, Then they would have turned them from their evil way And from the evil of their doings.

Questions - How are we turning from evil ways and doings? What's that like? Are we also growing in good? How so or why not?

Jeremiah 25:5 They said, 'Repent now everyone of his evil way and his evil doings, and dwell in the land that the Lord has given to you and your fathers forever and ever.

Jeremiah 36:3 It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the adversities which I purpose to bring upon them, that everyone may turn from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin."

Questions - Would turning from our evil ways involve thinking? How so or why not? Would we identify thoughts and redirect them elsewhere?

Jonah 3:8 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands.

Question - Which would comes first, God relenting or our turning?

Jonah 3:10 Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.

Question - Does this seem like a cause and affect relationship—turning and relenting? How so or why not?

2 Corinthians 13:7 Now I pray to God that you do no evil, not that we should appear approved, but that you should do what is honorable, though we may seem disqualified.

Questions - Are we praying not to do evil? Are we praying for strength to do what is honorable? How so or why not?

1 Peter 3:11 Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it.

Questions - If we abstain from evil, but do not pursue peace, are we doing good? How so or why not? How can we seek peace and pursue it better?

2 Kings 17:13 Yet the Lord testified against Israel and against Judah, by all of His prophets, every seer, saying, “Turn from your evil ways, and keep My commandments and My statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by My servants the prophets.”

Question - How might we better keep God’s commandments and statutes with all heart, soul, and strength—great commandment?

Psalms 37:27 Depart from evil, and do good; And dwell forevermore.

Isaiah 1:16 “Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil,

Jeremiah 18:11 “Now therefore, speak to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, ‘Thus says the Lord: “Behold, I am fashioning a disaster and devising a plan against you. Return now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good.”’”

Zechariah 1:4 “Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets preached, saying, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts: “Turn now from your evil ways and your evil deeds.”’ But they did not hear nor heed Me,” says the Lord.

Ezekiel 33:11 Say to them: ‘As I live,’ says the Lord God, ‘I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?’

Psalms 119:101 I have restrained my feet from every evil way, That I may keep Your word.

Question - How can we better restrain our feet from evil thoughts and practices? How might growing in good keep us from evil?

Perseverance is good

Galatians 6:9-10 And let us not grow weary while doing **good**, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do **good** to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Questions - What is an example of growing weary while doing good? What does it mean by “especially to those who are of the household of faith” and why is that important?

Romans 2:7 eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing **good** seek for glory, honor, and immortality;

Questions - What does he mean by those who? What about those who don't? Describe your patient continuance in doing good.

Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, **goodness**, faithfulness,

Questions - Can you describe the fruit you are producing? Are others around you tasting your joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, and faithfulness? Can you improve your fruit? How so or why not?

Psalms 52:1 Why do you boast in evil, O mighty man? The **goodness** of God *endures* continually.

Question - How might we endure more in doing good, especially when we don't feel like it?

Courage is good

2 Chronicles 19:11 ... Behave courageously, and the Lord will be with the **good**.”

Question - What Godly good courageous behavior have you experienced?

Ezra 10:4 Arise, for *this matter is your responsibility*. We also *are* with you. Be of **good** courage, and do *it*.”

Numbers 13:20 whether the land *is* rich or poor; and whether there are forests there or not. Be of **good** courage. And bring some of the fruit of the land.” Now the time was the season of the first ripe grapes.

Questions - How might being rich or poor impact our courage? What are some good thoughts to use to help us through tough times?

Deuteronomy 31:6-7 Be strong and of **good** courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the Lord your God, He *is* the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you.” Then Moses called Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, “Be strong and of **good** courage, for you must go with this people to the land which the Lord has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall cause them to inherit it.

Questions - When we face struggle, what thoughts come to us? Is there fear, worry, doubt, or hope, faith, and courage? Which do we convince ourselves to believe?

