



The Faith Messenger

Connect

www.yourfaithcommunity.com

<https://facebook.com/yourfaithcommunity/>

2330 Hickory Valley Road,
Chattanooga, Tennessee 37421

(423) 551-8633

Sundays

with Our Savior

Worship Service: 11am

Sunday School: 10am

Issue Focus:

The Fruit of the Spirit:

Goodness

Volume 3, Issue 2

Summer 2025



Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due.” — Proverbs 3:27

We live in a world where “goodness” is often mistaken for politeness or passive kindness. But the Goodness listed in Galatians 5:22-23—the Fruit of the Spirit—is something far more costly. It is moral excellence birthed not by human effort, but by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

The Faith Messenger 2025 Summer edition continues our journey exploring the Fruit of the Spirit. In this issue, we’ll take a deep dive into the Fruit of the Spirit: Goodness.

This newsletter invites us to examine this deeper kind of goodness—not as a behavior to perform, but as a holy outflow of a life fully surrendered to Christ.

Just as a healthy tree cannot help but bear fruit, a Spirit-filled believer cannot help but reveal goodness—not the world’s version, but God’s.

This is not about being “nice.” This is about being transformed. It’s about becoming so yielded to the Spirit that goodness becomes not something we do, but something we are.

And that—like holiness itself—comes at a cost. Because true goodness will always stand apart from the world. It will confront injustice. It will walk in integrity when no one sees. It will bear witness to Christ... even when it costs everything.

Goodness is:

- Moral excellence born of the Spirit
- A life surrendered to holiness
- Visible evidence of invisible grace



In Christ. By Christ. For Christ.



“For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with goodness...”

What Does Goodness Mean?

The Original Language

The Greek word used here is ἀγαθωσύνη (agathōsýnē).

It appears only four times in the entire New Testament: (Galatians 5:22; Romans 15:14; Ephesians 5:9; 2 Thessalonians 1:11).

Unlike the more common word for kindness (chrēstotēs), agathōsýnē doesn't simply mean being nice or helpful. Instead, it refers to:

- moral excellence,
- righteousness in action,
- uprightness of heart and life.

It's a goodness that is strong, not soft—courageous in doing what is right, even when it's costly.

To walk in agathōsýnē—the Spirit-born goodness of Galatians 5—is to accept the weight of holy courage. It isn't niceness or moral performance. It's a surrender so complete that goodness flows from the Spirit, not from striving.

True goodness will cost you. It may isolate you. It may call you to speak truth when silence is safer. But it is in this very cost that goodness becomes powerful. Not a performance to impress, but a life surrendered to express the character of Christ.

This goodness doesn't come from us. It comes from Him—through us—no matter the price.



Goodness is Not:

- Being a “good person” by worldly standards.
- Acts done to “earn points” with God.
- Mere friendliness, politeness, or philanthropy.

Goodness is:

- A fruit of the Spirit—meaning it's not produced by effort, but by abiding (John 15:4).
- The evidence of a surrendered life (Galatians 2:20).
- Moral integrity shaped by God's holiness, not by human will.
- The courage to stand for what's right, when the world applauds compromise.

**In Acts 11:24, Barnabas is described this way:
 “He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith.”
 This confirms goodness isn't self-produced.
 It is the natural result of being filled with God's Spirit.**



“Goodness is not mere behavior—it is the holy echo of a heart surrendered to God.”

Biblical Examples of Moral Excellence (Goodness)

Joseph

Scripture Reference:
Genesis 39–50

Summary:
Despite betrayal, false accusation, and imprisonment, Joseph remained morally upright. He refused to compromise in Potiphar’s house, and later showed forgiveness to his brothers—demonstrating goodness rooted in trust and obedience to God.

Key Verses: Genesis 39:9; Genesis 50:20; Psalm 105:19

Daniel

Scripture Reference:
Daniel 1–6

Summary:
Daniel maintained uncompromising integrity in a hostile culture. His goodness was not about popularity or safety, but about allegiance to God’s holiness—seen in both his diet choices and refusal to stop praying, even under threat of death.

