

PART 8 – SOWING AND REAPING

PART 1 – WHAT TO CHANGE

This week I want to look specifically at [Galatians 6:7-8](#) on the laws of sowing and reaping.

Gal 6:7 (NKJV) Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸ For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

Now, I know that you are thinking to yourself, how does this fit into a study on “Embracing Change”. It is because **it is critical that we learn to appreciate and accept the things that we cannot change** – and that is really difficult to do. If that does not happen in our life, then we will always be fighting the wrong battles. We will be trying to change things that simply are not going to change, and that is always a lose / lose situation. So, when you see people that are always struggling in different areas of their life, it is generally because they are always struggling with what never changes. They do not understand both natural laws and especially spiritual laws that never change. There are many things that you can change with little to no effort at all. You can change your phone number, your home address, the kind of car you drive, or how much you budget for your vacation. However, that are many other things that you cannot change, and if you do not accept that reality, then you are in for some difficult days ahead. So, what we want to see from these two verses is very simple.

God wants us to replace our bad habits that create bad results with good habits that create good results.

So, here is our goal that we will address next week. Our goal is to learn how to **break** our bad habits (“**sowing to the flesh**”) and then learn how to **build** good habits (“**sowing to the Spirit**”), and that will be our focus. So here is where we are headed. Today is **WHAT** and next week is **HOW**.

We want to BREAK what is bad and we want to BUILD what is good.

We want to break; we want to build. So, how do we do this?

We break the bad habits by replacing them with good habits.

Maybe you are always frustrated with people, or critical of everyone else, or impatient with your children. Maybe you are an unforgiving person, or you always think negatively, or you always have to have your way about everything. All of those are really bad habits that you have created in your life because of making bad choices. The moment you make a bad choice, you immediately begin to create a bad habit. Listen carefully.

The more bad choices you make, the more bad habits you create.

This is only common sense. Why? It is because **our choices are what control the direction of our life**. Today, all of us are simply a by-product of the choices we have made in our life – some good, some bad. I know people who never planned on ending up where they find themselves today, but when they look back, it is all because of some really bad choices that they made in their life. Those bad choices quickly created bad habits, and those bad habits are what now define their life.

What we clearly know and understand is that the entire universe operates on fixed physical laws like the law of gravity or the law of thermodynamics or Ohm's law in electricity. These physical laws never change, they never stop working unless God supernaturally intervenes. The speed of the earth's rotation is always the same. Gravity is not something that all of a sudden does not work. In the same way that there are physical laws that never change, there are also moral laws and spiritual laws that never change. They are fixed, unchanging, and eternal. Let me say this is a different way.

Whenever you knowingly and willingly sin against God, there will ALWAYS be some negative consequence in your life.

You cannot escape that reality. I cannot tell you what that consequence is or the severity of the consequence or the timing of that consequence, but the spiritual law that you cannot change is that you will always reap what you sow. You may not know what it is today or tomorrow or next week, but under the spiritual laws of sowing and reaping, you will eventually reap what you sow. Look again at v8,

Gal 6:8 (NKJV) **For he who sows to his flesh WILL of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit WILL of the Spirit reap everlasting life.**

Both of the verbs “will” are in the indicative mood, future tense, active voice. Simply stated, all that parsing means is that **it is a fact** that **in the future** that **you will reap** what you have sown – either good or bad. Some Christians can justify and rationalize anything that they are doing, anything they are saying, or any attitude that they may have that is contrary to what they know God would desire for their life. They always have an excuse or a justification as to why they are doing what they are doing, and they have no intention of changing. That is not a good place to find yourself.

It is amazing to me personally how often people who claim to be a Christian seem to have little to no commitment whatsoever to the Christian life and no idea what it even means to be a Christian.

They just seem to drift in, then drift out. It is as if they are completely ignorant about the law of sowing and reaping. They have completely forgotten or simply do not care that their actions always create consequences. They believe that they can break God's laws, and somehow for them it will never have any negative impact on their life. They think that they are the exception and that they can change spiritual laws that will never change. Listen carefully.

The choices you are making today are determining how you will be living tomorrow.

Why is that? It is because whatever you are sowing today is what you will be reaping tomorrow.

What and how you think today is what you will become and do tomorrow.

So, let us keep this idea of planting a garden as our analogy. If you plant kindness, you will receive kindness. If you plant mercy, you will receive mercy. If you plant discord, you will reap tension. If you choose to lie, you will become a liar. If you choose to steal, you will become a thief. Listen carefully. **When you sow sin in your life, trust me, but you have no say concerning the outcome of that choice.** It is like the husband and wife who are always arguing and allowing resentment and harsh words to come into their relationship. **The results are inevitable.** They are constantly sowing seeds for the destruction of their marriage, and they will simply find themselves drifting further and further

apart, and eventually reaping loneliness, bitterness, and complete disillusionment about their marriage. Why? It is because **they keep planting the wrong seeds** in their marriage. Obviously, they do not understand the law of sowing and reaping. No matter who you are or what you think, you cannot escape the reality of God’s spiritual laws. **If you sow bad things, you reap bad things. If you sow good things, you reap good things.** The law of sowing and reaping is always working. This is true in every area of your life. If you look at your life and you see things that you do not like, things that seem to never get better, then there is a reason for that, and what you invariably need to do is to CHANGE something in your life. Right? **DO NOT WORRY ABOUT CHANGING SOMEONE ELSE.** That would be considered a very bad habit. If you sow to the flesh, you “**WILL reap corruption**”. (I will tell you exactly what that means in just a moment.) If you sow to the Spirit, you **WILL reap everlasting life** - which refers to a specific quality of life. You cannot change these two spiritual laws, so why fight against them? If you have bad habits, then you must change your habits.

