

# Our State of Theology – 9g(2)

*The Holy Spirit: The Fruit of the Spirit – Every Good Work*

## John 15:8 (HCSB)

<sup>8</sup>My Father is glorified by this: that you produce much fruit and prove to be My disciples.

- When we bear fruit, we glorify God, the Father, and we also show evidence that we are Christ Jesus' disciples.
- How do we bear fruit and how does the manifestation of that fruit come about?

## John 15:1–7 (NIV84)

<sup>1</sup>“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.

<sup>2</sup>He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

<sup>3</sup>You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.

- God, the Father, *prunes* (καθαίρω *kathairō*, to cleanse) every branch so that it will bear more fruit.
- We are *clean* (καθαρός *katharós*, clean, pure) because we have accepted and believed the Word of God.  
Thus, we, just as the disciples, were ready to bear fruit.
- The words translated in verse 2 as “*prunes*” and in verse 3 as “*cleansed*” have the same Greek root.<sup>1</sup>
- The *pruning* is accomplished by God and His Word.

<sup>4</sup>Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

<sup>5</sup>“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

## John 15:16 (NIV84)

<sup>16</sup>You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit--fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

- We did not choose God, He chose us and appointed us to bear fruit.

With the command of God that we bear fruit, comes God's enablement through His Spirit.

We can do nothing (*bear fruit*) apart from God, the Father, and without the Holy Spirit enabling us.

<sup>6</sup>If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

<sup>7</sup>If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.

- We bear fruit by staying connected with the vine, Jesus Christ. We do that by staying in His Word.
- Branches cannot bear fruit if they are not connected to the vine.
- A branch is only alive if the sap flows from the trunk through the branch. Without sap the branch dies.
- The life of Jesus flows through every Christian. Apart from His life, we can accomplish nothing for God; we can do nothing to please God.<sup>2</sup>
- V. 7, *Ask whatever you want, and it will be done for you.* The key to getting what we want is **wanting what he wants**. To have Christ's words “abiding” in us means more than merely memorizing them. It means meditating on them until our conscious natures are impregnated with them, until they become a vital part of us, so that they enlighten our understanding...

When our innermost beings are influenced by the indwelling, pervading words of the Lord Jesus, then we can demand as our due and it shall be done—for the simple reason that there will be nothing out of harmony between what we want and what he wants.<sup>3</sup>

## 1 Corinthians 2:12–16 (NIV84)

<sup>12</sup>We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.

<sup>13</sup>This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.

<sup>14</sup>The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

<sup>15</sup>The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment:

<sup>16</sup>“For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?” But **we have the mind of Christ**.

- As mentioned earlier reference John 15:7, the key to getting what we want in prayer is *wanting what God wants*.
- We learn what God wants and what His desires are

<sup>2</sup> Matt Carter and Josh Wredberg, *Exalting Jesus in John* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), Jn 15:1–6.

<sup>3</sup> John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John: An Expository Commentary*, The John Phillips Commentary Series (Kregel Publications; WORDsearch Corp., 2009), Jn 15:7–8.

<sup>1</sup> Gail R. O'Day and Susan E. Hylen, *John*, ed. Patrick D. Miller and David L. Bartlett, Westminster Bible Companion (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 152.

It is before us on every written page of **the Book**.

- through the Word of God.
- When Scripture says that we have the mind of Christ, it is not meaning a mystical experience of thinking Christ's direct thoughts.
  - The verse implies that we and *all* God's people can understand spiritual truths and spiritual wisdom in a way similar to the way the Lord knows them.<sup>4</sup>
  - Those spiritual truths and spiritual wisdom are within the pages of Scripture.

## 2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NIV84)

<sup>16</sup>All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,

<sup>17</sup>so that the man of God may be **thoroughly equipped for every good work**.

- If you want to know what God thinks about anything, read His Word. Don't be waiting for some mystical thought to come floating into your head. God's total and complete revelation for us is written in God's Word, the Bible.

*Mysticism* = the belief that direct knowledge of God, spiritual truth, or ultimate reality can be attained through subjective experience (such as intuition or insight). – *Merriam Webster Dictionary*

## 2 Peter 1:20-21 (NIV84)

<sup>20</sup>Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation.

<sup>21</sup>For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

God is not giving out any new revelation. God gave his complete revelation when He, through His Holy Spirit, divinely inspired and guided specially-chosen men to write the sixty-six books of the Bible.

