

Fruit of the Spirit - The Nature of God

Introduction

1. The one who is in Christ is a new creation. (2 Cor. 5:17)
2. The Christian is to be transformed from one who is worldly into one who is godly. (Rom. 12:1-2)
3. The Christian is to be like God.
 - a. Those who are led by the Spirit are "sons of God." (Rom. 8:14)
 - b. "Sons" = those like unto. (cf. John 8:44)
4. The Spirit has a major role in transforming the Christian into one who is "like unto" God.

I. The Transformation from Worldly to Godly

- A. Those in Christ are to walk in newness of life. (Rom. 6:1-14a)
- B. Christians are to be led by the Spirit. (Rom. 8:12-17)
- C. Christians are to put off the old man and put on the new man. (Eph. 4:17-24)
- D. Christians are to produce the fruit of the Spirit, that which evidences they are living for God. (Gal. 5:22-23)
 1. The fruit of the Spirit stands in stark contrast to the "works of the flesh." (Gal. 5:19-21)
 2. Note the difference between "fruit," singular, and "works," plural.
 - a. Any one of the "works" of the flesh is enough to bring condemnation.
 - b. But all of the "fruit" of the Spirit must be a part of one's life if he is going to grow unto salvation, grow to be like God.
- E. By producing the fruit of the Spirit in their lives, Christians become partakers of the divine nature. (2 Pet. 1:4)
 1. "The object of all God's promises and dispensations was to bring fallen man back to the image of God, which he had lost. This, indeed, is the sum and substance of the religion of Christ. We have partaken of an earthly, sensual, and devilish nature; the design of God by Christ is to remove this, and to make us partakers of the Divine nature; and save us from all the corruption in principle and fact which is in the world..." (Adam Clarke commenting on 2 Peter 1:4)
 2. One becomes a partaker of the divine nature by producing the fruit of the Spirit because those things which comprise the fruit of the Spirit are, in fact, qualities of God.

II. The Fruit of the Spirit = Qualities of God (Galatians 5:22-23)

- A. Love. "God is love." (1 John 4:8, 16)
- B. Joy. "He will rejoice over you with gladness." (Zeph. 3:17; cf. Deut. 30:9; Isa. 62:5; 65:17-19)
- C. Peace. "Now the God of peace be with you all." (Rom. 15:33; cf. Heb. 13:20)
- D. Longsuffering. "The Lord is longsuffering and abundant in mercy..." (Num. 14:18; cf. Ex. 34:6; Psa. 86:15; Rom. 2:4)
- E. Kindness. "His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." (Eph. 2:4-7; cf. Neh. 9:17; Titus 3:3-7)
- F. Goodness. "Oh, how great is Your goodness..." (Psa. 31:19; cf. Psa. 27:13; 52:1; 68:10; Rom. 11:22)
- G. Faithfulness. "Great is Your faithfulness." (Lam. 3:23; cf. Psa. 36:5; 89:1-2; 119:90; Rom. 3:3)
- H. Gentleness. "Your gentleness has made me great." (2 Sam. 22:36; cf. Psa. 18:35; 2 Cor. 10:1)
- I. Self-control.
 - 1. In regard to sin. "God cannot be tempted by evil..." (Jas. 1:13)
 - 2. In regard to His emotions. "So the Lord relented from the harm which He said He would do to His people." (Ex. 32:1-14; esp. v. 14)

Conclusion

- 1. In the word of God the Spirit has given to mankind, God has not only revealed His will but also Himself and His nature.
- 2. Christians are to take on that nature and grow to be more and more like God Himself: "Be holy, for I am holy." (1 Pet. 1:16)
 - a. To be holy is to be set apart from the world and the worldly.
 - b. To be holy is to be devoted to God in all things.
- 3. We can know whether or not we are taking on those qualities by which we will be godly if we can see evidence of "the fruit of the Spirit" in our lives.