Key Verses: Daniel 1:8; Daniel 6:10; Daniel 6:23

Nehemiah

Scripture Reference: Nehemiah 1–6

Summary:
Nehemiah displayed moral courage and righteous leadership while facing opposition during Jerusalem’s wall rebuild. He rejected corruption, led with prayer and integrity, and upheld God’s standards in all decisions. He remained uncompromised in character.

Key Verses:
Nehemiah 1:4; Nehemiah 6:9; Nehemiah 5:15

Key Lessons from Their Goodness

Joseph. Daniel. Nehemiah.
Three men. Three stories.
One Spirit.

Goodness

Requires Conviction

Each of them chose to honor God when it would’ve been easier to conform. Goodness begins not with comfort, but with conviction.

Goodness

Resists Corruption

Whether in a palace, prison, or public office, these men refused to bend to dishonesty or moral decay. Their integrity was Spirit-kept.

Goodness

Endures Opposition

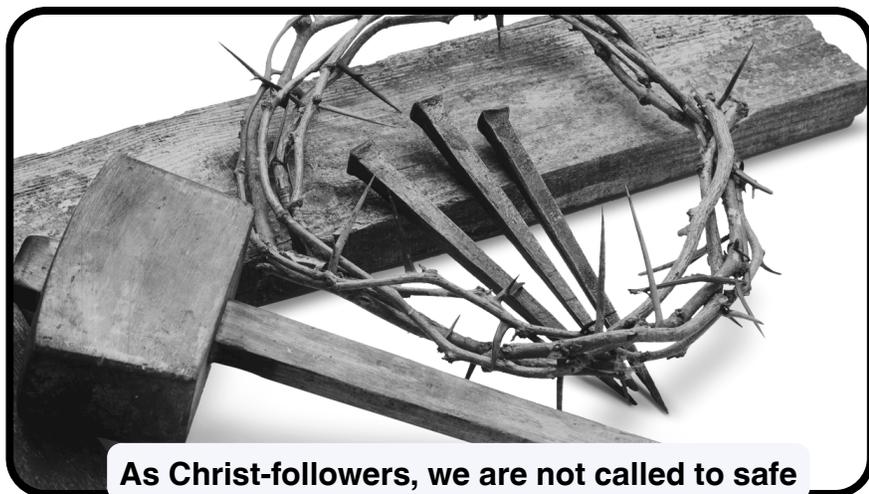
Their moral excellence did not exempt them from betrayal, threats, or hardship. But it did anchor them with courage and peace.

Goodness Points to God

Their lives bore witness—not to their own strength—but to God’s power at work through surrendered hearts. They lived holy because they were wholly His.



In Christ. By Christ. For Christ.



As Christ-followers, we are not called to safe lives. We are called to sanctified lives.

“Empowered to Be Good: The Cost of Spirit-Filled Discipleship”

When the Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost, the disciples weren't merely comforted—they were commissioned. The outpouring of power wasn't for personal edification. It was for public witness, holy courage, and moral clarity.

Before Pentecost, Peter denied Jesus. After Pentecost, he declared Him boldly. Goodness flowed not from grit—but from grace. This is the Fruit of the Spirit at work: not niceness, but moral excellence fueled by surrender (Gal. 5:22–23).

But empowerment came with cost. After preaching in power, the apostles were arrested, flogged, and forbidden to speak (Acts 5:40–41). Their response? “They rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name.”

The same Spirit who fills us is the one who sustains us. Goodness is not self-generated. It is a visible sign of invisible transformation.

To walk in goodness is to stand in the fire without bowing. To love truth more than popularity. To yield entirely, not selectively.

Pentecost wasn't the end of fear. It was the birth of fearless witness. “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses...” Acts 1:8



What it Cost Them

Peter – Crucified Upside Down

After decades of faithful ministry, Peter was arrested under Emperor Nero. According to early church tradition, Peter requested to be crucified upside down, feeling unworthy to die in the same manner as his Lord. His goodness—his moral courage and unshakable loyalty—cost him his life, but his witness still speaks.

