

Galatians 6:6-10

What We Sow, We Reap

With all the millions of words that have been written in scientific journals and textbooks supporting the theory of organic evolution, one simple fact dating back to the beginning of creation stands as incontrovertible evidence against evolution. Eight times in Genesis chapter 1 Moses used the phrase "after its kind."

The plants and the animals were to reproduce after their kind. Thousands of years later things haven't changed one bit. There are mutations within species - but there are no transmutations. One species does not mate with another, does not give birth to another. Dogs give birth to dogs, fish to fish, birds to birds and humans to humans.

All of the smoke screen of scientific language and technical jargon hasn't changed the basic truth one bit - like begets like.

The only way that's going to change is if we mix and match genes. If an intelligence outside of the process manipulates the genetic structure. It will never happen on its own.

It is no wonder then that the Bible so often uses the natural, fixed operating principles of God in nature to illustrate corresponding spiritual truths.

Just as sure as we reap what we plant in the world of nature, we reap what we sow in the spiritual realm as well.

It's interesting to note that the natural man is an incurable evolutionist.

Long before Charles Darwin was ever born and anyone dreamed of terms like "natural selection" and "random mutation" people thought flesh could produce spirit.

In John 3 Jesus told Nicodemus *"that which is born of flesh is flesh and that which is born of spirit is spirit. Don't marvel when I say to you, you must be born again."*

In other words, we as human beings, made of flesh and blood, need a spiritual birth so that we can commune with God. God is spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

But our flesh can't produce spirit. We need to receive the new birth. That's God at work thru Jesus Christ. Only Spirit can produce Spirit after its kind.

Man, with his diversity of religions down thru the ages has taught that somehow flesh can give birth to spirit. That good works or religious actions or whatever can enable man to spiritually unite with God. But that can't happen.

The law of the harvest physically and spiritually holds true. We reap what we sow. Everything produces after its own kind.

If you plant corn it will never sprout up wheat. Your cat will never have puppies and religion won't give you the new birth.

You must be born again - that's why Jesus said in the very same passage in John 3. *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."*

Its by faith that we appropriate the salvation of God. It's God working in us.

That's been the consistent theme of the book of Galatians. From chapter 1 thru chapter 5 there's been a clear, resounding message. Faith, not works is the way to God.

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We've been told that faith is the way of salvation and walking by faith is the way of spirituality. *"We've believed in Jesus Christ that we might be justified by faith in Christ."* 2:16 and *"Walk in the spirit and you won't fulfill the lusts of the flesh."* 5:16

We're free. We have liberty in Christ. Galatians is the epistle of freedom.

But, freedom can be misunderstood and abused. Liberty means freedom to serve the Lord and serve one another.

And so from Chapter 5 and verse 13 down through chapter 6 and verse 10 the Holy Spirit inspires Paul to explain our responsibility to other Christians. We're not to use our freedom as an opportunity to the flesh. We're not to become conceited, provoking one another or envying one another. That's a misuse of liberty.

Rather, we're to serve one another. Two weeks ago we saw one aspect of that service in the first verses of Chapter 6.

We're to bear one another's burdens. If a someone is overtaken by sin We're to minister to that fallen brother or sister to try and restore him.

Now in verse 6 Paul picks us another aspect of serving one another.

I want to draw out two main points from the 5 verses we're looking at today. The fist is this:

I. Freedom In Christ Doesn't Mean Freedom From Responsibility

He says in verse 6 - Read verse 6

The problem that moved Paul to write this letter in the first place was the problem of false teachers who came into a church after he left.

People often ask, "How come there's so many churches with different ideas about the Bible? How does anyone know who's right?"

Talk about an important question.

I believe there are two main reasons why we have different churches teaching different things.

#1 is that the Bible has what we call fundamentals. These are essential truths like the deity of Christ, The inspiration of Scripture, and the virgin birth. These are non-negotiable essentials. If you change these you change the substance of God's Word.

Then there are the important, doctrines, but doctrines that can be discussed within the family of God. These are the way we baptize, or how we view church leadership.

Churches can differ on some things as part of the interpretation of the Bible. That's understandable. Those churches aren't in competition, they're just different in some areas.

The second reason, though, why there are different churches, has to do with the one the Bible calls "The Prince of Darkness." According to the Bible Satan is a fallen angel whose objective in this age is to nullify the purposes of God.

One way He does that is through spiritual confusion. Contrary to popular belief Satan loves religion. He loves it as long as it's false because then people are caught up in confusion and don't even know it.

The Bible says: *But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.* II Corinthians 4:2-3

It's absolutely imperative that we read the Bible to know God's truth so we'll be aware if the counterfeit comes along. There are a whole lot of false teachers out there who distort God's truth.

The Galatians were all new to the faith and so they were easily swayed by false teachers.