Deuteronomy 31:23 Then He inaugurated Joshua the son of Nun, and said, “Be strong and of **good** courage; for you shall bring the children of Israel into the land of which I swore to them, and I will be with you.”

Joshua 1:6 Be strong and of **good** courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.

2 Samuel 10:12 Be of **good** courage, and let us be strong for our people and for the cities of our God. And may the Lord do *what is good* in His sight.”

1 Chronicles 19:13 Be of **good** courage, and let us be strong for our people and for the cities of our God. And may the Lord do *what is good* in His sight.”

Questions - If good courage is trusting and giving ourselves over to God, then what is bad or evil courage? In what ways can we shape our thoughts more toward good courage?

1 Chronicles 28:20 And David said to his son Solomon, “Be strong and of **good** courage, and do *it*; do not fear nor be dismayed, for the Lord God—my God—*will be* with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you, until you have finished all the work for the service of the house of the Lord.

Psalms 31:24 Be of **good** courage, And He shall strengthen your heart, All you who hope in the Lord.

Question - If good courage can strengthen our heart, what might evil courage do?

Isaiah 41:6 Everyone helped his neighbor, And said to his brother, “Be of **good** courage!”

Questions - Are we helping others? How so or why not?

Joshua 1:8-9 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have **good** success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of **good** courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God *is* with you wherever you go.”

Questions - Is it good courage to meditate on God’s law day and night and do what it says? How so or why not?

Joshua 1:18 Whoever rebels against your command and does not heed your words, in all that you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and of **good** courage.”

Joshua 10:25 Then Joshua said to them, “Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed; be strong and of **good** courage, for thus the Lord will do to all your enemies against whom you fight.”

1 Chronicles 22:13 Then you will prosper, if you take care to fulfill the statutes and judgments with which the Lord charged Moses concerning Israel. Be strong and of **good** courage; do not fear nor be dismayed.

Questions - Can we take care to fulfill the statutes and judgments? How so or why not?

Psalm 27:13-14 *I would have lost heart*, unless I had believed That I would see the **goodness** of the Lord In the land of the living. Wait on the Lord; Be of **good** courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the Lord!

Question - Are we waiting on the Lord? How so or why not?

Suffering with good

1 Peter 2:20 For what credit *is it* if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do **good** and suffer, if you take it patiently, this *is* commendable before God.

Questions - What is an example of doing good with suffering? How might we suffer for doing God's good and remain patient?

1 Timothy 6:12-13 Fight the **good** fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the **good** confession in the presence of many witnesses. I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and *before* Christ Jesus who witnessed the **good** confession before Pontius Pilate,

Questions - What is the good fight of faith? How do we lay hold on eternal life and in what ways are we seeking it?

2 Timothy 4:7 I have fought the **good** fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

Questions - What might be an example of fighting the good fight? What is meant by, "I have kept the faith?" How are we seeking such faith and keeping it?

2 Samuel 16:12 It may be that the Lord will look on my affliction, and that the Lord will repay me with **good** for his cursing this day."

2 Timothy 2:3 You therefore must endure hardship as a **good** soldier of Jesus Christ.

Question - How are we enduring hardship as good soldiers?

Jesus says in Luke 6:33 And if you do **good** to those who do **good** to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.

Questions - Is our doing good too easy? Could we struggle more with the good that we do? How so or why not?

Good to Give Thanks to God

Psalm 92:1 *It is **good** to give thanks to the Lord, And to sing praises to Your name, O Most High;*

Questions - What is meant by the saying “to Your name?” (Read a few more verses in Psalm 92 paying attention to what it says to do. Think about verse 4.) Has God’s work in us made us joyful? How so or why not?

Psalm 106:1 Praise the Lord! Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for *He is **good**!* For His mercy *endures* forever. (Read through to verse 8)

Question - What might this imply about us, God, and how to cooperate with God?

Psalm 107:1 Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for *He is **good**!* For His mercy *endures* forever.

