

Learning and doing: the same fruit of the work of the Holy Spirit in us!

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The Word of God praises the role of the mind as an essential part of doing what is right and our growing through sanctification. Our faith emphasises the truth that how we behave and what we think (believe) influence each other. What we think and believe and what we do, act on each other.

When we alter the gospel, both our ways and views change. When we stop seeking to do what is right and holy, our thinking and understanding of the gospel slithers too.

Note Ephesians 4:17 - 20 on this relationship between not living according to the Word and futile thinking: *“So I say this, and insist in the Lord, that you no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding, being alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardness of their hearts. Because they are callous, they have given themselves over to indecency for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. But you did not learn about Christ like this!”*

The gospel is not something we learn in order to do right!

No, the gospel is, **by the work of the Holy Spirit, the powerful word of God that achieves the authenticity of the salvation that the Spirit proclaims through our lives.** Therefore the gospel is a lot more than “information” or even “salvation history”!

No, the gospel is what Christ did and lived, so that we too may live. The gospel is the truth that re-creates us and through our teaching, re-creates the world.

This is why the Christian’s mind is important: we act out of who we are. The Spirit who changed our minds about Christ, also changes our ways into an identity that lives for God and for my neighbour.

Christ, and his gospel, is the powerful and effective answer to futile pagan thinking and living. For it is the futility of materialism (the new paganism and idolatry) and the futility of humanism (today’s religion) that is alienating us from the life of God.

The wisdom of God shown by the radical grace through the gospel of Jesus Christ answers the darkened reasoning of hardened hearts which is the result of ignorance of the gospel. This is why ignorance of the true gospel leads to every practice of impurity!

Yet, when we embrace the understanding of the pure and true gospel through the Spirit’s work in our minds, this work of the Spirit makes the gospel a daily lamp for our feet, a light to our path, the seed that bear fruit and the love that brings about decent, pure and unselfish Christian living.

Understanding and doing are not two aspects of a Christian’s life. It is the same thing!

For as the Spirit brings understanding of God’s love, this understanding sanctifies our love according to the life of the Redeemer.

When we believe in the Saviour, we follow the Saviour in thinking, speaking, doing and attitude. Understanding the gospel recreates us in the image of Christ - and both our learning and doing are the fruit of the work of the same Spirit!