

Grace to You :: *esp Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

The Inescapable Law of Sowing and Reaping

Scripture: Galatians 6:7-10

Code: 48-41

Let's turn to Galatians chapter 6, Galatians chapter 6. This is one of those very important portions of Scripture that every believer should know. In fact, every nonbeliever should know it as well. But it was written for us. Galatians chapter 6, verses 7-10; I'll read it, and then we'll take a look at it.

"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith."

I was reading a book called *Rocket Men*. I enjoy reading fact rather than fiction; and *Rocket Men* is a relatively new book that describes the mission of Apollo 8, the first manned space mission that orbited the moon. That was back in December of 1968, couple of months before I came to Grace Church in February of '69, and a few months before Neil Armstrong actually walked on the moon.

It was a massive achievement to do what that mission did. By the time the rocket had sent the capsule out of earth's gravitational field and it was orbiting around the earth. It was a massive accomplishment just to do that. But there was yet awaiting another even more amazing mission. That orbiting capsule was going to be jettisoned out of that orbit toward the moon, only to be drawn in by the moon's gravitational field to orbit the moon and then come back to earth.

When they hit the jets and left the orbit around the earth the capsule reached a speed of 25,000 miles an hour. The moon is moving at 2,300 miles an hour. So going 25,000 miles an hour they had to hit a target moving 2,300 miles an hour, and begin to orbit. Everything had to be absolutely perfect.

It's really an astonishing feat to think about the fact that mathematicians and scientists could figure out exactly how to do that so that the mission was flawless and perfect. They intersected with the moon moving 2,300 miles an hour while the capsule was moving 25,000 miles an hour at precisely the right moment, were drawn into the moon's gravity, and went around the moon ten times, and then left again to come back to earth. That is all possible – it's not only because of the scientific efforts of brilliant men - but it is all possible because the entire universe operates on fixed laws.

Nothing is random. All of a sudden the moon doesn't speed up or slow down, or gravity doesn't alter its force. All that is predictable as the capsule catapults through space at 25,000 miles an hour is unchanging and absolute. The reason they could do that and everything subsequent to that and anything else in the scientific world, whether it's in that macrocosm or the microcosm, is because everything in creation operates on fixed laws. They are inviolable, unalterable, and absolute. We know that; we see that; we live by that.

Every part of our lives depend on things staying exactly the same. Things aren't randomly going off in some fashion that violates law – I'm talking about physical law; doesn't happen - because the material universe is built on absolute laws. That is why we can speak of creation as under the reign of law. And just as there are physical laws – and those laws are absolute and inviolable. They are consistent; they do not vary. They control the order of creation from the smallest single cell to the moving, catapulting planets and stars throughout the infinite universe. Just as there are laws that control all of that – and they're absolute and unchanging – so there are moral laws.

There are laws in the spiritual realm that are equally fixed and absolute. To think otherwise is to contradict the nature of the Creator and His creation. And the Bible certainly affirms this axiomatic, self-evident reality. All human experience confirms with great force that the universe is run on absolute, fixed laws, and that God has structured into His universe physically and morally, naturally and spiritually, laws that operate inexorably.

That's what we're seeing in this brief text that I read to you. Here is a moral law. Here is one of God's absolute, fixed principles; it is stated at the end of verse 7: "Whatever a man sows, this will he also reap." Now that is true agriculturally. That is true in farming. That is true in gardening. That is true in planting anything. You plant a seed, you get the life that is contained in that seed; that never, ever changes.

That is true physically: whatever you sow, you reap. But Paul is making the point here that that is true spiritually, that reality in the material world is also an analogy that is to be understood in the spiritual world. So I want us to look at this law and consider its importance. The divine law stated, the divine law stated in verse 7: "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this will he also reap." Don't be deceived. Don't think you can ignore God; this law will never ever change – a principle that no one can deny, not even a skeptic. Some passages in Scripture need no other proof than experience, this is one of them. That's why we say it's axiomatic.

In the context explicitly, Paul has been saying to the Galatian believers and to all of us, "Now that you are in Christ, the Holy Spirit is in you, and you are led by the Holy Spirit. If you walk in the Spirit, you will realize the fruit of the Spirit," verse 22 of chapter 5, "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." If you walk in the Spirit that is what you will experience; that's the fruit. You plant walking in the Spirit, you harvest those virtues. On the other hand, back in verse 19 of that fifth chapter, if – opposite to that – you plant deeds of the flesh, you will harvest immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these.

