

God's Laws of Harvest

Gal. 6:7-9

I. Introduction: 1, 2

1. 3 When God created the Universe He set it in motion and put in place a set of laws to guide its function and operation. God put those laws into place in both the physical, spiritual and moral realms.
2. God's laws are:
 - A. Fixed and Constant: (Drop book to the floor.) It always happens that way every time.
 - (1) It's good God's laws are fixed and constant; just imagine if the law of gravity wasn't constant!
 - (2) We can depend on things being constant; without such fixed laws everything would be chaos.
 - (3) You couldn't walk down the street, drive a car, eat food, dribble a basketball, etc.
 - B. For Our Good:
 - (1) God's laws are not designed to disappoint us, frustrate us or "spoil our fun"; despite what many people believe! 1 Jn. 5:3
 - (2) To them God is a "cosmic kill-joy" who gets His "jollies" by issuing a lot of "Thou shalt not's."
 - (3) However, "Thou shalt not steal" not only keeps us from taking what we want, but also is designed to protect us from losing what we have.
3. ** In this lesson we want to consider one of God's most important laws; actually you might call it a "family of laws"; since they are in fact a set of related precepts. We need to realize and appreciate these laws are certain, fixed and immutable.
4. I'll call these laws "God's Laws of Harvest."
 - A. Without these laws in the physical realm farmers would not be able to produce the food on which our lives depend.
 - B. But "God's Laws of Harvest" apply to all of us even if we are not farmers.
 - C. Because each of us are "spiritual farmers" whether we realize it or not and thus subject to "God's Law of Harvest."

II. Discussion:

I. 4 You Reap What You Sow:

- A. Physical reaping: the farmer who sows the field is (usually) the farmer who reaps that field.
 - (1) A farmer typically does not expend the money, time and effort to plant a crop and then let just anyone who desires to harvest it!
 - (2) In the physical realm there are certainly exceptions to this "rule" (e.g., custom work).
- B. Spiritual reaping:
 - (1) It is absolutely true in the spiritual realm: **Gal. 6:7**: "*Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.*" But what is the harvest in the spiritual realm?
 - (2) The harvest is the souls of men (**John 4:35-36**: "*Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! 36 And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.*").
 - (3) The day of harvest will be the day of judgment: **2 Cor. 5:10**: "*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he*

has done, whether good or bad.” On the day of harvest, judgment day, men will reap their eternal destiny.

- (a) Even though, in a sense, our judgment will be quite “public”; we will be judged individually on the basis of how we’ve lived (Matt. 25:31-46; **Rom. 14:12**: “So then each of us shall give account to himself to God.”; **Rev. 20:12-15**).
- (b) We can certainly help one another in our journey toward eternity (Gal. 6:2), but in the end I’ll have to answer for myself and you will have to answer for yourself. If judgment is “individual” then so is preparation (parents, children, spouses, congregation).
- (c) Some are always looking for the “perfect” congregation, and to a degree I understand there are sound reasons for doing so. But the “soundness” of this (or any) congregation will do us no good on Judgment Day! (**Acts 10:35**: “...in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.”; **Rom. 2:5-10**: “...God, 6 who ‘will render to each one according to his deeds’: 7 eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; 8 but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness — indignation and wrath, 9 tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; 10 but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good”).

2. **5** You Reap In A Different Season From When You Sow:

A. Physical reaping: farmers are the most patient and optimistic people on earth!

- (1) When a farmer sows corn in April or May, he knows the crop will not be harvested until September or October (corn ratings). This part of “God’s Laws of Harvest,” and it too is immutable (**Eccl. 3:1-2**: “To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven: 2 A time to be born, And a time to die; A time to plant, And a time to pluck what is planted”).
- (2) Seeds planted in the warm, rich soil need sunshine, water, nutrients and time to grow and produce a harvest.
- (3) That’s why I say farmers are the most patient and optimistic people on earth: They spend thousands and thousands of dollars planting a crop and then have to wait months to see the result (**James 5:7-8**: “Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. 8 You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.”).