- "*All Scripture*" is "*writing*," γραφή; is complete and expressed exclusively in written form. It is not expressed orally apart from what has already been written in God's Word.
  - The pen traces words and combines these into sentences and paragraphs.
  - These words convey the thought.
  - Erase the words, and the thought disappears.
- These are not *Woerter*, vocables, but *Worte*, words expressing thoughts. This is *Verbal Inspiration*.

- *There is no other divine inspiration*.
  - The thought cannot be separated from the words which are its vehicles.
  - To speak of an inspiration of thought that is *not* an inspiration of the words is to disregard what the Scriptures show us as a fact.**<sup>5</sup>
- The *written* words of Scripture that came from the voice (*vocable*) of God is the *divine inspiration* and *revelation* that we are to heed.

To speak an inspiration of thought that is *not* an inspiration of the words [*that were written*] is to disregard what the Scriptures show us as a fact.

**A thought apart from the *written* Scriptures is not divinely inspired.**

- V. 16 says, *All Scripture*. Middle English from Latin *scriptura* 'writings'; *script* – 'written.'
  - The word *Scripture* means *sacred writings*, not *vocalized thoughts*.
  - All the *sacred writings* of Christianity contained in the *Bible* is God-breathed or divinely-inspired, not *vocalized thoughts* that come from your mind.
  - Thoroughly equipped for every good work***. The **man of God, he who belongs to God**, may be fitted up as having been "fully fitted for every good work" whether it be to teach, to refute, to raise up somebody, to educate.
    - All these which are received by the man of God **from the inspired Scripture** and make him such a man, he, in turn, dispenses to others; this is the meaning of "*every good (beneficial) work*."
    - This is plain: "**all Scripture, inspired of God, is intended for every man of God so as to make him fit and not for the clergy alone who are to dispense this or that to others.**"<sup>6</sup>
- The Scripture is thus absolutely incomparable; no other book, library, or anything else in the world is able to make a lost sinner wise for salvation; no other Scripture, since it lacks inspiration of God whatever profit it may otherwise afford, is **profitable for these ends**:
  - teaching us the true saving facts—
  - refuting the lies and the delusions that deny these facts—
  - restoring the sinner or fallen Christian to an

<sup>5</sup> R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus and to Philemon* (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern, 1937), 844–845.

<sup>6</sup> R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus and to Philemon* (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern, 1937), 847-848.

<sup>4</sup> W. Harold Mare, "[1 Corinthians](#)," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Romans through Galatians*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 10 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), 203.

- upright position—educating, training, disciplining one in genuine righteousness.
- The character of the source (God-inspired) is matched by the profit produced; the profit attests the character of the source.<sup>7</sup>

### 1 Corinthians 3:1–15 (NIV84)

- <sup>1</sup>Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly—mere infants in Christ.
- <sup>2</sup>I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready.
- <sup>3</sup>You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men?
- <sup>4</sup>For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not mere men?
- <sup>5</sup>What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task.
- <sup>6</sup>I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow.
- <sup>7</sup>So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.
- <sup>8</sup>The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and **each will be rewarded according to his own labor.**
- <sup>9</sup>For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, God’s building.
- <sup>10</sup>By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds.
- <sup>11</sup>For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.
- <sup>12</sup>If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, **<sup>13</sup>his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man’s work.**
- <sup>14</sup>If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward.
- <sup>15</sup>If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.
- V. 13, Not every *good work* in our eyes is *good*. What we define *good* is not always the same as what God defines *good*.

<sup>7</sup> R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus and to Philemon* (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern, 1937), 841.

- Matthew 7:21-23 exemplifies: although someone may believe they were doing good works, in the sight of God, they were not *good*.