Now in this section that we're in in this wonderful book, Paul is talking to us about how to live the Christian life. In the first two chapters he defended his apostleship as one who represented the Lord Jesus Christ and spoke for the Lord. In the second two chapters, chapters 3 and 4, he defended the gospel of salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, apart from works. And then in the final two chapters he's telling us how to live the Christian life. And here is one of the essential principles of living the Christian life. You have two options: you can walk in the Spirit and realize the fruit of the Spirit, or you can walk in the flesh and realize the fruit of the flesh.

So he wants to warn us that whatever you plant is exactly what you will harvest. So we look at verse 7 and we read, first of all, "Do not be deceived." That's a very important warning. I would have to say that most people, including most Christians, are somewhat deceived, to one degree or another,

about the consequences of their sinful behaviors. I think we tend to believe that because we're under grace and not law, because we've been forgiven and that's forever, because we cannot lose our salvation, because God is so gracious He keeps on forgiving our sins, because we haven't contributed to our salvation by our works, we can't sustain our salvation by our works, or lack thereof, there's a certain impunity with which we can sin. And so, the apostle Paul says, "Don't deceive yourself."

He has been talking like this already in the book of Galatians. Back in chapter 3, he wrote in verse 1, "You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you?" In verse 3, he says, "Are you so foolish?" He has already addressed their foolishness, their potential deceptive influence.

"Deceive" is an interesting word, it comes from *planaō, planaō*, from which we get the word "planet" derivatively. *Planaō* means "to wander around," "to be led astray." And that was a term used, came through the Latin to the English to describe planets that were moving. This means "to wander away," "to be led astray." That's what deception is. In 1 Corinthians 3:18, "Let no man deceive himself." So not only can we be led astray and deceived by somebody else, we're pretty good at deceiving ourselves. And that's the essence of what this says: "Do not be deceived."

You really don't need somebody else to be deceived, because you have a deceptive component in you. Even as a believer you have the remaining sinful flesh, and Jeremiah 17:9 says, as we know, "The heart is deceitful above all things." So you have within you a force for deceit.

Obadiah 3, the prophet said, "The arrogance of your heart has deceived you." Your heart is arrogant. Your heart is self-protective, self-promoting, self-fulfilling, self-aggrandizing, self-defending. Pride is the primary sin - selfishness. So you have a selfish heart that will want to spin your life the best way. It'll want to make you feel the best about your situation and your behavior. So your heart will deceive you. As long as you're still in this world you have that deceptive heart.

In James chapter 1, verse 22, it says, "Prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves." You can deceive yourself coming and hearing the Word and doing nothing about it, thinking because you know the truth, that's enough. That is a self-deception. Verse 26 of James 1: "If you don't bridle your tongue you're deceiving your own heart; your religion is worthless."

Self-deceit is a problem for everybody, for all of us, and it tends to be that the deception kind of runs typically like this: you're saved, you're on the way to heaven, that can't happen, you're under grace, the Lord will never let you go, so there can't really be too serious consequences if I walk in the flesh. It turns into a kind of license, this self-deception. You can add to that the fact that there is a deceiver in the world. Revelation 12:9, Revelation 20, verse 3, says Satan is the deceiver who deceives the whole world, who deceives the nations. So you not only have an internal deceiver, you have an external deceiver running loose in the world. The potential for deception is very great.

Listen to 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. Such were some of you; but you were washed." Don't be deceived about who's a true believer. You can be deceived about that.

You can be deceived by choosing bad friends. Listen to 1 Corinthians 15:33, “Do not be deceived: ‘Bad company corrupts good morals.’” Don’t kid yourself. If you associate with bad company, they corrupt your morals. Don’t be deceived.

Don’t be deceived about the church. Listen to Romans 16:17, “I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you have learned, and turn away from them. For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.” Don’t be deceived by troublemakers in the church, those who tear up unity, those who sow discord, dissension, trouble.

Don’t be deceived by false teachers, Ephesians 4. “Don’t be children, tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by those who come to deceive you.” And 2 Timothy 3:13 says, “Deceivers will get worse and worse.” We have to live in a very protective way, because there is the potential for deceit in us, and there is the reality of deceit all outside us.