Paul has said some harsh things about these false teachers who have tried to corrupt these precious congregations in Galatia. He's said they're to be rejected because of their false message.

But true teachers are to be taken care of physically just as they minister to others spiritually. Paul left these congregations with elders and spiritual leaders and they were to be taken care of in a proper manner.

Two key words stand out in verse 6.

The first is the word "taught." "Taught" is a translation of the Greek verb *katecheo*. You can hear the word catechism in *katecheo*.

It means "one who has been well instructed in the faith."

So here's the biblical principle, in the local church let the one who is well taught in the word share good things with his teacher.

The second key word is the word "share." It's a translation of the greek verb *koinoneo*. *Koinoneo* and its noun form *koinonia* are used 5 other places in the New Testament where money is clearly being spoken of and every one are in Paul's letters. Some people have seen Paul just saying here that teachers and students should share in the good things of the Scriptures.

There's no doubt that that's true, but because of what follows, I'd say there's more to it than that. As we're going to see in the next verses, this is a passage about reaping and sowing. This is about fulfilling responsibilities.

Since this is a command to carry out something (notice the word "let"). And since *koinonia* is used so frequently in the New Testament to designate sharing money, it makes better sense to see this command as - "let him who is taught in the word physically help out his teachers."

Freedom in Christ doesn't mean freedom from all responsibility and here's one thing that touches us in a very sensitive spot. Our pocket book.

The teacher of the Word of God shares spiritual treasures with people, and those who are taught should share material treasures with him.

Paul uses a similar argument when he explains why the Gentiles churches should give an offering to the Jewish believers in Romans 15:27. He says, "*if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things.*"

The person who sows the seed of God's word should expect to reap a livelihood from it. It doesn't make any difference whether the instructor is a missionary, minister, evangelist or school teacher. Students should help supply their teachers material needs.

Paul said in I Corinthians "*If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things? The Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.*"

Now before you say, "Wait a minute. Was this guy like some of these TV preachers, out for the money remember this, because of the misunderstanding that could have arisen in churches like the one in Corinth where he was often under criticism from outside groups Paul didn't take any money at all.

Philippi was one of the few places that gave missionary support to Paul. Most of the time he earned a living for himself making and selling tents.

But he plainly taught the principle of supporting teachers of the Word of God. He encouraged local churches to carry this out.

Now, obviously that's a command that can be abused by both the person teaching and the ones being taught.

We have something that's unique to our culture in TV preachers who beg for money. Not everyone on TV is in it for the money or begs but the ones that do sure make a mockery of the Bible.

In 1991 "PrimeTime Live" reported that Robert Tilton's Word of Faith World Outreach Center Church in Dallas was making \$80 million a year from direct mail and TV. The program sparked an investigation by the Texas attorney general and numerous lawsuits. Stations canceled Tilton's television program until it eventually went off the air.

He divorced his first wife in 1993, and got remarried a year later.

Two years later, his first wife sued for more than \$1 million and his second marriage ended in a bitter divorce. Tilton has since married a third time.

During testimony in his second divorce Tilton testified that he was bringing in about \$800,000 per month and living aboard a \$450,000 yacht in Fort Lauderdale, FL.

You'd think with all of that Robert Tilton would go away, but he's back. He's on TV and it's estimated he's taking in millions telling people that God will bless them if they send him money.

The opportunity for abuse has always been there, which is why Peter warned elders in I Peter 5 to shepherd the flock of God eagerly, but not for dishonest gain. Keep your hands out of the offering box.

Of course, there's also the potential for abuse from the congregation who wants to use the pastor's salary to coerce him into preaching what they want to hear.

Both these situations are wrong, and both can be avoided if we'll understand what God is trying to teach us here.

See the word *koinonia* literally means "fellowship" or "partnership." When it comes to God's word the teacher and the student are partners in the same investment.

Remember God isn't poor. When he commands us to give to people in need, to the local church, to ministries, to missions - it's all for our benefit. Jesus said, "*where your treasure is there will your heart be also.*"

What we're willing to do with our material things is an evidence of how we value spiritual things.

When we let go of some of that cash that means so much to us, it helps us to put the proper value on the things of God.

And as we do we receive an unique blessing. Paul told the Philippians, "it is not that I desire a gift, but that fruit may abound to your account."

In other words we reap what we sow.

Read Verse 7

The law of the harvest is "like begets like." It's not the person who gathers that determine the harvest but the person who does the planting.

So don't be deceived. Don't be led astray. God is not mocked.

The word "mocked" is *mukterizo*. Literally *mukterizo* means "to turn up your nose."

And what he's saying is this, you can't turn your nose up at God. You can't treat God with contempt and not pay a price. What ever you plant, is going to determine what you harvest.

If you use your liberty as an occasion to the flesh you are going to reap a bad harvest.

If you refuse to share financially in God's work you are going to reap a bad harvest. You might fool others but you won't fool God. So don't be deceived.

