



What does GOODNESS mean as a fruit of the Spirit – including in the context of work – and what can be done to make it actionable?

The fruits of the Holy Spirit are the signs and actions that the Holy Spirit is alive within us and helping us live by faith in our daily lives.

“What does GOODNESS mean as a fruit of the Spirit – including in the context of work – and what can be done to make it actionable?”

This was the focus at the BELIEVES session held on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, featuring Mike Cosentino, Founder/Owner of Big Peach Running Co.



Big Peach Running Co., which opened on May 24, 2004, now has nine stores, one mobile unit, and has launched Ride & Run in Brookhaven and Midtown, shared Cosentino.

“What we’re called to do is to serve others and let our light shine,” he added. “Our calling is to engage not just in the organization but as an individual.”

Though it opened in 2004, the business plan for Big Peach Running Co. was written on Sept. 12, 2001.

“In 2001, I had been an endurance and ultra-runner,” Cosentino made everyone aware. “I was hoping to run a PR in Boston, do an Ironman in under 12 hours, and do the Western State Century Run. On September 11th, I was in Florida on a run and had thought the next time I would be in Florida, I’d come down to finish an Ironman in under 12 hours.”

When the World Trade Center was attacked, all flights stopped, but Cosentino had a rental car, so he drove back from Tampa to Atlanta that day. During the drive, he had conviction strike and he wrote the business plan the next day on September 12, 2001.

“I would love to say it was God-inspired from the beginning, but it wasn’t,” he said transparently. “You have to just be open to it. You may not understand it. You may sense God saying, ‘Do you wonder if this is from me?’ You may sense God saying, ‘Come back to me.’”

How has service evolved at Big Peach Running Co. over the years?

“Our mission is to grow to support and enhance a pedestrian lifestyle, and to steward the gifts and resources entrusted,” said Cosentino. The question we should all ask is, “What is your personal mission statement?”

From there he said that to have accountability we need to ask where that personal mission statement is alive.

“There is a sense of purpose felt in ideas from the Holy Spirit,” he stated. “From there, at Big Peach Running Co. there’s a filtering that the ideas must go through because there are only so many dollars to go around.”

The two things Cosentino mentioned are a part of the filtering are 1) playing to strengths and 2) looking at priorities and being ready to declare “this will be here” to know it’ll make a difference.

The filtering is important, according to Cosentino, because you have to be able to say no to other things.

With the discernment and filtering mentioned, what is an example of a weakness developed that Cosentino recalls?

“Several years ago, we launched Shoes for the Homeless, and then went through steps to be a 501c3 to be Big Peach Outreach,” Cosentino recollected. “We had invested in legal resources, and ran this for four years, but in the end, we underestimated the need, and were not properly equipped to deliver.”

The takeaway for Cosentino was to just do the right thing versus doing it as a non-profit.

When asked what informs his approach to run Big Peach Running Co., Cosentino stated that Jordan Raynor, an author, and the Apostle Paul, have both had a significant impact.

“Jordan Raynor speaks about how 14-33% of our existence is done to pursue being compensated for our activity (“working”),” he said. “We always speak of work-life balance, but Raynor focuses on whole-life existence.”

Explaining the difference, Cosentino remarked that in reality, work-life balance doesn’t exist, whereas whole-life existence is more on taking the fruit of the Spirit into the workplace.

As he shifted to think of Paul’s teachings, Cosentino said, “When we think about whole-life existence, then it is for our family, and it bleeds into the workplace. Whether it’s sporting goods, retail, or some place with zero knowledge, there’s opportunity.”

Cosentino shared all this with his own family’s core values in mind to guide them as they seek to live a whole-life existence.



Having given that background and shared those thoughts, how does Cosentino define GOODNESS?

“Matthew 5:15-16, ‘Let your light shine before others,’” he said. “Being mindful of letting your light shine in every instance. It becomes easier the more you do it.”

When asked what his prayer life looks like, Cosentino told of how he starts the day each day with a devotional in the morning.

“I like to hit the ground running. I also like the Bible App, which tells you how many days in a row you’ve read the Bible.”

At the end of the day, Cosentino said he gets on his knees to say thank you.

During the day, he said he also has little moments of thanks.

“I will be honest, gratitude is easier than petition for me. I want things to pop out unknowingly.”

When it comes to GOODNESS in the context of work, Cosentino shared how he believes we are the masterpieces created for good works.

“Good works desired for others is the goodness from Him,” he added.

One thing he feels is important to debunk is the statement – “It’s not personal, it’s just business.”

“You can’t do this if you have a personal relationship with God,” he said. “You have to make your work personal and recognize we have been equipped to do good works. We do have strengths. We have to pair the strengths in a way that’s God-honoring, but not doing it for braggadocio.”

Summarizing succinctly, Cosentino said, “The light is before others, but it’s illumination is to Him.”

Hearing what had been spoken, one session attendee was curious how Cosentino helped people discern strengths. Cosentino responded with a focus on three things: 1) observations, 2) leading with trust, and 3) evaluation.

With respect to observations, he feels at Big Peach Running Co., they have a good track record of doing this by this point.

“All our people who are managers have done ‘sit-and-fits,’” he said. “We also do feedback sessions twice a year where we ask our team members, ‘Where do your strengths reside that we’re not taking advantage of?’ and ‘Where do you want to do more?’”

As for leading with trust?

“Starting with trust has done well for me,” he said.

And with respect to evaluation, Cosentino added that as important as evaluation is a specific recognition of gratitude.

“What I hear in what you’re saying is, ‘From good habits, goodness flows,’” said the session attendee who had asked Cosentino how he helped people discern their strengths.

“I’m going to write that down,” Cosentino responded.

The attendee added, “God used what you had for His magnanimity, for His good, and His glory.”

So, what is Cosentino working on now?

“My personal mission statement did exist back in 2001 – *‘To steward the gifts and resources entrusted to me by my Heavenly Father in a manner that brings Him glory and brings enjoyment, encouragement, and empowerment to others.’* – so it’s important,” he mentioned.

With Ride & Run, he believes if they can have a favorable influence, then he and his team want to do so for people to have active lifestyles. He also feels he is in a position to make communities better.

“I believe there are some who have a heart for the business, but may lack the skills and experience to begin, so we have started franchising, and have two so far,” Cosentino revealed.

Finally, he believes there’s too much proof that there’s a burden – maybe from the enemy – that it’s all on our shoulders.

“So, my next phase is on the acknowledgement that God is with us.”