Listen to Ephesians 5:6, “Let no one deceive you with empty words.” Don’t be partakers with them. You have to know you have a propensity to be deceived. That is why faithful pastoral ministry has to be biblical, because the only way for you to be protected from deception is to know what it looks like; and the Scripture reveals that.

“Don’t be deceived,” Paul is saying here in Galatians 6. Don’t be deceived that you can walk in the flesh and it’ll be okay. You don’t want to be a legalist; but on the other hand, you’re liable to go the other way, and you say, “Well, look, we weren’t saved by law, and we can’t be perfected in the flesh.” Paul said that back in Galatians 3:3, “Having begun in the Spirit, are you now perfected by the flesh?”

So it’s not about works, it’s not about works - it’s about the power of the Spirit. So my works didn’t contribute to my salvation, they can’t undo my salvation. Why do I have to worry? This tends toward antinomianism, toward loose living in the name of grace.

“Don’t be deceived, God is not mocked.” You can’t mock God. God is not fooled, that means. Or, God is not ignored. Or, God is not outwitted. Or, you can’t sneer at God; you cannot insult Him. You cannot violate His holy law and think you’re going to get away with it.

In Jude, verse 17, “Beloved, you ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they were saying to you, ‘In the last time there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts.’” We’re in the last time. We’re in the last times of the last time. This is the latest it’s ever been in human history. And the world is full of mockers mocking God, shaking their fists in the face of God as if He didn’t exist, sneering at God. You can’t mock God. This is a culture that mocks God relentlessly. God will not be sneered at. You cannot mock God.

Now, having said that, “Don’t be deceived” – you’re not going to be able to mock God; here comes the law, and this is His law – “whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.” “Whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.” That’s so straightforward and true that it doesn’t really need an explanation. But we’re going to get one anyway, because Paul wants us to understand.

You have a choice as a believer: you can walk in the Spirit, you can walk in the flesh. Don't think for a moment that you can walk in the flesh and not pay the consequence. You can't mock God and get away with it. I mean, this is essential throughout Scripture.

You have people like Nebuchadnezzar who mocked God back in Daniel. And what happened to him? He was turned into an animal. You have Belshazzar in chapter 5 who mocked God. And what happened to him? Devastating destruction of his entire kingdom. God will not be mocked.

You have Romans chapter 1, where "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness." They turn from the Creator to the creature. Romans 1 describes a mockery of God, and the wrath of God is released on men when they mock God. The wrath in Romans is the wrath of turning them over to their sin, to immorality, homosexuality, and a reprobate mind.

Now understand this: the wrath of God has a number of forms. Let's start with the final form: eternal wrath. God's eternal wrath is hell, where all unbelievers will suffer punishment forever. That's His eternal wrath.

The Bible also talks about eschatological wrath; that's the wrath at the end of human history. That's wrath described by the prophets and described by our Lord in the Olivet Discourse at the end of His ministry in Jerusalem, and it's described particularly in the book of Revelation. There is coming horrendous wrath from God on the earth.

So there's eternal wrath and eschatological wrath. There's also cataclysmic wrath. Cataclysmic wrath is what we see in natural disasters and plagues and all of those kinds of things through human history, where in some cases in the past, millions of people died from a plague. And in the modern time, tens of thousands die in a tsunami, and some die in a hurricane, or whatever it is. The world, the fallen world, the cursed world is subject to these cataclysmic events, which are a form of divine wrath. But eschatological wrath is a period of time in the future. Eternal wrath is after time has ended, and cataclysmic wrath kind of comes and goes at points in time and place.

There is another kind of wrath that's operating all the time, it's just going on all the time. It's cyclical, it's always in place, and it's sowing and reaping wrath: what you sow, you reap. And it just never stops. It is happening all the time. "Whatever a man sows, this he will also reap." Whenever he sows, that's when he will set in motion the wrath of God. This is a divine principle. If you think you can violate it you're mocking God.

There was a commercial years ago that sort of recognized this. In the commercial they said, "It's not nice to mess with Mother Nature." Some of you might remember that old commercial. That was a recognition on a sort of pagan level of the fact that you can't mock God.

Man's atheistic identification is a mockery of God; and you can't do that without consequences. For it's not just atheism. It's people who believe in God and reject His Son are mocking God; or people who have received His Son, but think they can sin with impunity. That's mocking God, and that gets down to us.

