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"Remember this: Whoever Sows Sparingly Will Also Reap Sparingly, And Whoever Sows Generously Will Also Reap Generously."

~ Paul The Apostle

## CHAPTER 3- WHEN A MAN SOWS, HE EXPECTS TO REAP

"Now as for you, dear brothers who are waiting for the Lord's return, be patient, like a farmer who waits until the autumn for his precious harvest to ripen." [James 5:7 \(Living Bible\)](#).

Notice these four things about sowing and reaping: A man expects to reap when he sows; he expects to reap the same kind of seed that he sows; he expects to reap more; and ignorance of the kind of seed makes no difference.

### First: When A Man Sows, He Expects To Reap

If a farmer went on sowing, spring after spring, and never reaping in the autumn, you would say he was a fit subject for the lunatic asylum. No; he is always looking forward to the time when he will reap the reward of his toil. He never expects that the seed he has sown will be lost.

A young man serves a long apprenticeship to some trade or profession; but he expects by and by to reap the fruit of all those years of patient industry. Ask an engineer why he works so hard for five, six, or seven years in the endeavor to learn his profession. He replies that he is looking forward to the reaping time, when his fortune and reputation will be made. The lawyer studies long and hard; but he, too, anticipates the time when his clients will be numerous, and he will be repaid for his toil. A great many medical students have a hard time trying to support themselves while they are at college. As soon as they get their diploma and become doctors they expect that the reaping time is coming; that is what they have been working for.

Some harvests ripen almost immediately, but as a rule we find it true in the natural world that there is delay before the seed comes to maturity. It is growing all the time, however; first the little green shoot breaking through the soil, then the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. The farmer is not disappointed because all his crops do not spring up in a night like mushrooms. He looks forward with patience, knowing that the reaping time will come in due season.

So with the harvest of our actions. Few men, if any, would indulge in sin unless they expected pleasure out of it. A drunkard does not drink for the mere sake of drinking, but in the hope of present enjoyment. A thief does not steal for the mere sake of stealing, but for the sake of gain. And similarly with the good man.

He does not make sacrifices merely for the sake of sacrifice, but because thereby he hopes and expects to do good, and help others. All these things are means to ends: there is always expectation of a harvest.

## The Certainty Of The Reaping

We must look forward to the certainty of the reaping: "Don't be misled; remember that you can't ignore God and get away with it: a man will always reap just the kind of crop he sows! If he sows to please his own wrong desires, he will be planting seeds of evil and he will surely reap a harvest of spiritual decay and death; but if he plants the good things of the Spirit, he will reap the everlasting life that the Holy Spirit gives him. **And let us not get tired of doing what is right, for after a while we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't get discouraged and give up."** [Galatians 6:7-9 \(Living Bible\)](#)

We know what it is to have a failure of the crops, but **in the spiritual world no such failure is possible.** Wet soil may rot the seed, or frost may nip the early buds, or the weather may prove too wet or too dry to bring the crops to maturity, but **none of these things occur to prevent the harvest of one's actions.**

**The Bible tells us that God will render to every man according to his deeds, according to what he does.** "He will give eternal life to those who patiently do the will of God, seeking for the unseen glory and honor and eternal life that he offers. But he will terribly punish those who fight against the truth of God and walk in evil ways, God's anger will be poured out upon them. There will be sorrow and suffering for Jews and Gentiles alike who keep on sinning." [Romans 2:7-9 \(Living Bible\)](#)

How careful we should be of our actions in all departments of our being, physical, moral, intellectual! **The deeds we do, the words we speak, the thoughts we harbor, are all recorded, and shall meet their just reward, for God and His Laws are no respecter of persons.**

**And it must not be overlooked that the harvest comes as a necessary consequence of the sowing.** It has been said that God is not a sort of a moral dictator, as He is so frequently regarded. He does not sit on a throne, attaching penalties to particular actions as they come up for judgment. God, **has laid down certain laws, of which the law of sowing and reaping is one, and punishment is the natural outcome of sin.** **We are not punished because of our sins, but by them.** There is no escape. It must be borne; and though **others may have to reap with you, no one can reap for you.**

The harvest is one of two kinds, only two, directions in which the law leads: Sowing to the flesh, and a harvest of corruption, sowing to the Spirit, and a harvest of everlasting life.