Stephen – The First Martyr

Stephen, full of grace and power (Acts 6:8), boldly proclaimed Jesus as Messiah before the Sanhedrin. His Spirit-filled courage and uncompromising truth-telling enraged the crowd, and he was stoned to death. As he died, he echoed Christ's mercy: “Lord, do not hold this sin against them” (Acts 7:60).

John – Exiled to Patmos

Unlike the other apostles, John is believed to have died a natural death—but not without suffering. After enduring arrest and possible torture, he was exiled to the island of Patmos by Roman authorities. There, cut off from society, he received the Revelation of Jesus Christ and remained faithful in worship and witness, even in isolation.

“Goodness empowered by the Spirit may not always be applauded, but it will always bear eternal fruit.”





In Christ. By Christ. For Christ.



“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.” - Matthew 25:40

The Inconvenience of Doing Good

My day was planned. Groceries, errands, a fast-food reward, and a long-awaited lake swim. But God had a different idea—one that would confront both my comfort and my conscience.

Outside the restaurant, a grizzled man with a cardboard sign caught my eye. I looked away. I prayed the classic cop-out prayer: “God, please help him... just not through me.”

But halfway home, the Spirit’s voice pressed gently but firmly: “Why not you?”

I turned around—grumbling. When I arrived, he was gone. Whew. Or so I thought.

Then I saw him storm out, angry and muttering, “Nobody cares... not even for a kid.”

That’s when I saw the child. Turns out, he wasn’t begging for himself. He was pleading for his two neglected nephews.

These children had addicted parents. An empty refrigerator. Hopeless hearts. And suddenly, I knew this was my divine appointment.

I bought food. I drove them home. I listened. We prayed. He told me later, through tears and profanity-laced honesty, “I was about to give up on people... and on God. But He sent you. Thank you.”

I wept. For my initial selfishness. For the brokenness in front of me. For the miracle I almost missed.

Goodness doesn’t always feel good. Sometimes it interrupts, inconveniences, and asks more of us than we want to give. But it is always worth it.

Because real goodness doesn’t come from us. It flows through us—from a God who never turns away.



Quotes on Goodness

John Wesley

“Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can... as long as ever you can.”

C.S. Lewis

“Don’t shine so others can see you. Shine so that through you, others can see Him.”

Amy Carmichael

“You can always give without loving, but you can never love without giving.”

William Booth (Founder, Salvation Army)

“Faith and works should travel side by side, step answering to step, like the legs of men walking. First faith, and then works; and then faith again, and then works again—until they can scarcely distinguish which is the one and which is the other.”

Corrie ten Boom

“The measure of life is not its duration, but its donation.”





In Christ. By Christ. For Christ.



“And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.”

—Matthew 5:41

The Second Mile: Goodness in Motion

Matthew 5:41 and the Moral Excellence of Going Beyond

The Context: A Radical Teaching

When Jesus stood on the mountainside and delivered His famous sermon, He wasn't speaking into a vacuum.

He was speaking into oppression. Roman soldiers had legal authority to force Jewish civilians to carry their burdens—a heavy pack, a tool, or a weapon—for up to one mile. This was not voluntary service; it was forced compliance, and it was humiliating.

And yet, Jesus said: “Go two.” Go further. Do more than is required. Not out of duty, but out of devotion. To others. To God,

The Meaning: Goodness That Costs

This is *agathōsýnē* in motion—goodness that costs something. It is more than kindness. It is more than niceness. It is goodness forged in the fire of surrender and expressed through moral excellence.

The first mile is obedience. The second mile is grace. It's showing up early and staying late. It's forgiving again when the offense still stings. It's walking beside someone when it's inconvenient, costly, or emotionally heavy.

And it is there—beyond the boundary of “enough”—that the Holy Spirit's Fruit shines brightest.



The Application: Where Is Your Second Mile?

Your second mile may not look like someone else's. For some, it's caregiving. For others, it's making peace, staying committed, or showing integrity when compromise would be easier. The second mile is: The text you send after the silence. The meal you deliver without applause. The servant posture when the flesh wants to be noticed. We are not called to comfort. We are called to Christ. And Christ always walks further than the world expects.

