

Spirit Fruit: Goodness

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control”
Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV).

“Be Good, Chester!”

“Please be good,” said Chester’s mother as she hurried out the door.

Chester’s mind went blank. What did his mother mean by “good”? He supposed it meant that he shouldn’t eat all the cooking chocolate in the cupboard, and it might even mean that he shouldn’t spend his entire afternoon playing *Legend of Tatooine II*. It probably meant that he shouldn’t get himself into trouble.

Being good doesn’t seem like any kind of fun, thought Chester. But wait! Maybe being “good” meant RESCUING SOMEONE, or SAVING THE DAY!

Chester ran to the garage and began pulling out items that might be useful for a heroic deed.



He pulled out a long rope, “Good for pulling someone out of a well.”

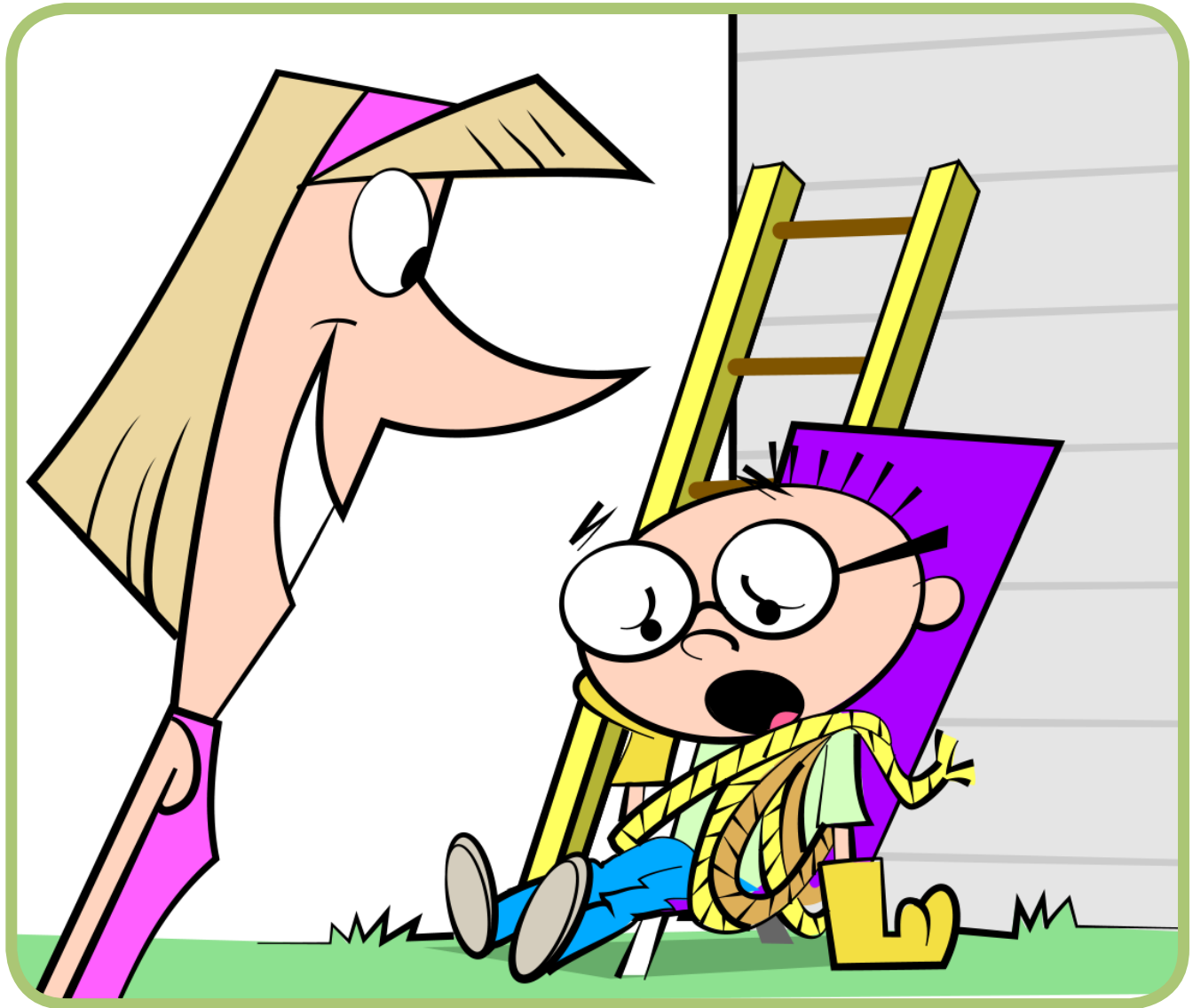
He pulled out a ladder, “Good for rescuing someone from a tall tree.”

He pulled out mother’s gardening gloves, “Well, they’re not cool like the gloves that Batman wears—but at least they are gloves.”