This law is laid out all through Scripture. Listen to Job 4:8, "Those who plow iniquity sow trouble and

harvest it.” “Those who plow iniquity sow trouble and harvest it.” Proverbs 1:31, “They shall eat of the fruit of their own way.” Same principle. Proverbs 11:18, “The wicked earns deceptive wages; he who sows righteousness earns a true reward.” Or Hosea 8:7, “They who sow the wind reap the whirlwind.”

In Hosea, tenth chapter, couple of verses I’ll read to you, verses 12 and 13: “Sow with a view to righteousness, reap in accordance with kindness; break up your fallow ground, it is time to seek the Lord until He comes to rain righteousness on you.” And that’s an agricultural scene: sowing, breaking up the ground, the rain, and the result is righteousness. On the other hand, the prophet says, “You have plowed wickedness, you have reaped injustice,” or unrighteousness. So this is a biblical principle. It’s in those places and many other places.

The harvest is determined by the planting, like begets like. If you want wheat, you don’t plant strawberries. The law is true; it’s true in a moral sense. The fruit of a life is determined by what that life has planted. A man’s character and condition is the harvest of his habits. Think about a child, foolishly indulged and encouraged to think only of its own whims and its own wishes and its own way. And it may be cute; but the obstinate, stubborn, sullen, self-centered, undisciplined adult reaps the whirlwind.

One English writer put the law in its moral sense in these words: “What strikes me more and more each day is the permanence of one’s early life, the identity between youth and manhood. Every habit, good and bad, of those early years seems to have permanently affected my whole life. The battle is largely won or lost before it seems to begin.” End quote.

No doubt that’s what the Bible had in mind in Proverbs 22:6, “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he was old he’s not going to depart from it.” This is an inexorable law that works in life.

Witness, for example, the absolute frustration and hopelessness of psychiatry and psychology to put people together. Why? Because of this law. The only way that you can get out of the bondage of this law is to become a believer and to be transformed; and even then the law still operates. But for nonbelievers, they can only sow sin, and they can only reap corruption.

So what does psychology or psychiatry do to fix that? Nothing. Nothing. This is the operating form of divine wrath that is inescapable for anyone without the knowledge of God through Christ. Only the divine miracle of the new birth and regeneration can get you out of that total bondage, and you still have to be aware that you are subject to deception, subject to walking in the flesh, and reaping what the flesh sows.

In Numbers 32:23 it says this: “Be sure your sins will find you out.” “Be sure your sins will find you out.” That’s sowing and reaping. Or Psalm 90, verse 8, “Have you” – speaking to God – “you have placed our sins before you, our secret sins in the light of Your presence.” You didn’t fool God. You may have mocked Him, but you didn’t fool Him, you didn’t hide anything.

Isaiah 3:11, “Woe to the wicked! It will go badly for him, for what he deserves will be done to him.” Isaiah 59:12, “Our sins testify against us.” Romans 2:9, “There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil.” You do evil, you’re going to get tribulation and distress. So the law of God is unchanging, immutable, and relentless, as God’s nature is unchanging and relentless. You

cannot escape it; it is a form of operating wrath built into the world.

You say, “Well, wait a minute. Well, what about forgiveness? Am I not forgiven?” Yes. “What about grace? Do I not receive grace?” Yes. “What about mercy? Have I not received mercy?” Yes. Yes.

God, at the point of salvation, intercepts that fully operating law, intercepts and gives new life, so that now you have the capacity since being freed from that law to do what honors God, to walk in the Spirit by the miracle or redemption. You can now reap what Christ has sown. Yet in your daily life, that principle still operates. If you walk in the flesh, you’ll harvest the flesh. If you walk in the Spirit, you’ll harvest the Spirit.

Think about it in a material sense. Salvation doesn’t prevent people who drink and smoke and harm their bodies from getting sick or getting cancer. The Christian who gets in a fight may be a Christian, but it’s not going to prevent him from having his teeth knocked out. If you drive recklessly and go off the road, have an accident, the fact that you’re a Christian isn’t going to protect you from the fact that you sowed irresponsibility and you ended up with the results. If you’re a Christian and you sin immorally with another person, that’s not going to necessarily protect you from venereal disease.

Look, the Greeks even saw this law. They didn’t attribute it to God, but the Greeks invented a god by the name of Nemesis. And Nemesis, they believed, was the god who watched everybody’s behavior; and when a person did a wrong deed, immediately Nemesis took off after that person. This god got on the trail of the wrongdoer, and sooner or later, the Greeks said, Nemesis would catch up and pay vengeance.

