

The New Testament Church
The Righteous will Shine #9 – Goodness
December 1, 2024 - Pastor Paul Jehle
Matthew 16:24-26; 2nd Peter 1:5-7

I The Righteous will Shine

- A. God strategically places us as a seed of the Kingdom where we will influence others
 - 1. Christian character outlasts and transcends politics, laws, wars and economics, etc.
 - 2. Wheat will outlast the tares (evil defeats itself) – our focus is Christ and His Character
- B. How will the character of Christ be carved into our lives and shine to others?
 - 1. Joy is a contentment and confidence in the midst of depression and anxiety
 - 2. Peace is knowing “you have enough” when you have God – Jesus in your boat!
 - 3. Self-control is “strongly mastering curbing and restraining oneself”
 - 4. Longsuffering – “a disposition to bear injuries patiently” – forbearance
 - 5. Faithfulness – “trust in the faithfulness of Christ to His Father” – fidelity
 - 6. Kindness – “goodwill and benevolence promoting another’s blessing”

II Goodness – from *agathos* – “goodness, virtue... uprightness of heart and life”

- A. The Fruit of the Spirit – Christ’s character was a picture of God’s moral integrity
 - 1. The Greek word is expanded to mean “*being good in its character of constitution*”
 - a. Used of physical things (trees, ground) and moral (people) – only God is totally Good
 - b. It is close to kindness but with a deeper root of what is holy – pleasing to God - virtue
 - 2. True goodness or moral virtue – *the moral qualities which constitute Christian excellence, moral virtue; religion* (here a system of expected attitudes/conduct)
 - a. Virtue – *strength* (of character)... *moral goodness... voluntary obedience to truth*
 - b. Excellence – *purity of heart, uprightness of mind, sincerity... excellencies of character*
 - c. **Virtue is an attitude of reverence and respect for the things of God (holiness)**
 - 3. The “works of the flesh” opposite of virtue are rooted in *an identity solely in oneself*
 - a. Selfish – “zeos” – from “zeo – heat” – *the ambition to find and promote self alone*
 - b. Today’s “self” now means “to find and pursue being true to oneself”
 - 1. Quote Trueman’s *Strange New World*, pgs. 12-13, 21
 - 2. Western civilization once understood the need to curb “self” – not anymore
 - 4. How do we cultivate goodness and virtue?
 - a. 2nd Peter 1:5-7 – *add to your faith virtue, then knowledge* –
 - b. *You will only use the knowledge you have in proportion to the virtue to sustain it*
 - c. Mt. 16:24-26 – We find ourselves when we embrace a godly purpose beyond ourselves
 - 1. Deny our will, our desires – but not to destroy us, but fulfill our *created* purpose
 - 2. Take up our cross – see a higher purpose than immediately fulfilling desires
 - 3. If our priority is self, we will lose our identity, but if it is in Christ, we will find it
 - d. We once saw our sin nature as our problem, as illustrated by Jabay and Ravenhill
 - 1. Jabay – *Kingdom of Self* – Ravenhill – *Why Revival Tarries*
 - 2. Self must be de-throned so that Christ’s virtue can shine through our character
 - 3. It is imperative that we surrender to Christ’s virtue – a holy reverence for God
 - 5. Why was *virtue* such a revered commodity at the founding of our Nation?
 - a. *Freedom and Virtue* – they are interconnected within nations as history attests...
 - b. Quotes from Sam Adams on virtue...