Then he sat down waiting to do good. Chester waited and waited. Two hours later, when Mother came home, Chester had still not rescued anyone out of a well or from a tall tree.

“Did you have a good day?” asked Mother.

Chester moaned. “I tried to be good, but it’s sooo hard!”





Have you ever been told to “be good”? You probably thought it meant you were not to do a lot of things. Like, not tease ants or not leave the room messy or not play computer games before homework was done. But being good isn’t only about what you should NOT do. It’s also not about being a superhero. And it isn’t just a stuffy sounding thing that banishes fun.



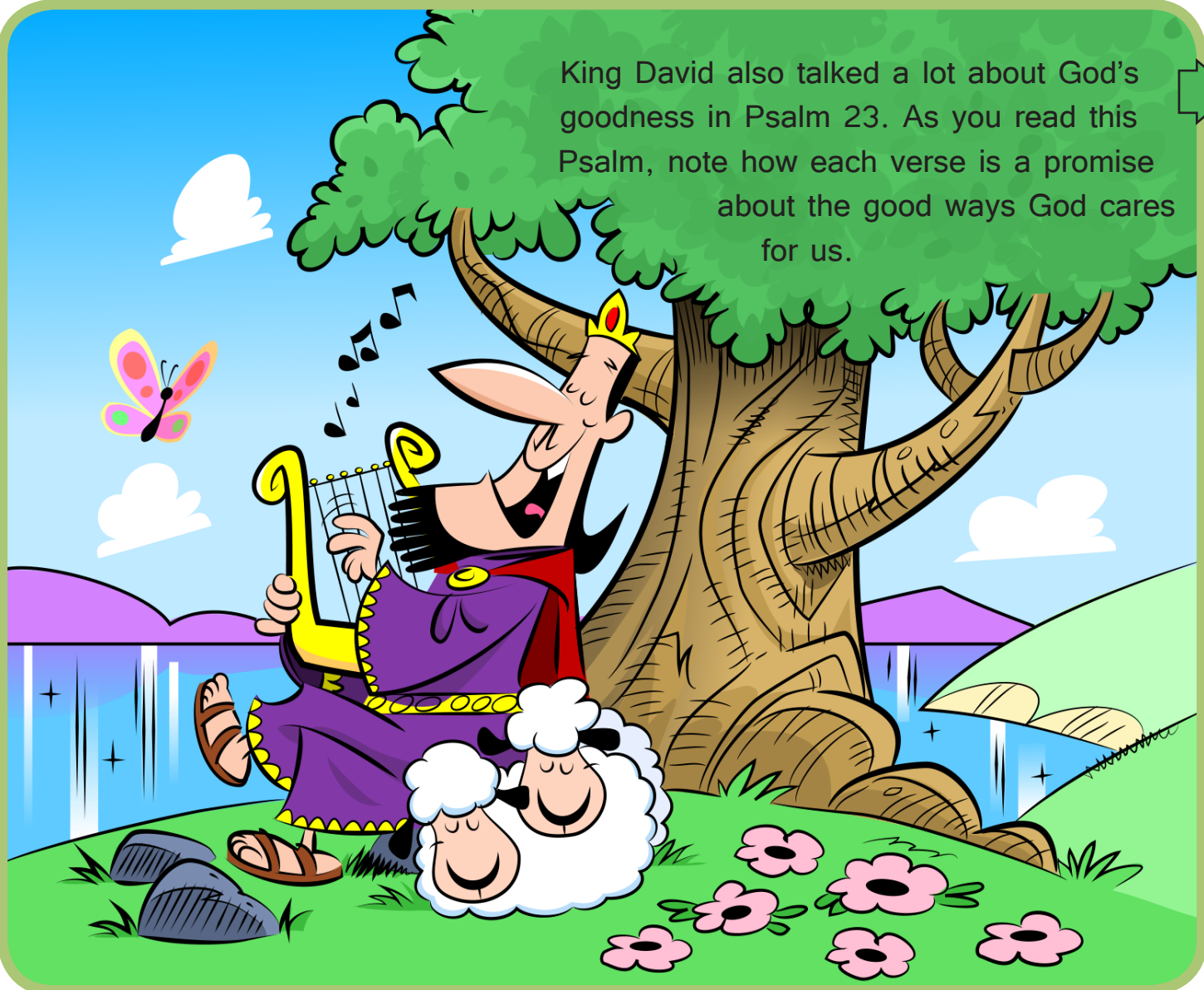
In Galatians 5:22–23 we find that “goodness” is a fruit of Jesus’ Spirit in your life. The Greek word Paul used in this verse was *agathosune*, which means uprightness of heart and life, goodness, and kindness. Paul also said, “I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out” (Romans 7:18 NIV). Both Paul and Chester wanted to do good, but found that it was a very difficult to do on their own. That’s why “goodness” must be a gift of God’s Spirit working through us.