Psalm 107:8-9 Oh, that *men* would give thanks to the Lord *for* His **goodness**, And *for* His wonderful works to the children of men! For He satisfies the longing soul, And fills the hungry soul with **goodness**.

For context read all of Psalm 107 and take in verses 6-9.

Questions - How has God satisfied your soul? How has your hunger been fed by God’s good? In what ways are you choosing to give yourself to do God’s good? Does doing God’s good feed us? How so or why not?

Psalm 118:1 Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for *He is **good**!* For His mercy *endures* forever.

Psalm 147:1 Praise the Lord! For *it is* **good** to sing praises to our God; For *it is* pleasant, *and* praise is beautiful.

Questions - Is joy something we are to pretend we have when we do not feel it? Are thanks and praises to result because of a certain time of day or week? How so or why not?

1 Timothy 4:4 For every creature of God *is* **good**, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving;

Questions - What is an attitude of thanksgiving? What thoughts can help bring it about? Are we to be thankful with good or evil? What if we are bitter, fearful, worried, or grieving? Is it ever okay not to be thankful? How so or why not?

Good News

Righteousness - Psalm 40:9 I have proclaimed the **good** news of righteousness In the great assembly; Indeed, I do not restrain my lips, O Lord, You Yourself know.

Question - What is one way we can “proclaimed the **good** news of righteousness?”

Isaiah 52:7 How beautiful upon the mountains Are the feet of him who brings **good** news, Who proclaims peace, Who brings glad tidings of **good things**, Who proclaims salvation, Who says to Zion, “Your God reigns!”

Question - What is one way we can proclaim peace?

Nahum 1:15 Behold, on the mountains The feet of him who brings **good** tidings, Who proclaims peace! O Judah, keep your appointed feasts, Perform your vows. For the wicked one shall no more pass through you; He is utterly cut off.

Questions - How might we bring good tidings? How are good tidings peaceful? How being with peace cut off the wicked?

Romans 10:15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of **good** things!”

Questions - What is spiritual peace? What does peace feel like? What might it look or sound like?

Faith & Love - 1 Thessalonians 3:6 But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and brought us **good** news of your faith and love, and that you always have **good** remembrance of us, greatly desiring to see us, as we also *to see you*—

Questions - How might the good news of faith and love be brought? How can we recognize faith and love with news?

Faith is good

Acts 11:24 For he was a **good** man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.

Questions - What is a good man? What sort of character might a good man have? How can we discern a persons faith?

Psalms 37:3 Trust in the Lord, and do **good**; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.

Questions - How might doing good feed us?

Psalms 73:28 But *it is* **good** for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, That I may declare all Your works.

Questions - How might we ‘draw near to God?’ How might we ‘declare’ God’s works? Which teaches more, our words or actions?

Misc.

Genesis 2:18 And the Lord God said, “*It is not* **good** that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.”

Questions - How much time do we spend alone? How can we genuinely and sincerely let other people know us and for us to know other people?

Zechariah 7:10 Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, The alien or the poor. Let none of you plan evil in his heart Against his brother.'

Questions - What might oppression be like in a school, work place, church, or home? What does the verse mean by 'brother?'

Acts 15:28 For it seemed **good** to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things:

Titus 2:10 not pilfering, but showing all **good** fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.

Question - How might we choose to be more loyal to God's ways in our agendas, interests, and goals?

1 Timothy 1:8 But we know that the law *is* **good** if one uses it lawfully,

Question - What might be some examples of good used lawfully and unlawfully?

1 Timothy 3:1-2 This *is* a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a **good** work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of **good** behavior, hospitable, able to teach;

Questions - What might being blameless be like? How might we describe character and behavior that is blameless? What might sober-minded be like? Can you define good hospitality? How might you describe someone who is able to teach God's good? Would they need experiential knowledge? How so or why not?

1 Timothy 5:10 well reported for **good** works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every **good** work.

Question - How might we improve our own following of every good work?