### Hebrews 6:4–12 (NIV84)

- <sup>4</sup>It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit,
- <sup>5</sup>who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age,
- <sup>6</sup>if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.
- This passage describes professors of faith who are within the church community—church members, as we would say today—who experience the benefits of God’s blessing in the church without ever personally committing themselves to faith in Christ.<sup>8</sup>
  - There are those who *possessed* faith as well as those who only *professed* faith.
    - This passage describes those within the church community who only *professed* faith but did not *possess* the faith.
- <sup>7</sup>Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God.
- <sup>8</sup>But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end it will be burned.
- <sup>9</sup>Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are confident of better things in your case—things that accompany salvation.
- <sup>10</sup>God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.
- <sup>11</sup>We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure.
- <sup>12</sup>We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.
- **Some people who appear to be saved actually might not be.**
    - Warnings such as this one in Hebrews are **aimed at people who persist in a life of sin while claiming to have faith in Christ.**
    - Such people can expect to hear Jesus’ statement

<sup>8</sup> Richard D. Phillips, *Hebrews*, ed. Richard D. Phillips, Philip Graham Ryken, and Daniel M. Doriani, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2006), 191.

They are the evidence that he is alive from the dead.

They are the proof of the glorious togetherness that exists between the believer and the Savior.<sup>12</sup>

- Good works neither produce or earn salvation; they are a result of salvation.

Although they have no part in gaining salvation, **good works** have a great deal to do with living out salvation. No **good works** can produce salvation, but many **good works** are produced by salvation.<sup>13</sup>

- Good works are a by-product (fruit) of the regenerated (*born anew*) person.
- As 2 Timothy 3:16-17 tells us, all Scripture is useful to us so that we may be *thoroughly equipped for every good work* or so that we may bear fruit.

Scripture, God's *written Word*, equips us for every good work by defining what a *good work* is.

Unless a person knows what *good* is, they may pursue a course of conduct that is not good in God's eyes, even though that person believes he is doing good.

### Isaiah 5:20 (NIV84)

<sup>20</sup>Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.

- We have a generation of people today, who have turned morality around, and upside down on its head. And what God calls *good*, they call *evil*; and, what God calls *evil*, they call *good*. It's a moral depravity. And we in America have reached the very bottom of the garbage can, where people have gone from a dynamic conscience, to a defiled conscience, to a deadened conscience, to a depraved conscience.<sup>14</sup>

### Psalms 73:1-28 (NIV84)

A psalm of Asaph.

<sup>1</sup>Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart.

<sup>2</sup>But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold.

<sup>3</sup>For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

<sup>4</sup>They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong.

from Matt 7:23 that he never knew them.<sup>9</sup>

- V. 9, The better things or *better works* are those that accompany or is in line with salvation: things of *eternal value*.

### Luke 16:13–15 (NIV84)

<sup>13</sup>“No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.”

<sup>14</sup>The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus.

<sup>15</sup>He said to them, “You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts. What is highly valued among men is detestable in God's sight.”

- **Luke 16:15 (NLT2)**

<sup>15</sup>Then he said to them, “You like to appear righteous in public, but God knows your hearts. What this world honors is detestable in the sight of God.”

- The thing that men thus deem high, look up to, admire, boast of in themselves, glory in, is not only low but utterly abhorrent in God's eyes.

The more the Pharisees managed to get exaltation among men, the more abominable they made themselves before God.<sup>10</sup>

### Ephesians 2:10 (HCSB)

<sup>10</sup>For we are His creation, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time so that we should walk in them.

- “Good works” are such as God adjudges as good and not the world in its superficial judgment.

They are all of the thoughts, words, and deeds in which the righteousness and the holiness of the new life manifest themselves.

Such works are an utter impossibility before our quickening; only the new creation in Christ Jesus is able to bring them forth.<sup>11</sup>

- Good works are part of God's plan.

They are not the *price* of salvation, but the *proof*.

The believer is not saved as a result of good works; good works are the result of salvation.

They are the result of God's working in the believer's heart.

<sup>9</sup> John D. Barry, Douglas Mangum, et al., *Faithlife Study Bible* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012, 2016), Heb 6:4–8.

<sup>10</sup> R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), 838–839.

<sup>11</sup> R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, to the Ephesians and to the Philippians* (Columbus, O.: Lutheran Book Concern, 1937), 426–427.

<sup>12</sup> John Phillips, *Exploring Ephesians & Philippians: An Expository Commentary*, The John Phillips Commentary Series (Kregel Publications; WORDsearch Corp., 2009), Eph 2:10.

<sup>13</sup> John F. MacArthur Jr., *Ephesians*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1986), 62.

<sup>14</sup> Adrian Rogers, “How to Have a Good Conscience.” in *Adrian Rogers Sermon Archive* (Signal Hill, CA: Rogers Family Trust, 2017), 1 Ti 1:18–19.

