

J, N, July 3, 83 PM ✓

"REAPING WHAT YOU SOW"

Proverbs 12:14

Jo Berry walked through the garden department of a local discount store. Noticed a sale table, piled high with flower bulbs - not wrapped, or labeled, being sold (cheap). No telling what they were. But since Jo could not resist a bargain, Jo bought a sack full and planted.

Not wait for Spring. Her Christmas sprouts began to appear. Tried to guess what kind of flowers they might be.

By May - alive with color - irises, crocuses, daffodils, tulips, lilies.

Months of waiting - gorgeous crop.

Each year the bulbs burst forth under the kitchen window.

Jo continues to reap from what was sowed.

Sowing and reaping - universal law of nature!

Farmer - expects crops when he plants. Barring natural disasters, his labour will be followed by a harvest.

Law applies in physical world.

Law applies in principle that governs our behavior.

✓ Galatians 6:7-9 speaks to this law.

✓ First, an unalterable law. V. 7 - "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

Look at the seed - the harvest will not be how much we know, but how much we sow.

Maybe a large stock of seed in the barn, but unless planted in suitable soil there will be no profit in time of harvest.

Always brings fruit after its kind.

Look at the soil. The type or class of soil is important.

If you sow to the flesh, it is like sowing rotten seed in poisonous soil.

Nothing can come but corruption.

✓ Second, a solemn reminder - V. 7. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked."

No one can gather grapes from thorns.

Not trust in appearances or feelings.

Deceive ourselves if we think it does not matter what we sow.

God is not mocked. He is not going to be silenced and put to shame.

A common mistake - self-deception, an unfailing law.

James puts it this way in 3:12 - "Can the fig tree my brethren, bear olive berries?"

What is the answer to that question?

Can the fig tree bear olive berries? No.

Very undesirable that it should. There is no need for it to do so.

Why is it that the fig tree can not bear berries?

A display of/divine sovereignty - fig tree bears sweet figs. Olive rich purple berries.

Can a fig tree bear olive berries? No, it would be altogether contrary to its nature.

Just as (unnatural) for a Christian to live in sin.

Impossible for fig tree to bear olives.

Impossible for an (unconverted) man to produce the fruits of righteousness - beyond his power.

You might try to label the tree - trim or shape it into an olive, or surround

it with olive trees like the Mount of Olives.

Everything we do the Scriptures teach, has a consequence commensurate with the deed.

Prov. 12:14 - The deeds of a man's hands will return to him.

11:18 - A promise - "He who sows righteousness gets a true reward."

Think of the potential! We can determine the results by what we do, what we choose to sow, dictates what returns to us.

Old Proverb - "What goes around, comes around."

How does this carousel work?

Example, if you choose to lose your temper you will get turmoil in return because, "a hot tempered man stirs up strife." 15:18.

If you stay calm you are a peacemaker, rather than an agitator. "A gentle answer turns away wrath." 15:18.

We cannot expect punishments, results, to be visible -- may be turmoils - frustrations.

This not mean that we do not reap what we sow. We don't recognize our reward.

Too often we miss God's blessings.

We may expect our crop to be something tangible.

Newspaper -- High School student had written a paper about importance of honesty.
In it he stated if he ever found a large sum of money - he would return it to the owner.

The test soon ~~- \$3,000 in cash~~. He returned it and received \$50 reward.

Reporter asked if sorry he did not keep the whole amount? Absolutely not.
Knowing I did the right thing is enough."

We may not recognize our reward because we are looking to the wrong source for payment. 11:18 promises - "True Reward".

Let us detail this principle of our text.

1. THE SPIRIT OF THE LAW IS THAT WE REAP WHATEVER WE SOW.

Illustrated in nature - flower bulbs - corn - radish seed produces radishes. Like begets like.

Crop determined by what is planted.

Righteousness is imbedded with it's own reward - as is sinful behavior.

We reap whatever we sow.

Examples:

10:4 - Diligence is followed by riches.
Negligence results in poverty.

10:7 - "The memory of the righteous is blessed,
but the name of the wicked will rot."

10:12 - Hatred stirreth up strifes:
But love covers all sins.

10:16 - The wages of the righteous is life,
The income of the wicked is punishment.

Like begets like.

Problem of many - we plant the wrong thing. Plant weeds → enough of them will
grow without planting more.

*Many people sow wild oats on Saturday night, then come to the
church on Sunday praying for a crop failure!*

You can redirect and live a better life, if become conscious of a plan to sow
enough righteous seed to choke out the weeds.

II. A SECOND BASIC QUALITY IN THE LAW IS THAT YOU HAVE TO SOW BEFORE YOU REAP.

Seed alone is impotent. In a junk drawer in the kitchen, or a package of tomato
seeds, cantaloupe stored in a closet.

Good intentions, last Spring, but you did not plant the seeds in the right kind of soil at the right time of the year.

Your child - never tell him you love him or a friend, never write note.

Peter Marshall - "Small deeds done are better than great deeds planned."

The only way to reap is to sow.

III. A THIRD BASIC COMPONENT OF THIS LAW IS THAT ONCE YOU SOW, YOU WILL REAP.

Planting carries with it the expectation of harvest.

A man's son Brian, 4 years old, planted a vegetable garden, seeds at right depth - covered - watered. "Now, all we have to do is wait for them to grow."

Early next morning he was outside looking at the ground. He was waiting for the plants to start growing -- everyday he checked. Anticipated the harvest.