Second Mile People in Scripture

Rebekah

(Genesis 24:18–20)

She didn't just give water to a stranger—she watered all ten of his camels.

The Good Samaritan

(Luke 10:33–35)

He didn't just offer a bandage—he gave transportation, funding, and a promise to return.

The Model: Jesus, the Ultimate Second Miler

No one walked further than Christ. He carried more than a soldier's pack. He carried our shame, our sin, our story.

He didn't just go to the edge of requirement—He went to the hill of sacrifice, bearing a cross He didn't deserve, for people who hadn't earned it.

We do not walk the second mile alone. We follow in the footsteps of the One who has already walked it for us. And because of Him, we can walk it for others.



In Christ. By Christ. For Christ.



When we love the unlovable, forgive the offender, and give without applause, we are simply echoing the grace we've already received.

Rooted to Bear Fruit: Why Good Works Are the Evidence, Not the Entry Ticket

We don't do good to get to God. We do good because God got to us.

There is a dangerous distortion, both subtle and widespread, that teaches: If I do enough good, I will earn my place with God.

But the gospel says the opposite. Salvation is not achieved by merit—it is received by mercy.

"He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy."
(Titus 3:5)

The Christian life begins at the cross. We are rescued by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone (Ephesians 2:8-9). We can't climb our way up to God with charity, kindness, or religious rituals.



But once we are redeemed, the Spirit begins a holy renovation within, and that's when goodness flows.

"We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works..."
- Ephesians 2:10

Think of it like fruit on a tree. A healthy root system doesn't try to bear fruit—it just does. A person rooted in Christ will reflect His goodness because they are now alive in Him. It's never forced.

Good works are not our way in—they're our way forward. They are the visible evidence of an inward resurrection.

God never meant for "doing good" to be a performance. He meant it to be a response. A daily, Spirit-filled, grace-powered expression of a life made new.

What the Greats Said About Works and Grace

Martin Luther: "Faith alone saves, but saving faith is never alone."

D.A. Carson: "It is grace at the beginning and grace at the end... Grace is the only thing that makes us holy."

John Wesley: "We cannot do good works to be saved, but being saved we must do good works."

John Calvin: "We are justified by faith alone, but not by a faith that is alone."

Leonard Ravenhill: "A man is not saved by works, but a saved man works."

Charles Spurgeon: "The fruit of a tree proves the root is alive."

Supporting Scriptures

Ephesians 2:8-9: "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

Titus 3:5: "He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy."

James 2:17:
"In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."



In Christ. By Christ. For Christ.



Amy Carmichael: A Life of Goodness Poured Out

Key Facts:

Born: December 16, 1867

Died: January 18, 1951

Mission Field: Dohnavur, India

Legacy: Rescuer of over 1,000 girls from temple slavery

Amy Carmichael never sought applause. She simply sought obedience.

Born in Northern Ireland in 1867, she was the eldest of seven children and grew up in a devout Presbyterian home. Her early years were marked by a deep hunger for God and a keen sensitivity to the suffering of others. As a young woman, Amy began serving impoverished factory girls in Belfast, known as “shawlies” for their simple head coverings. But a greater call would soon arise.

In 1895, after a short missionary stint in Japan, Amy arrived in India—where she would remain for the rest of her life.

What she found broke her heart: the systemic exploitation of young girls who were forced into temple prostitution under the guise of religious ritual. These children were considered untouchable, unseen, and unsavable by many.

Amy refused to look away. Defying cultural norms, legal threats, disease, and the scorching heat of South India, she began to rescue these children—one by one.

She founded the Dohnavur Fellowship, a sanctuary that would become home to more than a thousand children over the decades. She dressed in Indian clothing, dyed her skin with coffee to better relate to the locals, and rejected the colonial missionary mindset of superiority.

Her love was incarnational, unflinching, and Spirit-led. But her greatest acts of goodness happened in obscurity.

Amy Carmichael Quotes

- “There is nothing worth living for, unless it is worth dying for.”
- “If I covet any place but the dust at the foot of the cross, then I know nothing of Calvary love.”
- “You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving.”



