

We reap what we sow in well doing

Galatians Explained

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Bible Text: Galatians 6:6-10
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Congregation, often we ask the Lord in prayer for the conversion of the unconverted ones and the edification of the church. We ask for the conversion of them that are not converted, we don't ask for conversion for them that are converted, we ask for their comfort, for their help, for instruction, but is that right? Should we not also pray for the conversion of God's people because they need to be converted again? They need a daily conversion and the Lord tells his people also be reconciled with God again. Let's not forget that God's children are converted but they are not in yet, they are saved but it's not accomplished yet. Yes, it is all paid for on the cross but they are still in territory, in enemy territory, and Satan is still going about as a roaring lion and wants to deceive if possible God's people and likes them to faint, and to quit, and to give up, and to let go, and to return to the world, it can happen. But they need to strive, to fight the good fight, and we need to pray for them that they might keep fighting.

"Therefore him that thinketh he standeth, take heed, take heed lest he fall." You'd better watch it. Take heed lest you fall, "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake, but he that endureth to the end shall be saved." If people don't endure, they won't be saved, they have not been saved. So the church is encouraged to endure to the end, so to be saved, future, and be saved completely when they are in heaven. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life." Not yet but he shall receive the crown of life at the end, "which the Lord has promised to them that love him." We also notice that in Galatians 6, that the Apostle Paul is worried about God's people, that they are deceived, that they are mocking God, that they are weary, that they faint, and he proposes very kind language not such strong language mainly about what you sow, that you get. So God's children are encouraged to sow to the Spirit so that they may also reap from the Spirit, but not sow to the flesh because then they will not reap that salvation.

Galatians 6:6 through 10. Let's read those verses and you will see that he is speaking to God's people and he's concerned. Galatians 6:6 through 10.

6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. 7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall

of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. 9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. 10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

We reap what we sow in well doing. The context is well doing, so the theme is to reap, we reap what we sow in well doing. You heard the three thoughts already. Sowing, what do we sow, where do we sow, what type of sowing is it? Sowing, and then the second, reaping, harvesting, reaping. And in the third place, that well doing. So we reap what we sow in well doing: the sowing part, the reaping, and the well doing.

Well, as I said, congregation, you can notice it, you can feel it when you read those verses, the Apostle Paul is deeply concerned with the living church. He does not sit back and say, "Well, they'll be saved anyway. I don't have to be concerned about them. They're paid for, they're chosen, I just turn my back to them. They're fine anyway." He fears and therefore he talks about deceiving. He did it already in verse 3, "if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself." And he comes back to that in verse 7, "Be not deceived," because that's a danger, that we deceive ourselves, that we deceive others. You cannot deceive God, though.

You can be mistaken and the Apostle Paul warns them for that, to keep it up, to be honest, to realize that what we sow we also will reap because God is not mocked, he continues in verse 7, "God is not mocked." Now people are mocking him all the time. Yes, but he is not mocked. What does that mean? Well, sometimes we say that's not going to happen again and it still happens. And we say it's not going to happen, that's an indicative, that's a fact, it's not going to happen again, what we mean is, "I don't want it to happen." So God is not mocked. We may not mock with him, that's the meaning of it because there is something in our speaking to mock with God, to not take him too seriously and to just take things for granted, and even God's people can sit back too much and just let it go and fall back.

So he talks about deceiving and mocking and what do you see in verse 9? "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." He's afraid of the church of God being weary, tired, exhausted, giving up, despondent. That word "weary" and "faint," they are very close to each other both meaning the same way. So he keeps the church under pressure. "Be careful because Satan is going about as a roaring lion trying to devour sinners." So that's the background and against that background he says, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

That's a simple expression, right? Farmers and growers, he puts corn seeds in the ground and you get corn. Not grass. Not something else. Corn seeds produce corn, but then when you put it in the ground, that's what you get and what you sow, that you reap. What you sow, that's what you also get, is what you harvest. And by nature, people sow to the flesh. Sowing to the flesh, verse 8, "For he that soweth to his flesh." What is that to sow to your flesh? Now you have those seeds and all those things of this world and you just put them

in your own soil, your own ground, your own fleshy heart and you please yourself. You please yourself, you do it for your own gratification, for your own fun, for your own benefit. It's all about me, my entertainment, my life, in selfishness, to the flesh.

But even God's children are prone to that. They still have that old nature and the Apostle Paul is afraid for them. He's afraid that they fall backwards, that they faint and that they get weary and that they don't get close to the Lord anymore, and that they stray like a straying sheep. So they need to sow to the Spirit. You remember the Apostle Paul was very strong on by grace only, right? By grace only. You can't earn salvation. You cannot merit it yourself and it's a gift of God. It's the Lord Jesus Christ doing it. He paid the price. He keeps the spirit in his hands. It all depends upon him and yet we may also not forget that sanctification is also important. It's not only forgiveness, it's also now you also need to see it.

