

**Articles and Sermons :: Fruits and Works - Christopher West ( Galatians 5:16 - 26)****Fruits and Works - Christopher West ( Galatians 5:16 - 26), on: 2011/4/7 5:29**

In his letter to the Galatians, Paul says that "the works of the flesh are plain: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control".

Paul distinguishes "works" of the flesh from "fruits of the spirit". For Paul "works" are the specific acts of man, whereas the term "fruit of the Spirit" emphasizes God's action in man.

This 'fruit' grows in him like the gift of a life whose only Author is God; man can, at most, promote suitable conditions, in order that the fruit may grow and ripen.

In other words, everything that comes from "the flesh" is not of the Father but of the world. The goodness that springs from a man's heart, on the other hand, is of the Father and not of the world.

Only from this perspective can we clarify fully the nature and structure of the ethos of redemption. Reclaiming the purity of our origins does not mean pulling ourselves up by our bootstraps. We are speaking of a possibility opened up to man exclusively by grace.

The ethos of redemption is born in man when he forms an alliance with the Holy Spirit, allowing him to guide all his thoughts and behaviours. Behind each of the moral virtues that Paul outlines as a fruit of the Spirit lies a specific choice, an effort of the will, which is the fruit of the human spirit permeated by the Spirit of God.

This cooperative action of the divine and human is always manifested in choosing that which is true, good, and beautiful. Again we see how this differs from merely following an external norm or law.

Healing the wounds of sin, the Holy Spirit renews us interiorly through a spiritual transformation. It enlightens and strengthens us to live as 'children of the light' through all that is good and right and true.

In other words, the Holy Spirit, operating deeply within man's heart, orients his desires rightly so that he comes to desire freely what the law demands of him. This is why Paul can say that "if you are led by the spirit, you are not under the law". You naturally live in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control. As Paul points out, no law forbids these things.

**Re: Fruits and Works - Christopher West ( Galatians 5:16 - 26), on: 2011/4/7 9:02**

Hi Andie,

I caught this sentence and am interested in some more light on it.

Quote:  
-----This 'fruit' grows in him like the gift of a life who's only Author is God; man can, at most, promote suitable conditions, in order that the fruit may grow and ripen.  
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What would you and others consider "suitable conditions" from God's point of view?

Thank you,  
777

**Re: , on: 2011/4/7 11:06**

I can only offer an opinion, since they are not my words.

Obedience and submission. Not my will but yours Lord!

**Re: , on: 2011/4/7 11:52**

I think that is exactly right. It is the internal environment of the heart and nothing to do with our external surroundings.

Mat 13:23 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

Php 4:11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be CONTENT.

Php 4:12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

1Ti 6:6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.

Yep, the "suitable" soil of the heart.

Thanks for the reply.

777