B. Spiritual reaping:

- (1) The harvest always ultimately comes: **Gal. 6:7-10**: “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. 9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.”
- (2) The things we do in this life and in this world are the seeds of our life so to speak. Our deeds, our words, our thoughts, our habits, etc. will grow and mature and in “due season” we will reap a harvest based upon them.
- (3) Sometimes our actions and deeds bring immediate consequences (e.g., drunk driver), but that isn’t always the case.
- (4) I’ve heard people say, “My uncle drank and smoked for years and he lived a long life.”
- (5) We need to be very careful and not fall into the trap thinking we’ve escaped the consequences of our actions if they do not occur immediately (e.g., mother died of lung cancer after 30 years of smoking cigarettes; father died of heart failure and emphysema).

- (6) It is even entirely possible one may never reap the consequences of a sinful life in the “here and now,” **BUT** “in due season” an unavoidable reaping will take place! (**2 Cor. 5:10**: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”; **Rom. 14:10-12**: “For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. 11 For it is written: ‘As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God.’ 12 So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.”; **Heb. 9:27**: “And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,”).

3. **6** You Reap the Same Kind as You Sow:

- A. Physical reaping: Every farmer knows that if he sows corn he will reap corn, not soybeans or alfalfa. If you sow weeds, thorns and thistles you will not reap corn, you’ll reap weeds, thorns and thistles! **Gen 1:11-12**: “Then God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth’; and it was so. 12 And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.”
- (1) This is such an obvious truth you’re probably mentally shaking your head and saying, “This preacher has such a gift for the obvious!”
- (2) But, most people, even though they recognize this principle in the physical realm, either fail to recognize it in the spiritual realm or ignore it!
- B. Spiritual reaping:
- (1) Jesus asked the obvious question: “Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?” (Matt. 7:16) The answer is “NO.”
- (2) “The wicked man does deceptive work, But he who sows righteousness will have a sure reward” (Prov. 11:18).
- (3) “...knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free” (Eph. 6:8).
- (4) “Even as I have seen, those who plow iniquity and sow trouble reap the same” (Job 4:8).
- (5) Jacob is a prime example of this aspect of “God’s Laws of Harvest.” His troubles began when he lied to his father then later he reaped the same kind of trouble he had sown. His sons deceived him into believing Joseph was killed by a wild animal. Jacob grieved for years over Joseph unnecessarily, but he was reaping the harvest he had sown.
- (6) But, what is the “seed” that is sown in this case? **Gal. 6:8**: “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.” The “seed” is the type of life we chose to live; and there are only two choices:
- (a) A selfish life where our first priority in life is to serve ourselves—sowing “to the flesh.” (We can be considered a “faithful Christian” and still live such a life!)
- (b) A life dedicated to serving God and following His will—sowing “to the Spirit.”
- (7) The day of harvest will be the day of judgment: **2 Cor. 5:10**: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.” The harvest in this case is one’s eternal destiny.
- (a) In the physical reaping and sowing it is an immutable law: “you will reap what you sow.” If, you sow corn, in the day of harvest you will reap corn.
- (b) The same is true in the spiritual realm: if one “sows to his flesh” the immutable harvest will be the reaping of “corruption” (i.e., eternal punishment). If one sows “to the Spirit” the immutable harvest will be the reaping of “everlasting life.”

(8) The vast majority of people live their lives either in total disregard of God's laws or only obey those laws which they find convenient to their "life style." But they expect the harvest of "the Spirit"—"everlasting life."

(a) Have you ever attended a funeral where it was said of the deceased, "Well, old 'so and so' is surely burning in hell now!"

(b) No, we always hear just the opposite...right?!

(c) But, "God's Laws of Harvest" are inviolable, you will reap what you've sown: **Matt. 7:13-14**: "*Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. 14 Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.*"

C. Only a fool would expect a different harvest than that of the seed he/she has sown; therefore, let's not fool ourselves thinking we can live to please ourselves and make it to heaven (**Deut. 29:18-20**).

