

What is Good?
- Ron Stullenbarger -

"And God saw that it [His creation] was good." (Genesis 1:12)

People use the word "good" in a lot of ways. In fact, a lot of commercials and advertisements use the word good. See if you can match the slogan with the product it advertises (answers are given below):

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| 1. IT DOES A BODY GOOD | A. MAXWELL HOUSE COFFEE |
| 2. GOOD TO THE LAST DROP | B. CAMPBELL'S SOUP |
| 3. GREAT TASTE NEVER LOOKED SO GOOD | C. SUNNY DELIGHT (CITRUS DRINK) |
| 4. M'M M'M GOOD! | D. MILK |
| 5. THE GOOD STUFF KIDS GO FOR | E. SPECIAL K CEREAL |

See? Sometimes good can mean "tasty." Sometimes it can mean "healthy" or "nutritious." Sometimes it means "pleasant." And sometimes it means "attractive."

But good also means "right" and "moral." That's what a mother means when she says, "Be a good boy/girl at school." That's what people mean when they talk about "do-gooders." That's what the Bible means when it says, "Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good" (Romans 12:9).

It can be confusing, can't it? Sometimes good means "tasty" (like "good food") or "pleasant" (like "good music"). But sometimes it means "morally good," the opposite of evil. But you know what makes it even more confusing? A lot of people think that moral goodness is no different from other kinds of goodness. They think, "Hey, you like chocolate, I like vanilla. You think lying is wrong, I don't." But that's wrong, because they are confusing two different kinds of "good."

People can have different tastes or opinions about what foods are good, what music they enjoy, and what colors they like; but when it comes to what's good and what's evil, what's right and what's wrong, that's not up to you or me to decide. It doesn't matter what we like or don't like. All that matters is what God says is good. He has already told us what's good and what's evil. We can argue. We can disagree. We can ignore what He says. But we can't make up our own version of "good."

Have your choices always been "good," meaning "right" and "moral"? Has your behavior always been like God? Pleasing to God? If not, take a few moments to ask God for His forgiveness.

We need to be alert to the various ways we hear people use the word good. Are they using the word to mean "tasty," "pleasant," "attractive," or "healthy" (which depend on a person's taste or opinion), or do they mean moral goodness (which doesn't depend on taste or opinion)?

We need to thank God for teaching us what is good. We need to ask Him to help us hate what is evil.

Answers to the Matching Exercise: 1(D); 2(A); 3(E); 4(B); 5(C).