SPIRITUAL LAWS OF SOWING AND REAPING

Nine Principles

2 Corinthians 9:6-12

"Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed; as it is written, 'HE SCATTERED ABROAD, HE GAVE TO THE POOR, HE RIGHTEOUSNESS ENDURES FOREVER.' Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness; you will be enriched in everything for all liberty, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God. For the ministry of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgiving to God." (Cf.Gal.6:6-10)

These verses tell us something about:

- **God’s nature** (God is able to make all grace abound)
- **God’s gift** (Jesus)
- **God’s purpose** (you may have an abundance for every good deed)
- **God’s ownership** (He who supplies)
- **God’s people** (why believers must give and reflect the family characteristics of God)

The theological mystery is how do believers receive a blessing or reward for things that God gives? This text teaches us that **God will give more resources to those who share the resources with Him**. This abundance, however, is not for the personal uses of the individual, but for the causes of Christ. Charismatic theology has scared the church away from this truth by perverting its principle, but the truth is: the Christian giver becomes a channel of God’s provisions for the needs of others. Yes, covenant blessings and abundance will occur, but they are to be passed on for the Kingdom and not retained! Believers are saved to serve and blessed to give!

Taking the analogy of the sowing and reaping from the text, there are nine principles that every believer can understand and apply.

1. **EVERYTHING STARTS AS A SEED.**

   **Explained:**
   The “sowing and reaping” reference points back to an allusion used in by Solomon in Proverbs 11:24-25 (Cf.19:17; 22:9). It reflects Jesus’ teaching on giving (Cf.Matt.7:2; Mark 4:24; Luke 6:38). The agricultural metaphor of sowing is often used in the Bible, sometimes in an eschatological, judicial sense (Cf.Gal.6:7). It is a way of referring to supernatural actions like the resurrection (Cf.1 Cor.15:35-37). In this context, it speaks of one seed producing many seeds as a way of referring to abundance.

   The first principle that everything starts with a seed means that our actions are like seeds. In creation, God has designed a built-in consequence to the actions of His creatures. If an action lines up with His moral law, it protects life and brings order. If an action does not line up with His moral law, it destroys life and brings chaos into society (Cf.Ex.20:5-7). In the law of sowing and reaping everything starts as a seed.
2. **NOTHING HAPPENS UNTIL THE SEED IS PLANTED.**

   Explained:
   The place where seed is designed to bear fruit and spring forth is **soil**. The same is true of our lives. In the parable of the sower, the seed is the Word of God, the sower sows the Word and our hearts are like soils *(Mark 4:1-20)*. However, in this analogy, the seed is our obedience (actions) in giving. Intending to give will not result in a harvest of blessing. Actual giving is needed in order to reap.

3. **WHATEVER I SOW IS WHAT I REAP.**

   Explained:
   If you sow an apple seed, you will not reap a cherry tree. If you sow a cotton seed, you will get a cotton plant. Reaping is always **in kind** to what you sow. You always reap what you sow *(Gal.6:7)*.

4. **I'M NOT THE ONLY SOWER.**

   Explained:
   In life and in spiritual matters, everyone sows. However, sometimes we can reap what others have sown. Jesus reminded the disciples of this principle in John 4, as it related to the Samaritan harvest. "Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest. Already he who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering fruit for life eternal; so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this case the saying is true, 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored [John the Baptist] and you have entered into their labor" *(John 4:35-38)*.

5. **I ALWAYS REAP IN A DIFFERENT SEASON THAN THE ONE IN WHICH I SOW.**

   Explained:
   In agriculture, there are no automatic or instant results. James uses the farmer as an example of patience *(5:7-8)*. The farmers of those days were dependent on two "rains." The "early" rain came at planting time in October. The "latter" rain came at harvesting time in late April or early May. Without those two rains, the farmer had no hope of raising a good crop.

   But the farmer could not force it to rain. All he could do was wait for the rains to come. He had to depend on the **God who ordained those rains to send them at the proper time**. The lesson is clear. **We are helpless without divine intervention.** Nevertheless, we are called to trust God in circumstances over which we have no control.

6. **I ALWAYS REAP MORE THAN I SOW.**

   Explained:
   Now this law works both ways; both in the sowing of good and the sowing of evil. We never reap **less**, always **more**. But why more? The reason we always reap more is because this is God’s built-in way of affirming His **generosity** (grace) and His **veracity** (truthfulness). He is “**opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble**” *(James 4:6)*.
7. I CAN INCREASE MY HARVEST BY PLANTING MORE SEED.

Explained:
Remember, your harvest is not for your personal use, but for the causes of Christ. Matthew Henry notes, “It is God who giveth us not only a competency for ourselves, but that also wherewith we may supply the wants of others, and so should be as seed to be sown...that upon the whole they may find it true that they shall be no losers, but great gainers. Works of charity are so far from impoverishing us that they are the proper means truly to enrich us, or make us truly rich.”

8. IT’S TIME TO START PLANTING NOW.

Explained:
Seed is created to be sown. However, the time to plant depends on the nature of the seed. Winter grass seeds don’t germinate in the summer; it’s too hot. And summer grass seeds don’t do well in the winter; it’s too cold. You need to plant the right seeds at the right time. That’s the principle. Financial giving to the Lord’s work through the church is a year-round seed. The time to plant is now, because “Now is THE ACCEPTABLE TIME, behold, now is the ‘THE DAY OF SALVATION’” (2 Cor.6:2).

9. TO REAP THE HARVEST, I MUST BE PATIENT AND NEVER GIVE UP.

Explained:
Patience, endurance, or perseverance is a fruit of the Spirit. It is also required for spiritual maturity and success. The writer to the Hebrews admonished us, “For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised” (Heb.10:36). Sometimes we give up too early. God calls us endure in the grace of giving— “Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary” (Gal.6:9).

TO THINK ABOUT AND DISCUSS

- Think and share with someone something you sowed (good/bad) that came back to you clearly.
- Which spiritual law did you need to be reminded of at this time?
- How do you plan to implement these laws this week?