## Sowing To The Flesh

“Sowing to the flesh” does not mean simply taking due care of the body. The body was made in the image of God, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness...” [Genesis 1:26 \(Living Bible\)](#) and the body of a believer is a temple of the Holy Ghost, and we may be sure that due care for the image is well-pleasing to God. The expression refers rather to pandering to the lusts of the body, pampering it, providing gratification for its unlawful desires at the expense of the higher part of a man, indulging the animal propensities which in their excess are sinful. “Sowing to the flesh” is scattering the seeds of selfishness, which always must yield a harvest of corruption.

“When your old nature was still active, sinful desires were at work within you, making you want to do whatever God said not to and producing sinful deeds, the rotting fruit of death.” [Romans 7:5 \(Living Bible\)](#)”

And what does Paul say are the works of the flesh? “Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, sedition, heresies, envying, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like.” If you sow to the flesh you must reap the flesh. If you sow to the wind you must reap the whirlwind.

And yet it must not be thought that indulgence in the grosser vices is the only way of sowing to the flesh. Every desire, every action that has not God for its end and object is seed sown to the flesh. No matter how “polite” and “refined” and “respectable” the seed may be, no matter how closely it resembles the good seed, the blight of corruption will be upon it.

How foolish are the striving of men in view of this judgment! Many a man will sacrifice time, health, even his character, for money. What does he gain? Corruption; something that is not eternal, that has not the qualities of “everlasting life.” [John The Apostle](#) said, “And this world is fading away, and these evil, forbidden things will go with it, but whoever keeps doing the will of God will live forever.” [1 John 2:17 \(Living Bible\)](#).” [Peter The Apostle](#) said, “Yes, our natural lives will fade as grass does when it becomes all brown and dry. All our greatness is like a flower that droops and falls; but the Word of the Lord will last forever.

And his message is the Good News that was preached to you." [1.Peter.1:24-25](#) (Living Bible) None of these fleshly things have their roots in the eternal. You may even outlive them in your own short earthly life.

## No Bridge Between

Now, men make this mistake—they sow to the flesh, and they think they will reap the harvest of the spirit; and on the other hand, they sow to the spirit and are disappointed when they do not reap a temporal harvest. It is flesh and corruption, or, Spirit and everlasting life. There is no bridge from one to the other.

“Seed which is sown for a spiritual harvest has no tendency whatever to procure temporal well-being. Christ declared, “Happy are those who long to be just and good, for they shall be completely satisfied. Happy are the kind and merciful, for they shall be shown mercy. Happy are those whose hearts are pure, for they shall see God. Happy are those who strive for peace—they shall be called the sons of God. Happy are those who are persecuted because they are good, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. “When you are reviled and persecuted and lied about because you are my followers—wonderful! Be happy about it! Be very glad! for a tremendous reward awaits you up in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted too. “You are the world’s seasoning, to make it tolerable. If you lose your flavor, what will happen to the world? And you yourselves will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless. You are the world’s light—a city on a hill, glowing in the night for all to see. Don’t hide your light! Let it shine for all; let your good deeds glow for all to see, so that they will praise your heavenly Father.” [Matthew 5:6-16](#) (Living Bible)

You observe the [Beatific Vision](#) of the Almighty—fullness of righteousness—divine comfort. There is nothing earthly here, it is spiritual results for spiritual labor. It is not said that the pure in heart shall be made rich; or that they who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled with bread, or that they who mourn shall rise in life, and obtain distinction. [Each department has its own appropriate harvest, reserved exclusively to its own method of sowing.](#)

[Everything reaps its own harvest, every act has its own reward. And before you covet the enjoyment which another possesses, you must first calculate the cost at which it was procured.](#)

## Sowing To The Spirit

[“Sowing to the Spirit” implies self-denial, resistance of evil, obedience to the Spirit, walking in the Spirit, living in the Spirit, guidance by the Spirit.](#)

We sow to the Spirit when we use our abilities and means to advance Spiritual things; when we support and encourage those who are extending the influence of the Spirit.