After a serious fall in 1931, Amy was largely bedridden for the final two decades of her life. Yet she continued to write, producing over 35 books—devotionals, biographies, and letters—that strengthened the global church and challenged superficial faith.

Her suffering never silenced her compassion.

Amy once prayed, “God, make me holy at any cost.” And He did.

She died in 1951 at the age of 83, having never taken a furlough in over 55 years of ministry. Her grave bears no name—only a single word in Tamil: “Ammal,” meaning mother.



**Biblical goodness is not about being agreeable.
It's about being aligned with God.**

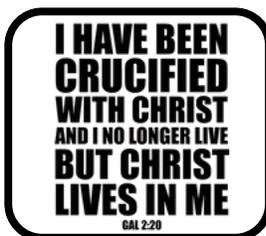
Goodness is not Always Nice: Goodness & Spiritual Discernment

We often associate “goodness” with kindness, politeness, or being well-liked. But the biblical concept of *agathōsýnē* is not a surface-level niceness.

It is moral excellence fused with divine purpose.

It is goodness with grit. It is the Fruit of the Spirit that dares to confront darkness—not out of arrogance, but out of love rooted in truth.

- Nice avoids conflict.
- Goodness confronts sin.
- Nice craves approval.
- Goodness obeys God.
- Nice smooths things over.
- Goodness restores what is broken.



When Jesus overturned tables in the temple (Matthew 21:12–13), it wasn't nice. But it was good.

When Paul confronted Peter to his face for hypocrisy (Galatians 2:11–14), it wasn't diplomatic. But it was good.

True goodness, the Fruit of the Spirit, doesn't wink at injustice or silence truth to preserve comfort.

- It speaks life, but also draws lines.
- It feeds the hungry and also disciplines the soul.
- It forgives, but does not enable harm.

In a world confused by counterfeit kindness, may the Church rise in *agathōsýnē*—goodness born from God's nature and guided by His Spirit.

Not sentiment. Not softness. But holy strength that tells the truth in love and obeys God even when misunderstood.

Theological Snapshot Goodness vs. Niceness

Biblical goodness (*agathōsýnē*) is not about temperament—it's about truth.

Niceness prioritizes social harmony; goodness prioritizes God's holiness.

Jesus never told us to be “nice.” He told us to love our enemies, bless those who curse us, and speak truth without shame. He modeled compassion with courage, tenderness with boldness.

True goodness may look confrontational when it protects the vulnerable or draws a line against evil. It may look like silence when it refuses to gossip. It may look like heartbreak when it speaks truth that costs relationships.

Goodness is Spirit-led moral clarity in action.

**“Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.”
- Ephesians 5:11**

Goodness drives out evil.





In Christ. By Christ. For Christ.

Hymns Focused on Goodness



So we sing... not just to praise, but to be made more like Him.

“Make Me a Blessing”

Author: Ira B. Wilson

Date: 1909

Historical Context: Written during the early 20th-century evangelistic movement, this hymn emerged from a desire to turn private faith into public good. It reflects the heart of Galatians 5:22—that goodness is outward-facing and sacrificial.

Background: The lyrics ask the Lord to use the singer to serve others. The refrain, “Make me a blessing,” is a plea to become a vessel of God’s goodness to a hurting world—by action, not just intention.

“Have Thine Own Way, Lord”

Author: Adelaide A. Pollard

Date: 1902

Historical Context: Penned during a season of personal disappointment, Pollard’s hymn expresses a deep desire for spiritual refinement. Though it emphasizes surrender, it naturally leads to action—a yielded life becomes a useful life.

Background: This hymn highlights the spiritual shaping required to live in goodness. Its metaphor of the Potter and clay echoes the need for God to mold His people into vessels of divine excellence and service.

“Channels Only”

Author: Mary E. Maxwell

Date: 1900

Historical Context: This hymn emphasizes surrender to Christ so that His Spirit flows through the believer. It reflects the theological truth that our goodness is not self-generated but Spirit-empowered.

Background: Mary Maxwell’s text is a prayer of consecration—an appeal to be a clean, usable instrument through which Christ can show love, truth, mercy, and goodness to others. It’s especially relevant for Galatians 5—inspired discipleship.