Good works are necessary because, "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" You can believe whatever you want and have the most beautiful stories and impressions and feelings and texts and emotions and assurance, but if you sow to the flesh, then your faith is dead. Very emotional but worthless. Abraham was sanctified by God. Abraham was justified, right? He looked upon the stars and he believed God and it was accounted unto him for righteousness. By faith only, he practiced that by faith only and yet James writes about that. "Was not Abraham our father justified by works," by works, "when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?" He was justified by works, "And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." Luther struggled with that. Luther could not understand what James said. First, the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. So we need justifying faith by grace only, by faith only, and yet those works are also necessary because what you sow, that you will reap.

And it's amazing how often the Lord Jesus spoke about that. The Lord Jesus. He often spoke about good works, that they are necessary. You can't miss them. You need good works. You need to sow to the Spirit. If you sow to the flesh, you will reap corruption. And we hear it out of the mouth of the Lord Jesus, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." That's strong language. You can say whatever you want, "Lord, Lord," very pious and in prayer and in confessing it. It sounds so good, "Lord, Lord," but, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father." That's necessary. That is indispensable.

"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" They did miracles. "And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you." They prophesied, they were ministers. They did miracles, they're apostles.

"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Like Judas did who was a thief, he professed, he looked like a child of God, nobody thought he wasn't, but he deceived himself and he deceived his brothers.

So without holiness no man will see God. Every man shall bear his own burden. Be not deceived. Don't kid yourself. It's a great mistake to think you can mock with God. It's mockery. Hypocrisy is mockery. Pious talk and life is so different in secret behind the screens, the Lord knows.

So if you sow to the flesh, you shall reap corruption. If you sow to the Spirit, you will reap everlasting life. Sowing. The Apostle Paul spoke about it before, right, in the last chapter? He also spoke about that flesh and the Spirit, "the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." That is sowing to the flesh. It's all about myself, to feel good, to have heavenly experiences in this life, to have a paradise for yourself here below, all for your own flesh. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another." Sowing to the flesh, gratifying yourself in a legalistic way or an ungodly way.

And what is that to sow to the Spirit? To sow to the Spirit, to live in the Spirit, to be filled with the Spirit means to be dominated by the Spirit, to be controlled by the Holy Spirit, to dwell in the Holy Spirit and the Spirit dwelling in us, being a temple of the Holy Ghost, to be meditating upon him, to have that close life with him. To sow to the flesh or to sow to the Spirit, that's an important issue.

Let's go to the second thought. Congregation, there are laws, physical laws, the laws of gravity, for example, you can't change that, right? I can't change the law of gravity. That stone still falls down. I can resist it and throw it up but there is still that power of gravity. Natural laws are laws you cannot change. This you cannot change either, what you reap, you will sow. "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season," in due season, in due season, sometimes, some time later, "we shall reap," especially at the day of our departure, the day that we must die. Then we shall reap it. Then they will get it, they will be rewarded.

Job 4, "Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same." They plow iniquity and sow wickedness. They will reap the same. It's an old law. "The wicked worketh a deceitful work: but to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward." If you sow righteousness, you receive a sure reward. The Bible talks about rewarding, rewarding God's people. "For they sow the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind," Hosea 8:7. It's in the entire Bible. "Sow to yourself in righteousness, reap in mercy, for it is time to seek the LORD till he come and rain righteousness upon you."

So the Apostle Paul warns the people in Galatia but also makes them jealous and entices them. We sometimes entice, right? You say to your children, "If you do that, then you'll get..." And they smile and say, "I'll do it!" And so the Lord in his word holds out salvation everlasting and says, "Look at this, something for you, something you like." That's in the Bible. Although it is by grace only, although you cannot merit salvation, the Lord makes people jealous. They feel jealous.