This is the pagan Greek culture recognizing that there are moral laws in the world that work. They attributed them to Nemesis when they should have been attributed to God. And though we are forgiven and though we are headed for heaven, as long as we’re in this world, living in this world here and now, this law is still operative. What you sow you will reap.

This is David, man after God’s own heart. Wrote all those beautiful psalms; a true worshiper, whose life is marked by outrageous sin; and always the consequences, always the consequences. The eternal consequences have been settled, temporal ones have not. So that is the law stated.

Verse 8, the law is explained: “For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.” Sows to his own flesh: the act of choosing to gratify the cravings of your fallen flesh. Flesh is always the starting point for sin.

James 1, verse 14, “Each one is tempted when he’s carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren,” – James is writing to believers – “my beloved brethren. Don’t be deceived.”

When you start with lust and it gives birth to sin it can bring forth death. This is the harvest of the flesh. Sow to the flesh, and from the flesh you will reap corruption. It’s a word that means “decay,” “disintegration,” “degeneration,” or even the ultimate corruption, which is “death.” If the flesh is indulged, as we saw in verses 19 to 21, the fruit is corrupt: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry,

sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing. Those are only samples.

To sow is simply to pander to the flesh. John Stott wrote, "Every time we allow our mind to harbor a grudge, nurse a grievance, entertain an impure fancy, or wallow in self-pity, we are sowing to the flesh. Every time we linger in bad company, whose insidious influence we know we cannot resist, every time we lie in bed when we ought to be up and praying, every time we read pornographic literature, every time we take a risk that strains our self-control, we are sowing, sowing, sowing to the flesh."

Some Christians sow to the flesh seemingly every day and wonder why they don't reap a harvest of holiness or usefulness. Let me make it simple: holiness is a harvest. Holiness is a harvest of sowing to the Spirit, not the flesh. Sow to the flesh, you harvest corruption. In the case of the believer, this corruption is simply the corruption of your Christian experience: the loss of peace; the loss of joy; the loss of worship, service, usefulness. The world knows this; they get it.

Years ago I read about Oscar Wilde who was a homosexual but kept it hidden; and eventually his life was a total disaster, and he wrote, "I had forgotten that what a man does in secret he will one day shout from the housetop. I was fascinated by poetry as a young man. I read the poetry of Lord Byron, whose whole life sowed to the flesh. And he knew what the harvest was when he wrote these words: 'My days are in the yellow leaf, my soul is soar with sullen grief; it is as if the dead could feel the icy worm around them steal and shudder as the reptiles creep to revel o'er their rotting sleep.'"

This is the despair of one who sowed to the flesh. It's how the world lives. And really, in a sense, it's all they can do. But as believers, why would we do that? Do we think we can mock God? Are we deceived? No, you sow to the flesh, it's inexorable. It's a law; it's an operative principle. You sow to the flesh you're going to end up with corruption in your life. Sow to the Spirit, that's going to produce – I love this – eternal life. "The one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life."

"What do you mean, 'Will from the Spirit reap eternal life'? Don't we already have eternal life?" Well, we possess eternal life, yes. We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. We've been given eternal life. This isn't talking about future heaven. We have that secured; that's already ours.

"What do you mean, 'Reap eternal life'?" We're talking about here and now, right? This is where this law operates. This law isn't operating in heaven; this law operates here and now. And whatever it meant when you sowed to the flesh, it means when you sow to the Spirit. And since that's here in this world, and since the results are showing up here in this world, this is also here in this world, and the results will show up in this world.

"Well, what do you mean we're going to reap eternal life?" What Paul means is we're going to reap the full blessings contained in that life which is already ours in Christ. And what are those blessings? Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, other blessings. The Christian who sows to the Spirit reaps the full blessing, the plentitude – all the satisfactions, all the joys of eternal life, enjoying peace, joy, love, patience, goodness, kindness, being conformed to Christ. So the law is explained.

Thirdly, the divine law having been stated and explained is now fulfilled in verse 9, "Let us not lose

heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.” At this point, some of the Galatians, and maybe some of you are thinking, “Hmm, I’ve been sowing a lot of good things; I’ve been walking in the Spirit. When does the harvest come?” That’s what this verse is addressing.

“Let us not lose heart in doing good,” because you can be pouring your life into walking in the Spirit and wondering why things are difficult in your life. “Don’t lose heart in doing good, in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.” Due time is God’s time, in God’s season.