Now, one of the most important and crucial elements of these verses is how Paul begins. He says “**Do not be deceived, God is not mocked...**” where the word “**deceived**” means to roam from the truth, to go astray, to be seduced, to wander.¹ Obviously, we can be deceived by others, but just as bad, we can actually deceive ourselves, and I believe that is Paul’s intent here – that we not be so foolish as to deceive ourselves. In this context, it refers to someone who is **knowingly** sowing to their flesh and doing something they know God is not pleased with, but for whatever reason they think God is just going to overlook all of that and they are going to reap good things. That is to treat God with utter contempt. The reason I say that is because the word “**mocked**” in v7 is a word that refers to the nostrils, to someone’s nose. In fact, this is the only place this word is used in the New Testament, and it is the specific idea of turning up one’s nose in scorn against someone, to mock them, to demean them, and to treat them with contempt.² Trust me, but **no one** can mock God without suffering some kind of repercussion.

It would be utterly foolish on our part to somehow just casually ignore what God is saying to us about this spiritual law as if it does not and will not apply to us. It does apply to us. It will always apply to us, and that is a reality that we cannot escape. This is that place where we MUST embrace change and change our inclination to think otherwise. The law of sowing and reaping applies to every one of us without any distinctions. Theologians call this being “axiomatic”, or self-evident and obvious. We can never be so clever in what we do that we outwit God. We cannot ignore God’s Word in our life and then go about our way without it having some negative consequences at some point in time in our life. No man, whether Christian or pagan, can mock God and get away with it. Look at **Galatians 6:7** again just to make sure that we clearly understand what Paul is saying,

Gal 6:7 (NKJV) Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

Men can curse God, use His name in vain, and violate every principle in His Word, but be assured that God will not be mocked. Why? It is because immediately following that phrase that “**God is not mocked**” is the law of God that will never change – “**for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap**”.

¹ Strong, #4105, ep.

² Zodiates, *mukterizo*, ep.

Please appreciate that even the church is full of mockers mocking God, sneering at God, by just living in outright sin in their life. They ignore God, they ignore His Word, and they actually disdain the Christian life. Jesus said that the church would have both wheat and tares, and sheep and goats in it.

Then to make it worse, the word “**corruption**” in v8 means to bring a person into a lesser state or into a worse condition. It means to shrivel up, to wither, to spoil, to rot, to decay.³ The drug addict thinks that taking drugs will make his life better, but it is constantly destroying his life. His life is shriveling up and rotting every time that he takes drugs. Every part of his body is harmed. His brain cells are being destroyed, his vital organs are being destroyed, and eventually he will die a pre-mature death. It is inevitable. I am always amazed at people who constantly sow to the flesh and then when the harvest comes in, they blame God for the harvest. A man is a fool if he thinks that he can do whatever he wants to do now with no regard for God, but without later suffering any consequences. Stated another way,

You cannot become a spiritual person later.⁴

If you are waiting for that to just happen, please be assured that it is not going to just happen. That is a lie, a deception. **Whatever you want to be in the future is what you must begin to do now.**

One of the laws of sowing and reaping is that **you always reap in a different season that when you sow.** In agriculture, you sow seeds in the spring and reap fruit in the summer or the fall. Not only that, but another one of the laws of sowing and reaping is that **you reap more than you actually sow.** It is amazing how many corn seeds you can get from just planting one seed. Here is a very simple principle.

EVERYTHING STARTS AS A SEED.

Seeds are small, but they are very unique because they are always producing much more than it looks like they can produce. When I plant spinach, you can barely see the seed. So, from a purely spiritual perspective, we could say that everything starts as a simple thought, an idea, or even as a simple notion. The good things that you do in your life and the bad things that you do in your life, they all start as a thought (or as a seed) in your mind. Here is how it always works. It is really simple.

You have a thought, then you think about that thought, then you act on that thought.

If you want to take a vacation to the beach, you have a thought about going to the beach, then you think about it for a while, and then you start making plans to go. What you choose to do always starts out as a simple thought in your mind. This is why God says in Proverbs that “**as a man thinks in his heart, so is he**”. Here is a general principle that fits here.

What and how you think now is what you become and do later.

We have studied another similar principle before, so I just mention it as a reminder.

Input determines outcome.

What you put into your life is what you will get out of your life. All of life works this way. If you sow to the flesh, you will “**reap corruption**”, and if you sow to the Spirit, you will “**reap everlasting life**”. If you plant good habits, you will reap good outcomes. If you plant bad habits, you will reap bad

³ Precept Austin, *Galatians 5:8, corruption*, ep.

⁴ Ryken, 259.

outcomes. Unfortunately, when people begin to experience the wrong outcomes in their life, they immediately blame God, but in reality, it is just the harvest coming in from what they previously sowed in their life. One author I read said “*if you don’t like what you’re reaping, then change what you’re sowing. If you don’t like the harvest, then change the seed*”.⁵ Our governing principle for this entire study remains the same. We must build our life on that which never changes, and we only find that in the Word of God. So, when things are NOT going right in your life, examine your life to see where you may have sown the wrong seeds by making wrong choices – then begin to embrace the changes that you need to make to reverse the wrong direction of your life. We will begin to see how to do that next week.

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⁵ Groeschel, *Power*, 176.