4. **7** You Reap More Than You Sow:

A. Physical reaping: Sow one kernel of corn: Result→one stalk with 2-3 ears each containing 400-600 kernels; so a farmer plants ~30,000 kernels per acre and reaps ~18,000,000 and 600-fold increase! Thankfully, this is "God's Law of Harvest"; you will reap much more than you sow.

B. Spiritual reaping:

(1) This aspect of "God's Laws of Harvest" is a "good news, bad news" situation:

(a) The bad news is: sow evil and you will reap far more evil than you ever sowed.

(b) The good news is: sow good and you will reap far more good than you ever sowed.

(2) Just ask the Jews of ancient Israel about this aspect of "God's Laws of Harvest":

Hos. 8:7-8: "*They sow the wind, And reap the whirlwind. The stalk has no bud; It shall never produce meal. If it should produce, Aliens would swallow it up. 8 Israel is swallowed up; Now they are among the Gentiles Like a vessel in which is no pleasure.*" (remember Deut. 28?)

Isa. 17:11: "*In the day you will make your plant to grow, And in the morning you will make your seed to flourish; But the harvest will be a heap of ruins In the day of grief and desperate sorrow.*"

(3) Just ask King David about this aspect of "God's Laws of Harvest": David sowed the sin of adultery, deception and murder (2 Sam. 11). David reaped far more evil than he sowed:

☛ His child died shortly after birth (2 Sam. 12:19),

☛ One of his daughters (Tamar) was raped by one of her step brothers (Amnon) (2 Sam. 13),

☛ One son (Absalom) killed another son (Amnon)(2 Sam. 13),

☛ His son Absalom led a rebellion that caused David to flee Jerusalem and ended in Absalom's death (2 Sam. 15-18),

(4) Some profess not to understand how God will condemn people to an eternal hell; this is "God's Law of Harvest": **Rom. 2:4-11**

5. **8** You Eat the Fruit of Your Harvest:

A. Physical reaping: The reward of the farmer for his sowing and reaping is to eat of the fruit of his labor (**2 Tim. 2:6**: "*The hardworking farmer must be first to partake of the crops.*").

B. Spiritual reaping:

(1) Likewise, each one of us will eat the fruit of our deeds.

- (2) How will your life taste to you? Sweet? Sour? Bitter? (**Isa. 3:10**: “Say to the righteous that it shall be well with them, For they shall eat the fruit of their doings.”)
- (3) Have you ever taken a big bite of a really sour apple? (**Prov. 1:28-31**: “Then they will call on me, but I will not answer; They will seek me diligently, but they will not find me. 29 Because they hated knowledge And did not choose the fear of the LORD, 30 They would have none of my counsel And despised my every rebuke. 31 Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way, And be filled to the full with their own fancies.”).
- (4) The rich man ate a different “fruit” than he thought he would eat! **Lk. 12:16-21**

III. Conclusion:

1. **9** There was a young man who had trouble with one of the local farmers in his neighborhood.
 - A. To get back at the farmer this fellow went out one night and sowed weeds throughout the farmer’s fields.
 - B. The farmer had a terrible mess and fought the weeds year after year.
 - C. In the progress of time, the young man eventually married...he married the farmer’s daughter.
 - D. Soon after the farmer died and the young couple inherited the farm.
 - E. The young man spent the rest of his life battling the very weeds he had sown.
2. If God’s harvest came today; what would you reap?
 - A. If you’re spending your life sowing “to...the flesh”; you’ll “reap corruption” (Gal. 6:8).
 - B. On the other hand, if you’re spending your life sowing “to the Spirit”; you’ll “reap everlasting life” (Gal. 6:8).
3. God’s Laws of the Harvest” are immutable! What are you sowing?

Adapted from a sermon by Wayne Greeson in *Sowing the Seed* 3, pp. 73-75