We know from the Bible that God is good.

“Goodness” is one of the attributes or characteristics that people use when describing the nature of God. Here are some Bible verses that tell us about God’s goodness:

- Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him. (Psalm 34:8 NIV).
- The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing. (Psalm 34:10 NIV).
- Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. (James 1:17 NIV).
- Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever! (1 Chronicles 16:34 ESV).
- “For I know the plans I have for you,” saith the Lord. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope” (Jeremiah 29:11 NLT).



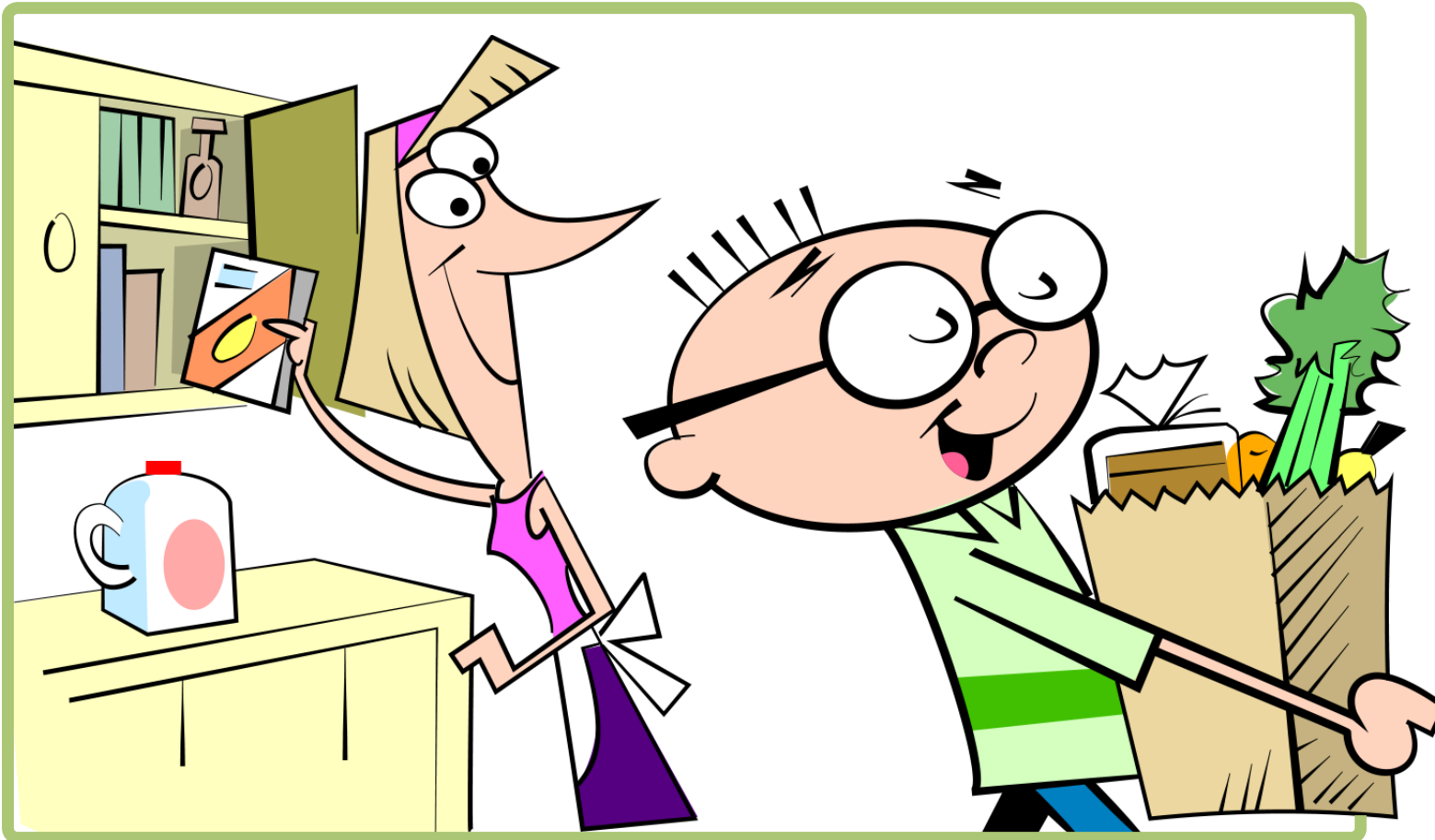


King David also talked a lot about God's goodness in Psalm 23. As you read this Psalm, note how each verse is a promise about the good ways God cares for us.

David ends the Psalm by saying, "Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (Psalm 23:6 NIV).