So we hope that the Holy Spirit shows young friends and old ones the same reward, and that some may go home today and say, "I'm going to seek that. I heard about the reward." Let me first mention a few texts and then answer the question: is that the right motivation, to seek salvation for yourself, for going to heaven, for the reward? What does the Lord mean? Is it even proper to seek the Lord for reward? But first the Bible. Moses. Young people, remember Moses in Egypt, he could do whatever he wanted. He was pleased with the life of an Egyptian prince. It went well. But then he found out that he was a Hebrew at heart and genetically, he belonged to the Hebrews, to those slaves, and the Lord changed his heart and he looked at all the pleasures of Egypt, all the good things for the flesh, and he looked at all the affliction, reproach of God's people and it was a hard draw, did he want to stay in Egypt and enjoy this life with all those riches and treasures, or did he want to depart? Now we know he departed, but why? Why did he say farewell to Egypt? I know the reason, "Esteeming the reproach of Christ," the reproach of Christ, "Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward." So Moses thought, "I'm not staying here in Egypt because what I reap, I will sow. I'd rather belong to that reproached people of Israel as they will be rewarded and they will have greater riches." He looked upon, he had respect upon the recompense of the reward and he left Egypt and he thought, "I'm looking for something better, something better than Egypt," because Egypt was only the pleasures of sin for a season, for a while, and then he would reap bitter fruits.

"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain." That's the Bible. We believe it's by grace only. Yes, but it's a reward, to receive that prize. Run. "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible." The Apostle Paul is talking about the crown, quite often talking about the crown. Five different crowns in the Bible. Would you like to have the crown of life? Life, the crown of life on your head or the incorruptible crown, or the crown of joy, or the crown of glory, or the crown of righteousness? The Lord is asking, "Do you want to be crowned with glory, joy, righteousness, life?" He is holding it out to us and saying, "What you sow, you will reap."

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him." We labor. We work that we may be accepted by him. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." So

according to what he has done. So those fruits are indispensable. What you sow, you will reap.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." But is it not wrong to seek the Lord, to benefit of it for yourself? Is it not selfish? Should we not serve the Lord and say, "Lord, I'd like to serve thee. I don't have to go to heaven. I don't need salvation. It's not about me, it's all about thee. If I only glorify thee, it's not about me, it's not of myself at all, it's not selfishness. I only do it for God, not for myself."

Well, two examples. Suppose that she would ask him, "Why do you want to marry me?" Right, a couple that have been dating, "Why do you want to marry me?" And he says, "Not for myself. Not for myself. I only marry you for you, I would like to help you. It's not for my own joy, it's only for you, really only for you. I just feel good about doing it for you." But you know, she wants to hear something else. She wants to hear, "I would like to marry you because I love it, to be with you." And so it is to God's glory when God's children and sinners seek him for their own joy.

Another example. Her father says, "If you on Saturday morning work hard in the yard and tidy everything up, we go for lunch together." And at 12 o'clock, she's finished and says, "Dad, I finished the whole yard. It's neat but I don't want to go for lunch. I'll go with my friends." The father is not happy because he would have loved it if she would have said, "I'd like to go for lunch with you, of course." So now she says, "I just did it for nothing. I don't need your lunch." But the father wanted her to love the lunch with him. Do you see my point? The Lord is so glorified if you would like to go to heaven to be with him, to be without sin, to have that supper of the Lamb, to glorify God. Not just for God's sake but for yourself.

So that's why the Lord is holding it out to us, eternal life. Do you see that at the end of verse 8? "For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption," destruction, pain, suffering, hell, "but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Life everlasting. That doesn't stop, it goes on in eternity and there's that praising of the Lord and that glorifying of him. So is something wrong with being motivated by reward? It depends on what it is like, but it's not secular, it's not unspiritual, "Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long." That's a promise.

So love should be the motivator, right, but also the reward and also the fear of God. Be afraid. Be afraid of deceiving yourself. Be afraid of that corruption. That's all right to have that fear and to be motivated by love and reward and fear. "But I keep under my body," I keep it under, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." Very realistic.

"And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of

men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward." But they will miss it. They will forgo it. They won't have it.

So, you see, you'll reap in due time and that reaping has two different levels. To reap life everlasting, right, but also to receive boldness in the faith, to receive assurance, and some say to have a closer place to Christ in heaven. Some say there are different places in heaven, the reward then that they'll have a closer life with him. I'm not so sure, I'd have to study a little bit more. It might be true, the reward in heaven.

So the Apostle Paul is talking to the church, to the living church, "Don't deceive yourself. Don't mock God. Make sure you have that crown. Let us not be weary of well doing. Don't faint. Keep going. Endure." But the heart of it is to be with Christ, to glorify him from the heart. So last thought, to do well. First we sing.

Congregation, the text for this morning is Galatians 6:6-10, but so far I've only dealt with 7 through 9, so we have to pay attention yet to verse 6 and to verse 10, the beginning verse and the last verse of this piece. "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things," verse 6. Let him that is taught in the word. To be taught in the word of God, that's what preachers do, right? It's about preachers and there's an audience and the audience was taught in the word because that's what preachers mainly are supposed to do, to teach the word. Not stories although they may use illustrations. Not psychology. Not only experiences. But mainly they need to expound upon the word of God, to explain it to the congregation, to teach the word of God.