We have done something we can never undo it. Results are beyond our control. Once the deed has been performed.

Jump out 40 story building - halfway down - changes mind and go back up.
Irreversible.

Politician, outburst of anger, shot and killed two people. No matter how he wants to erase his crime, he cannot.

Pulled the trigger - too late.

Deed cannot be undone. All we do is live with it - bitter or sweet.

Always harvest a crop.

IV. A FOURTH FACT ALTHOUGH WE REAP WHEN WE SOW, WE WILL REAP IN SEASON

Gal. 6:9 - Paul - "In due time we shall reap."

Due time - maybe right away or a long time off.

What we do may have immediate or remote results.

Job 1:8 - Went through trouble, testing, suffering. "The Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning and Job died, an old man and full of days." 42:12-17

Fact he lived righteously did not save him from trouble or grief, but ultimately in due season what he did came back to him.

We must consider long term, final results of our actions.

The total scope of our lives and the lives of others, months or years from now.

The story of an author - like all eight year olds wanted to be many things --
 airline, teacher, private detective, lawyer, a writer. Took English, journalism,
worked on school paper, wrote poems, stories, college majored in English. Later
teaching elementary school. Enrolled in correspondence course with writing school -
 when reached 40 - honestly say earn living as an author. The due season was
over 31 years in length because of planting now reaping.

V. A FIFTH BASIC IS EXCITING AND YET SOLEMN. WE WILL REAP MORE THAN WE SOW.

Illustrated - corn - one seed - stalk - 1, 2, or 3 ears with hundreds of
kernels. Not a bad rate of exchange.

Solomon 11:24-25 - "There is one who scatters, ye increases all the more - the
 generous man will be prosperous."

Scatter seeds of righteousness, we will increase in righteousness - bountiful
 crop. We will get more than we give.

Logical - want more of something.

2 Cor. 9:6 - "He who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly - and he who sows
 bountifully shall reap bountifully." *Baptist Girl stated a catholic Boy - Walking At -
 passed catholic ch. The C. Boy crossed himself "Hail Mary, Mother of God Pray for us" -
 Bap. Girl as they passed a Bap ch. - Saluted & said "Every Baptist a tither"*
 This is contrary to human inclinations, but it works.

He spoke of the results of his death - "unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone. (Stays just one grain never becomes more.) But if it dies, it produces many others and yields a rich harvest." John 12:24.

God planted his only son that he might reap many other sons. "As many as received that precious son to them He gave the right to become children of God." John 1:12.

We will reap more than we sow. That is part of the reward.

Question: We understand this principle - why do we refuse to use it to our advantage?

It is an added joy to our living.

We ignore the idea of recompense. Whether we like it or not, the law of recompense carries a burden of sowing what should be sown.

Here are some of the basic responsibilities which are yours.

↓ First, you are responsible to accept the consequences for your actions.

You must take control of your life and be willing to get the credit for what you do.

Many people wander through life blaming everyone and everything else for their misfortunes.

14:8, 14 "The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way . . . the backslider in heart will have his fill of his own ways, but a good man will be satisfied with his."

✓ Second, you are responsible to make proper choices.

God created you with that right.

No one can make you sin - The Devil can't make you do it if you don't want to!

Proacher passing a house, somebody swearing awful - he said to the son - who was swearing so bad at your house - it was Pa, he was hate for Sp. & couldn't
If you do right - you reap benefits of that choice. The choice is yours. *Find his Bible!*

✓ Third, you are responsible to do your best.

Man's way is to do as little as possible, short-cutting to get the most return.

Your talents, abilities.

Slothfulness is self-destructive. 18:9 - He who is loose and slack in his work is brother to him who is a destroyer.

✓ Fourth, you are responsible to (learn what you need to know).

"Ignorance of the law is no excuse for breaking it."

Not right to run a stop sign.

19:2 - "Not good for a person to be without knowledge".

✓ Fifth, responsible (for what you do to others).

Cain's - am I my brother's keeper?

Remember you receive back in kind the blessings or misery you bring in the lives of other people.

You hurt them, you hurt yourself.

✓ Sixth, you are (responsible to act in good conscience).

The human sense of reaping and sowing - you are accountable to yourself.

Not what others think but what is right.

What you say and do must stand in the eyes of God.

28:18 - He who walks blamelessly will be delivered, but he who is crooked will fall at once.

One way to make life easier is to live within the realm of moral responsibility.

Are you making good use of this principle?

God has built this into his universe.

The law is operational this very moment - "The deeds of a man's hands will return to him."

Two families:

Jonathan Edwards - Christian. 1394 descendents - 13 college Presidents, 65 professors, 60 lawyers, 32 authors, 90 physicians, 200 ministers of the Gospel, 300 good farmers.

Max Jukes notorious man.

93 descendents, 300 delinquent, 145 drunkards, 90 prostitutes, 285 had evil diseases, 100 spent an average of 13 years in prison. The crimes and care of this one family cost State of N. Y. over 1 million dollars.

World War II - ship sunk by its own mine. Ship sent lay miners enemy territory. Crew so engaged, neglected chart then completed the work on way home - destroyed by one of their own mines. Careful what you sow.

Kansas - Teen-ager angered at farmer planted many pounds of Johnson grass seed

daughter. After man's death - willed farm to the daughter. Teen-ager - older -
and wiser now. Said - "It has been 30 years since I sowed the seed and I have been
fighting Johnson's grass." Reaping results!