*The Holy Spirit: The Fruit of the Spirit – Every Good Work*  
 when he pondered the success of the wicked and the sorrows of the righteous, he began to falter in his faith.

It seemed that he was wasting his time and energy being faithful to God because the unfaithful received all the blessings.

*He did not realize that what he called “good” was not what God would call “good.”* He was walking by sight and not by faith.

- The turning point came when he went into the sanctuary and **started looking at things from God’s viewpoint.** *The important thing is not so much what you own or enjoy but where you are going.*
  - What good is an easy death (v. 4) if it ushers you into pain? (Hell)
  - When life seems unfair, take time to worship and get your spiritual vision properly focused.
- **Asaph realized that because he had God as his Refuge, he needed nothing else.**
  - He had more than the wicked, and what he had would last forever. God would hold him, guide him, strengthen him, satisfy his spiritual desires—and one day, take him to heaven!<sup>15</sup>

### **Ephesians 1:3–4a (NIV84)**

<sup>3</sup>Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

<sup>4</sup>For **he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.**

- Ephesians 2:10 tell us that God prepared good works ahead of time so that we should walk in them.
- What were those good works?
- V. 4, He chose us before the creation of the world *to be holy and blameless in his sight.*
  - Works that reflect us being holy and blameless in God’s sight (not man’s) are the good works that we should be walking in.
- *Kenneth H. Gray:* Christians are producing much political hot air about reclaiming the culture for God. I have fought in the culture wars against abortion, homosexuality, and moral relativism, and I was actively involved in politics. After exerting a lot of personal effort to reclaim the culture for Jesus, I came to the conclusion that he does not want it back. Yet with all the trouble that government propagates—using our tax dollars against us in the process—where is the supposed good? The good is what God calls good, not what people call good. Abortion is wrong, and homosexual sex is

<sup>15</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *With the Word Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1991), Ps 73:1.

<sup>5</sup>They are free from the burdens common to man; they are not plagued by human ills.

<sup>6</sup>Therefore pride is their necklace; they clothe themselves with violence.

<sup>7</sup>From their callous hearts comes iniquity; the evil conceits of their minds know no limits.

<sup>8</sup>They scoff, and speak with malice; in their arrogance they threaten oppression.

<sup>9</sup>Their mouths lay claim to heaven, and their tongues take possession of the earth.

<sup>10</sup>Therefore their people turn to them and drink up waters in abundance.

<sup>11</sup>They say, “How can God know? Does the Most High have knowledge?”

<sup>12</sup>This is what the wicked are like— always carefree, they increase in wealth.

<sup>13</sup>Surely in vain have I kept my heart pure; in vain have I washed my hands in innocence.

<sup>14</sup>All day long I have been plagued; I have been punished every morning.

<sup>15</sup>If I had said, “I will speak thus,” I would have betrayed your children.

<sup>16</sup>When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me

**<sup>17</sup>till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny.**

<sup>18</sup>Surely you place them on slippery ground; you cast them down to ruin.

<sup>19</sup>How suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors!

<sup>20</sup>As a dream when one awakes, so when you arise, O Lord, you will despise them as fantasies.

<sup>21</sup>When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered,

<sup>22</sup>I was senseless and ignorant; I was a brute beast before you.

<sup>23</sup>Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand.

<sup>24</sup>You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory.

<sup>25</sup>Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you.

<sup>26</sup>My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

<sup>27</sup>Those who are far from you will perish; you destroy all who are unfaithful to you.

<sup>28</sup>But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign LORD my refuge; I will tell of all your deeds.

- Asaph’s basic premise was correct: God is good. But

immoral—yet these and a host of other “critical” issues are not God’s keenest concerns. What God calls good is when our hearts turn back to him with love and devotion, giving him alone the glory.

In the end, the Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; he makes the plans of the people of no effect, according to Psalm 33:10 (NKJV). Even if the “good guys” (whoever they may be) win this election, government will still be in the business of oppression and persecution—as the agent and minister of God.

The good that God seeks is to draw people back to himself and his glory, and he uses even bad government toward that end.<sup>16</sup>

### **Colossians 3:17 (NIV84)**

<sup>17</sup>And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

- *Selah.*

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<sup>16</sup> [“Matters of Opinion: Commentary on Issues Facing the Church.”](#) *Christianity Today* (Carol Stream, IL: Christianity Today, 2000), 78–79.