Why Hymns Matter: Music as Moral Formation

The hymns we sing shape the lives we live.

Sacred music is more than melody, it is memory, theology, and discipleship.

Hymns have long been used by the Church not only to worship, but to form the soul. They teach us how to think rightly about God, how to respond faithfully to hardship, and how to live with moral clarity in a world of shifting values.

When we sing words like “I would be true, for there are those who trust me,” or “Make me a blessing to someone today,” we are rehearsing goodness. These lyrics become internalized, slowly aligning our hearts with Christ’s.

Good hymns don’t just stir the emotions—they train the human will. They remind us that goodness is not a passive virtue, but a holy calling.

Just as Scripture calls us to let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly—through “psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs” (Colossians 3:16), these beloved texts help deposit truth deep into our spirit. They guide our walk and sharpen our conscience.

Over time, they do what only Spirit-infused music can do: transform us from the inside out.





Prayers to Walk in the Goodness of Christ



Lord, Make me a person of agathōsýnē—the kind of goodness that runs deeper than politeness.

Root my life in a goodness that chooses righteousness over reputation, and truth over convenience.

Let my words bring light, not flattery. Let my actions carry weight, not just warmth.

Keep me from settling for surface-level kindness when You are calling me to holy courage.

Give me the strength to speak what is right even when it costs me, and the humility to serve when no one sees.

Teach me that true goodness is not weakness—it is Spirit-empowered obedience.

In the name of the One who went the second mile for all of us who call You Lord, Jesus, Almighty God, King of the Universe. Amen.

Father God, make me interruptible. Give me a goodness that doesn't wait for convenience but walks toward need—even when it costs.

Soften me where I've grown callous. Wake me up from my comfort. When I hesitate to do good for others, whisper again to my heart: "Why not you?" Teach me to discern what's holy over what's merely polite. Let my love have truth. Let my kindness have courage. Help me to say yes when it costs, and no, when it's wise to do so.

I don't want to appear good—I want to be good, by Your Spirit. And Lord, remind me again: My good works doesn't save me eternally. They are simply my response to being saved; an action of gratitude. I serve because I've been forgiven by You. I give because You first gave. I love because You loved me to the end.

So may my obedience be joyful, my service be sincere, and my goodness be real— not for applause, but for Your glory alone. Amen.



Let's Pray



In Christ. By Christ. For Christ. Our Faith.



CHECK OUT OUR DIGITAL PRESENCE



Faith Community Wesleyan Church-Chattanooga has a website and Facebook page to better serve our congregation and connect with our community. Learn more about what we believe, who we are, and our faith pillars to focus on Jesus.

Use your smartphone camera to scan this QR Code for fast access to our website. Just hover over this and click onto the link that will pop up.



Visit: www.yourfaithcommunity.com to discover a wealth of resources tailored to enrich your spiritual life. We regularly add new content including inspiring videos.

Our website features digital content that offer practical guidance for living out our tagline: **"Christ Our Faith. Christ Our Hope. Christ Our Life."** Join us as we build a vibrant faith community, both online and in person. We also expanded our online community through Facebook at: <https://facebook.com/yourfaithcommunity/>

Together in Faith, we are here to serve with love and grow in grace. Welcome to our digital home!

Goodness Scriptures

- **Psalm 37:3:** "Trust in the Lord, and do good; dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness."
- **Proverbs 3:27:** "Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in the power of your hand to do so."
- **Matthew 5:16:** "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."
- **2 Corinthians 9:8:** "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work."



Pastors Alex & Katie



August 2025



Rev. Ashley

Rev. Phillip

We Praise God for Sundays

Worship Service: 11am Eastern
Sunday School: 10am Eastern
www.yourfaithcommunity.com



Our Team

- Interim Pastor: Rev. Ashley Mew
- Associate Pastor: Rev. Phillip Bartlett
- Worship Leader: Beth Pickering
- Vice Chair: Eddie Galyon, Jr.
- Ushers: Greg Holland & Donald Glen
- Prayer Chain: Charlotte Brumley
- Communications: Someone Who Loves Jesus