1 Timothy 6:18-19 *Let them* do **good**, that they be rich in **good** works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a **good** foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

Question - Describe the conduct, thoughts, and attitudes that would help someone be “rich in good works?”

Titus 2:7 in all things showing yourself *to be* a pattern of **good** works; in doctrine *showing* integrity, reverence, incorruptibility,

Questions - How might we better show ourselves with incorruptibility? What might integrity and reverence be like in our mind, heart, choices, and character? What actions and thoughts might we have?

Taking New Action

How do we gauge our spiritual condition? Do we look around at others and then compare ourselves to what we see in them? Do we look at the best of people over history and see how we can do likewise? Do we already have a belief that limits us from being better than that belief? How well have we tested our beliefs? Do we know what it is like to apply ourselves with every ounce of our capability to do God’s good? Have we ever pushed ourselves to the limit to better learn what our limit is? How so or why not?

Each of us will inwardly decide for ourselves our spiritual choices, goals, and actions. Goals are tremendously important. How we use them, if we use them, is also important. It’s not wise to set a goal and then forget about it. Goals are the beginning. Then we set achievable steps to reach the goals. This requires some self-discipline because taking action to reach the goals will often involve some sacrifice of other desires or wants.

This too with the development of Biblical good and decreasing evil. We must be willing to set aside contrary beliefs that block us and take new action with God’s good.

What wants and desires based upon evil are we willing to sacrifice growing in God’s good? Growing good will involve responding less with evil. It

means we will be thinking different. We will be taking new different action. We will be producing different fruit. Being different is the goal.

2 Corinthians 7:10 For godly sorrow produces repentance *leading* to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.

Repentance is a very important part of growing with God. We ought to ensure we practice it.

Good & Evil Quick Reference

Good

1. Truth, No partiality, Heeding the word
2. Humble, Serving, Contrite,
3. Seeking good, Knowing good, Abhor evil, Repentance
4. Peace, Love, Compassion, Mercy
5. Charitable deeds, Lending
6. Zeal, Perseverance, Labor
7. Forgiveness, Caring for enemies, Not to burden
8. Generosity, Sharing, Giving
9. Building sincere love with others

Evil

1. Deceit, False lips, Flattery, Hypocrisy
2. Pride, Arrogance, Vanity
3. Seeking evil, Thinking evil, Avoiding good, Covet, Envy, Rebellion, Ungodliness
4. Malice, Clamor, Bitterness, Wrath, Anger,
5. Not giving or helping others
6. Seeking comforts, Sloth, Avoiding struggle
7. Holding grudges, Vengeful thinking, Paybacks, Doing evil, Creating harm
8. Love of money, Debt, Oppressing
9. Withdrawing from others, keeping people

Malice - desiring ill will or misfortune of others

Clamor - making lots of noise to agitate

Hypocrisy (hypokrisis) - playacting,
“any person who was wearing a figurative mask and pretending to be someone or something they were not”

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/hypocrite-meaning-origin>

Romans 12:9 NKJV “Behave Like a Christian
Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.”

Daily Process

Ponder God's character traits, how to practice and serve them, for they are Good.

Humble ourselves away from self-seeking, pride, vanity, idolatry, or other ungodly distractions.

Meditate upon the feelings and sensations of our doing Good and evil.
Inwardly cling to the Good.

Pray for strength, courage, and direction to do Good.

Identify struggles with evil, confess and discuss them, have mercy, and walk in forgiveness. Psalm 34:14

Slow down, take it easy, practice patience, walk peacefully.

Look for opportunities to do God's good today. Be spiritually ready, observant, and discerning.

Take comfort in the Good experienced, find the joy in it, and feel the affects of God's Good.

Empathetically and sincerely; compliment, comfort, encourage, and support others with love and truth. Let conviction happen when necessary.

Progress, not perfection. Improve awareness of progress. Tally up the good each day. Identify errors to better learn how to make improvements.

Teach by example, demonstration, and shared personal experiences. Be ready to describe own progress with real life examples.