We sow to the Spirit when we crucify the flesh and all its lusts, when we yield ourselves to Him as we once yielded ourselves to the flesh. There are in every person two impulses, good and evil. They who offers God their evil impulses offers the best sacrifice.

The fruit of such sowing is "love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

In this world the harvest is growth of character, deeper respect, increasing usefulness to others; in the next world, acceptance with God, everlasting life.

Among the last recorded words of [William Lloyd Garrison](#) in his public speeches in England were these "I began my advocacy of the anti-slavery cause in the Northern States of America, in the midst of brickbats and rotten eggs; and I ended it on the soil of South Carolina almost literally buried beneath the wreaths of flowers which were heaped upon me by her liberated bondmen."

### **The Lesson Of Patience**

Let us learn the lesson of patience. "Now as for you, dear brothers who are waiting for the Lord's return, be patient, like a farmer who waits until the autumn for his precious harvest to ripen. Yes, be patient. And take courage, for the coming of the Lord is near." [James 5:7-8 \(Living Bible\)](#)

**Delay does not mean denial. Too often one generation sows and another has to reap.** God is a jealous God, "You shall not bow down to any images nor worship them in any way, for I am the Lord your God. I am a jealous God, and I will bring the curse of a father's sins upon even the third and fourth generation of the children of those who hate me; but I will show kindness to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments." [Deuteronomy 5:9-10 \(Living Bible\)](#)

In the early years of Israel's existence as a separate people, God commanded them to give the land of [Canaan](#) rest every seventh year. "Sow and reap your crops for six years, but let the land rest and lie fallow during the seventh year, and let the poor among the people harvest any volunteer crop that may

come up; leave the rest for the animals to enjoy. The same rule applies to your vineyards and your olive groves." [Exodus 23:10-11 \(Living Bible\)](#)”.

From the anointing of [Saul](#) to be king this law was not observed. After four hundred and ninety years God gave the nation into captivity for seventy years. During this period the land had rest; seventy sabbath years to compensate for the sabbath years of which it had been deprived. Those [Israelites](#) sowed the bitter seed of disobedience, and their descendants had to reap the harvest in exile and captivity.

Paul says: "And let us not get tired of doing what is right, for after a while we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't get discouraged and give up." [Galatians 6:9 \(Living Bible\)](#)”

"Because God does not punish sinners instantly, people feel it is safe to do wrong. But though a man sins a hundred times and still lives, I know very well that those who fear God will be better off, unlike the wicked, who will not live long, good lives—their days shall pass away as quickly as shadows because they don't fear God. There is a strange thing happening here upon the earth: Providence seems to treat some good men as though they were wicked, and some wicked men as though they were good. This is all very vexing and troublesome!" [Ecclesiastes 8:11-14 \(Living Bible\)](#)

The idea that because a person does a thing in the dark it will never be brought to light, is fatal, God says it shall be brought to light. It is folly for a man who has covered his sins to think there shall be no resurrection of them and no final judgment. Look at the sons of [Jacob](#). They sold [Joseph](#) and deceived their father. Twenty long years rolled away, and down to Egypt their sin followed them; "Speaking among themselves, they said, "This has all happened because of what we did to Joseph long ago. We saw his terror and anguish and heard his pleadings, but we wouldn't listen." "Didn't I tell you not to do it?" Reuben asked. "But you wouldn't listen. And now we are going to die because we murdered him." [Genesis 42:21-22 \(Living Bible\)](#) The reaping time had come at last, for those ten boys who sold their brother.

You know there are some people who mock at religions meetings, and say that religion drives people mad. It is sin that drives people mad. It is the want of Christ that sinks people into despair. You need not go to the Bible to find it out.

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**"There is a power under your control that is greater than poverty, greater than the lack of education, greater than all your fears and superstitions combined. It is the power to take possession of your own mind and direct it to whatever ends you may desire."**

**~ Andrew Carnegie**