For - verse 8

There's two possible kinds of soil. The flesh and the spirit. We can use the things we have to promote the flesh or to promote the spirit. But once we've finished sowing we can't change the harvest.

What's sown to the flesh will bring a harvest of corruption. That word "corruption" means "that which is transient" "that which dies off." It's the word that Paul uses over in I Corinthians 15:53 to describe our bodies.

There he says, "*this corruption must put on incorruption.*"

In other words this temporary must put on the eternal. (That happens when we get our glorified bodies in the resurrection.)

In the same way we either sow a harvest that's temporary or we sow a harvest that's everlasting.

We can use our resources to gratify our own desires. We can use our physical substance to merely take care of our own physical needs but that harvest will end at this life. That money is gone and can never be reclaimed.

To reap corruption means that you harvest that which ends. That which is temporary.

Sow to this world alone and all that you will reap will quickly fade away.

That's why we're commanded to sow to the spirit. If you sow to the flesh your harvest ends - but if you sow to the spirit it never ends.

View your life from an eternal perspective and use your material things to further the kingdom of God.

We have a choice - we either reap that which has an end, or we reap that which has no end.

And of course, there's a much wider application to our lives than just finances. All that we do is either an investment in the flesh or the spirit. We're either investing in eternity or we're investing in the present.

We're going to reap what ever we've sown and we're going to reap in proportion to what we've sown.

II Corinthians 9:6 "He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully."

A believer who walks in the spirit and sows in the spirit is going to reap a spiritual harvest. And if his sowing has been generous, the harvest will be bountiful

So then, freedom in Christ doesn't mean freedom from responsibility. It means ministry and ministry means service to others.

Now, ministry to others can be difficult. It's easy to grow weary while doing good.

II. So to motivate us and give us the proper view God reminds us that Our Ministry On Earth Will Reap Eternal Rewards.

Most Christians are like children. They want to sow and reap the same day. But that's not the the harvest works. It's in due season that we reap.

What happens here on this earth is not the final accounting its the judgment seat of Christ where the rewards are given out. It is in eternity that the everlasting, living harvest takes place.

We have a phenomenon today in America that's never existed in Christianity before. Its the gospel of Christian prosperity, the health and wealth message.

Its the teaching that comes out of mostly charismatic circles that says that the harvest is guaranteed for life. God promises Christians health, wealth and prosperity. That's far different that the promises of the New Testament writers.

God may bless us with prosperity in this life and he may not. To most of the Christians of the world to say that God wants all his children wealthy and affluent is foolishness. Only in America could that type of message ever gain a following.

We have to view life in these terms - 2 Corinthians 4:18 *"We do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."*

Jesus commanded us to *"lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven and not on earth."*

Let us not grow weary while doing good for in due season we shall reap.

We may experience a bit of the harvest here on earth, we may not. The truth is that the treasures of earth are uncertain at best. But treasures in heaven are guaranteed. They're eternal in the heavens and they never fade away.

Thieves can't break thru and steal them. They'll never be destroyed by moth, by rust or by corruption.

At the right time we're going to reap, if we don't lose heart. What we need to remember is the Lord of the harvest is in charge, not the laborers. Both of those phrases "grow weary" and "lost heart" carry the idea of becoming exhausted and giving up.

You may grow weary in the spiritual work that God wants you to accomplish but be careful of growing weary of the work.

Where does our strength come from? How do we deal with these times that we feel worn out?

Hebrews 12 says this: *"...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."*

The way of strength is to keep our eyes on Jesus Christ who has already won the victory.

At the end of his life, the apostle Paul could say *"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing."*

Don't loose heart because doing right is hard work, and you don't always see the results - we shall reap if we do not loose heart.

Therefore Gal. 6:10

Serving others includes much more than teaching the Word and giving of our material substance. It also includes doing good unto all.

There are some people in the world who do evil. There are some who even return evil for good. Most of the people in the world return good for good and evil for evil.

We're to be different. We're to do good to all. Not just to the people we like, or those we think deserve it. We're to do good to all giving a high priority to those who are of the household of faith. That brings us right back where we started, serving one another.

There is an immutable law. The law of the harvest. What we sow we reap.

Our supreme example of patient ministry was the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

He came as God in the flesh to reach out to a lost and dying world.

A few believed. The majority didn't. Instead they nailed Him to a cross. But at that cross He paid the price for our sin. At that cross He finished the work of our redemption.

And the seeds that he planted on that lonely hillside outside of Jerusalem eventually bore fruit. 2000 years later a harvest of life is still being reaped.

Jesus Christ endured the cross. He despised its shame. But he completed the task for you and for me.

That love of God and that grace of God is calling to you and to me to get busy sowing the seeds of life and hope. Of the word of God and a ministry to others to a world that's perishing.

And as we do, well be investing our lives for eternal rewards.