From the Bible we understand that everything wonderful that God brings to our life—the love, promises, protection, and care that He gives—is God's goodness to us. Goodness as a fruit of the Spirit comes from above, not from us. However, when God's Spirit lives in us, we can be a reflection of God's goodness through our deeds and by living according to God's Word.

As Christians one way we can show thankfulness for God's goodness in our lives is through kind and caring actions and words—through our **good deeds**. Jesus said, "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16 NIV).

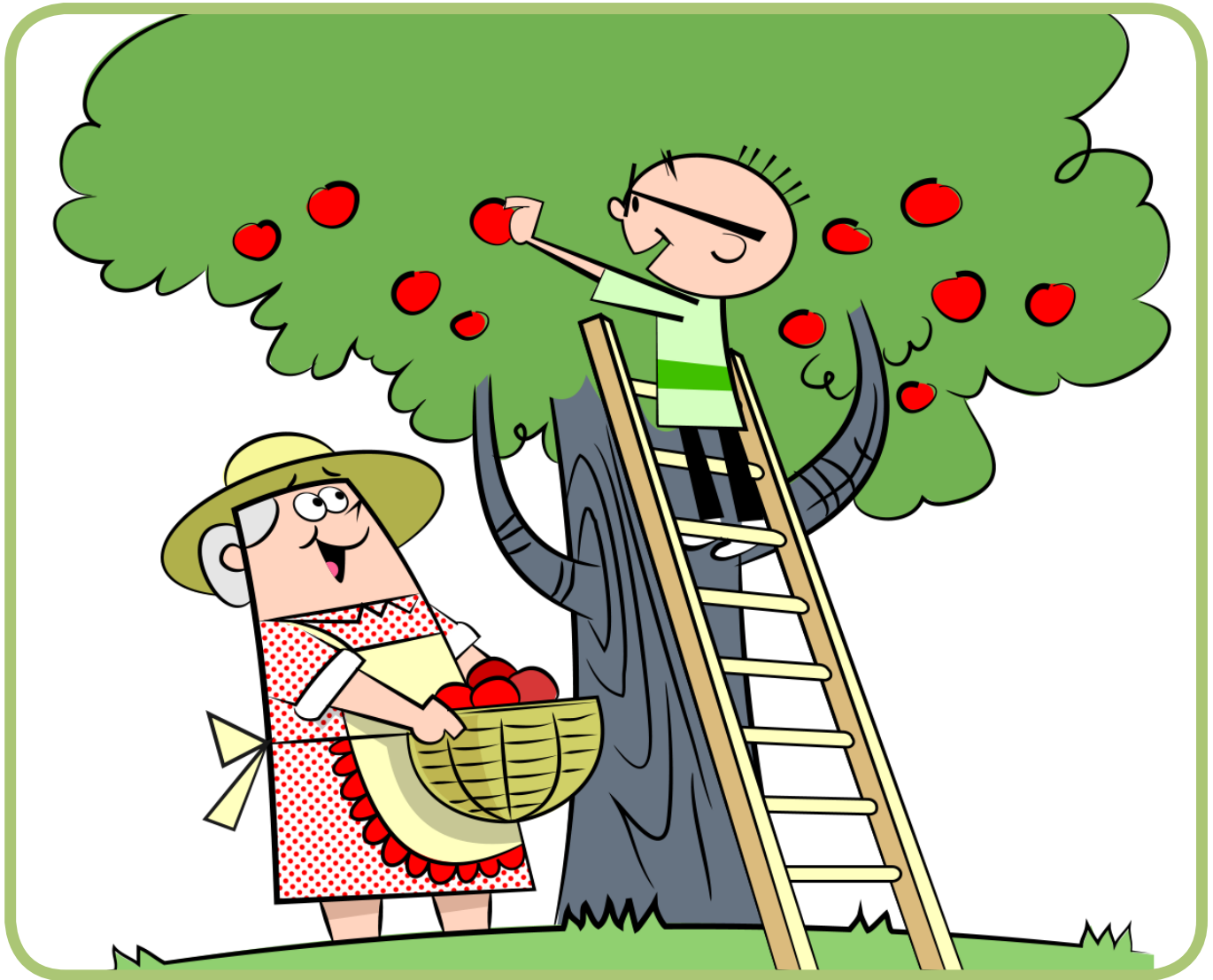


The "fruit of the Spirit" goodness springs from God's goodness to **us**—and it is because of God's goodness to us that we are meant to do our best to relay to others the wonderfulness of God's goodness through what we do and say.

Bite-sized: We can show our thankfulness for God's goodness through kind and caring deeds that point others to the goodness of God.

Memorize it: Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. (Psalm 23:6 NIV).

Action: Read and meditate on Psalm 23. Pause after each verse and think about the ways God's goodness toward you is shown in relationship to what is described in that verse. Jot down a list of things that come to mind, or even draw a picture relating to a point of God's goodness that the verse reminds you of.



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