Christians frequently act like children with reference to this harvest. They want to sow and reap the same day. So some of the Spirit-filled believers are saying, “I’m sowing. The sowing is hard, and I’m getting tired, and I don’t know if I’m seeing what I expected to see.” This is for you: “Do not lose heart. Do not grow weary.” And “do not lose heart” comes from *englakeō*. *Kakeō* is “to sin.” Don’t sin by becoming discouraged and entertaining fleshly discouragement. “Don’t lose heart” is a term used sometimes by a farmer who begins to slacken because he gets weary - he’s worn out, he’s fatigued. Don’t do that.

The end of 1 Corinthians 15, the apostle Paul says, “My beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing your toil is not in vain in the Lord.” Keep doing it - abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing your toil is not in vain. God will bring the harvest. No place for weariness, no place for spiritual laziness. God has been faithful to us, we need to be faithful to sow the seeds of righteousness.

“Don’t lose heart in doing good,” “doing *kalos*,” “real good”; “outward, manifest good.” This is the result of the fruit of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is attitude: love, joy, peace. Those are all attitudes, and they result in actions, good actions. “Keep it up. Don’t grow tired. Don’t grow lazy. Don’t turn away.” “Be like Christ,” Hebrews chapter 12. Even though it was a hard road, He never grew weary, but moved ahead because He saw the prize that was set before Him.

“Reward will come” – back to verse 9 – “in due time, in due time” – God’s time; God’s season – “and you will reap if you don’t grow weary.” Reminds me of the letter to the churches in Revelation about not growing weary. There’s a full harvest if you’re faithful. Don’t turn away, continue abounding in the work of the Lord.

Second John 8 says, “Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward.” That’s talking about heaven. Keep moving. God will give you a harvest here and now, and a reward in the future.

Finally, the principle has been stated and explained, and its fulfillment promised. Finally, the divine law is applied in verse 10, “So then,” – or “therefore” – “while we have opportunity,” – let me stop on the word “opportunity.” When we see the word “opportunity,” it kind of feels like a moment in time. It kind of feels like an event. “I had the opportunity.” We use it that way in our speech. But the Greek word here, *kairos*, is not referring to a moment in time, or an event, or an intersection of circumstances. *Kairos* means “a season,” “a period,” “an era,” even “an age,” rather than *chronos*, which is clock time – minutes and hours.

So while we are in this season. What season? The season between our salvation and our glorification, okay. “While we’re in this season,” – this “fixed time,” this “fixed time” – “let us do good

to all people.” That’s where we start. “Do good,” – “the good” literally in the Greek – “the good,” “the good” he has spoken of: love, joy, peace - all those things - all that is virtuous, all that is noble, all that is honorable.

And the whole New Testament is just full of verses that call us to this living goodness. First Peter 2:15, “Such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men.” Matthew 5:16, “Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

The New Testament is full of calls on us to do good, to silence the critics, to manifest the transformation that Christ has wrought in our lives, to be lights in the world. This is the heart of our Christian testimony. So while we are in this season of life, let us do good to all people; let us be known by our goodness, known by our goodness.

In Titus 2:7, “Show yourself an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.” Or verse 14, “who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.” Down in chapter 3, verse 8, “Be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men.” Verse 14, “Our people must also learn to engage in *good deeds* to meet pressing needs, so that they will not be unfruitful.”

This is the heart of our testimony, to sow righteousness, to sow in the Spirit, to sow good deeds, “especially” – he closes in verse 10 – “to those who are of the household of faith,” of *the* faith, the Christian faith – especially believers, *especially* fellow believers. We should do nothing but good to one another, nothing but good, never anything but good.

“So then,” Ephesians 2:19, “you are no longer strangers and aliens, you’re fellow citizens with the saints, and you’re of God’s household.” You’re part of His family from whom every family in heaven and earth derives its name. You’re God’s family. You need to show good to the family.

So the call was clear. There’s a law operating in the world. You can’t get around it; you can’t avoid it; it works. The whole universe is built on laws, physical and moral. God’s moral law is summed up in, at least in this aspect, “What you sow, you reap.” That ought to be the motivation for living your life, walking in the Spirit, that you might reap the fruit of the Spirit.

Again, I say, you sow in the Spirit, you reap holiness. Holiness is the harvest of righteous sowing.

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