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine," the Bible says. You need to teach the word. "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness." It is the power of God to salvation. We need to preach the word. So the main task of preaching is to prepare during the week. We also do visits and Catechism classes and other things but the main responsibility of a preacher is to preach.

There are two types of elders in the church, they that teach the word and they that don't. So those are the elders and the pastors. The pastors are elders also with a special responsibility of preaching. "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect." And the heart of that word is, you heard it, it's Christ and to exalt him, to show him in all his attributes.

So verse 6, "Let him that is taught in the word," if you have been taught in the word, you have heard about him. If you have not heard about him, you have not heard the word. He is the word himself. And he was sowing and reaping and he was rewarded. What you reap is what you get. For the joy set before him, he endured the cross. He did it all for a purpose, for that joy set before him. He sowed his whole life in the Spirit and he is reaping with joy. He'll have all his children in, in eternal salvation and have mutual joy, the church joying in him and Christ joying in the church.

So, "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth."
Communicate, he also means provide or share. It's kind of awkward to speak about this as a congregation but this is about a request of the Apostle Paul that the congregations would share good things with the pastors so that they don't have to work, that they are free to prepare their sermons, and that they can preach to the congregation and visit the sick. "To communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things."

And let us keep in mind those days that were so different than our days. They were days of poverty and persecution and the Apostle Paul and others often traveling from one place to another. So the Apostle Paul said, "Don't be weary. Don't faint in doing good also to them." But then look at verse 10, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men," to all men, "especially unto them who are of the household of faith." So he makes it wider and he says, "Share good things. Help out others. Provide." And I read in 1 Timothy 5:8, "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." So in the first place, you have to care for your own house, for your family, for your parents, for your grandparents, for your children, for your grandchildren, in the family, take care of one another. The family first but in also the church. "Let us do good to all men especially unto them who are of the household of faith." So to do good to all men but especially the church.

So that's why when we provide for earthquakes and tsunamis and disasters, we like to contact sound churches in those areas and provide them in the first place and help them out, the household of faith. What did the Lord say when he arrested the Apostle Paul? "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou my church?" No. "Why persecutest thou me?" What's the difference? Why did the Lord Jesus say, "Why persecutest thou me?" He didn't, he only persecuted the church. Not him, not Christ. Yes, he did because the church is Christ. It's his church. It's the apple of his eye. He loves them. They're first. So what you see here is the love of God for his church compared to the goodness of God for all men.

Do you see that? The Lord is good unto all men. The rain and the sun shines in providing for all people but especially them he loves with an eternal love. So as we have therefore opportunity, if you have the money, if you have the opportunity, "let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith," because people are going to be weary in well doing and were fainting in well doing. So at first they stopped in sinful ways, there was more life, more energy, they were not fainting, they were not so weary, there was more enthusiasm among God's people, and now we are 10 years further and they are fainting and running out of gas, we would say today, and it's not the same anymore. So he's saying to the church of God, "Think about that. What you reap, you will sow."

So doing well to the church, doing well to the persecuted church. Yes, we also make effort on all people, there are school and the students but that's yourself, just take care of yourself, we must take care of ourselves as well, that's correct but that's not what it's talking about here. It's talking about others. The Apostle Paul is concerned that the church of God is becoming more materialistic, there is less love, so that's why he has been talking about the fruits of the Spirit is love and joy and peace and longsuffering and

goodness and meekness and temperance, against such there is no law. That was his purpose.

So this piece is about reaping and sowing, about doing good unto all men, reflecting the work of Christ because he is doing good unto all men, but especially his church for eternity. He loves his church, his household, his family, his brothers, his sisters in the Lord. His household, he takes care of his own household like we have to in the first place but he does as well. He loves his church with an eternal love. He takes care of them for time and eternity, for body and soul, with the only comfort in life and death.

Back to the beginning. God's children cannot lose their faith. They will persevere. They have been paid for. And yet the Lord is keeping pressure on them and wants them to be on their toes, and wants them to be alert, and not faint, not be weary not only in the things of justification and comfort, also in the things of well doing. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked." In that context he says it. You can't say, "Well, those things don't matter. That's superficial. That's just horizontal." No, that's what the Apostle Paul received from the Spirit. He said it himself, "He that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

So when you go home, think about that. When you have some time this afternoon, write an essay on heaven. Just sit down at your desk or your table and write something on what is heaven about. Whatever you can think of what heaven is like. Or search in the Bible with a concordance or so, heaven, and may the Lord use that to entice you to say, "I'm going to seek him." It's not wrong to seek the Lord for a better reward, to always be with him without sin, to be with the church, with the agent of God, and that God is all in all. Amen.